

Spectrum

The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

25th Anniversary Celebration

FIVE MOST INFLUENTIAL ADVENTISTS
OF THE PAST 25 YEARS

A MORE "LIBERALIZED"
ADVENTIST FUTURE

BIGGEST NEWS STORIES OF
THE QUARTER-CENTURY

VOICES OF EXCELLENCE:

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Spectrum

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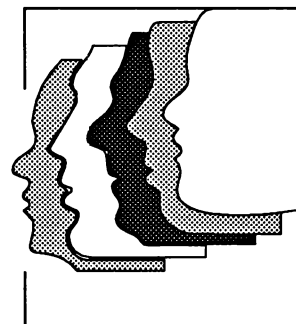
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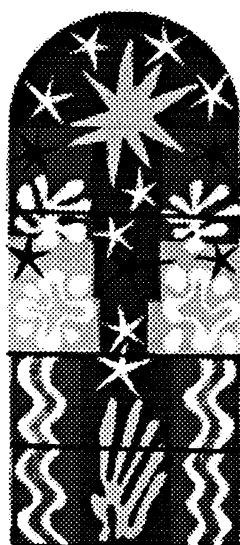
For 25 years, *Spectrum* has set the standard for responsible reporting in the Adventist Church. From Donald Davenport to heroism in Eastern Europe to killing fields in Rwanda, here are the highlights.

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From *Spectrum's* first 25 years, a concert of convictions, a chorus of creativity: Joseph Battistone, Roy Branson, John Brunt, Jonathan Butler, Barry Casey, Molleurus Couperus, Jan Daffern, Ronald Numbers, D. D. N. Nsereko, Richard Osborn, Richard Rice, Kathy Roy, Monte Sahlin, Charles Scriven, Erwin Sicher, Brian Strayer, Charles Teel



*Adapted from Henri Matisse's
"Nuit de Noël"*

25 Years of Leadership

At any 25th Anniversary *Spectrum* awards ceremony, the first name mentioned would have to be that of Molleurus Couperus, the first editor. (See the initial selection in the excerpt section and the short profile introducing Molleurus' own piece.) When Charles Scriven and I, as co-editors, succeeded Couperus, *Spectrum's* reputation was well established. We could afford to experiment with more popular features.

Attentive readers will notice from the initial excerpt that *Spectrum* is published by the Association of Adventist Forums. The leaders of the Association are the invisible heroes of *Spectrum's* 25-year story. They made certain the journal was staffed, funded, and promoted. The key office of executive-secretary has included such outstanding incumbents as Ronald Numbers, Alice Gregg, Richard Osborn, Viveca Black, Claire Hosten, Virginia Murray Mendoza, and Mary Haloviak. Many have served briefly as president—Tom L. Walters, Roy Branson, Lawrence T. Geraty, Ernest J. Plata—but the four presidents who served the longest established a consistent ideal of leadership. From their school days on, these were people used to being leaders at the center.

Alvin Kwiram, now the senior vice provost of the University of Washington, even as a young professor at Harvard, was a serious, carefully considered leader. He had been president of the student association at Walla Walla College before receiving his doctorate in physical chemistry from the California Institute of Technology. For the first three years of AAF's existence, he had the kind of gravitas as president that George Washington himself would have approved. He subsequently served as chair of the *Spectrum* Board of Editors. He has also remained a pillar of the Green Lake congregation in Seattle.

Lyndrey A. Niles, professor of communications and presently associate dean of the graduate school at Howard University, served in all three of the top officer's positions—executive secretary, vice president, and, for four years, president. Niles' commitment to

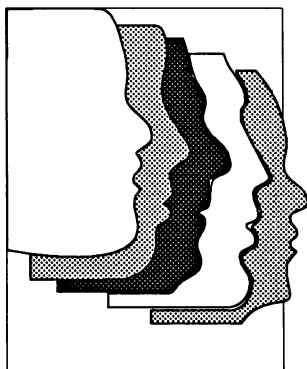
collegiality with the church never wore thin, even when *Spectrum* was publicly chastised at an Annual Council Session. Niles, originally from Barbados, with a Ph.D. from Temple University, helped create the Brotherhood Seventh-day Adventist Church, with the mission of bringing races together.

Glenn E. Coe, a partner in a Hartford, Connecticut law firm, served by far the longest period as president of the association. His two stints covered 12 years. Coe was skillful in negotiations, particularly when R. H. Pierson, the president of the General Conference, was outraged over *Spectrum's* coverage of Ronald Numbers' book on Ellen White: *Prophetess of Health*. He stood steadfastly for the independence of *Spectrum's* editor and editorial board, not only within the church, but within AAF. He revealed his passionately caring side in *Spectrum*, with a moving account of his brother dying of AIDS. A president of the student association at his alma mater, Andrews University, Coe went on to serve on conference and union committees, and continues to teach a Sabbath school class that has led to baptisms into the Hartford, Connecticut congregation.

Les Pitton, who served in several positions on the LAAF Board, has been its president for the past five years. Part of his time on the board, Pitton was also in the General Conference, as director of North American Youth Ministries. As president of AAF, he has both sought young talent for board positions and carefully reviewed *Spectrum's* financial position. Pitton, a recipient of an M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary, and now vice-president of Adventist Healthcare Mid-Atlantic, is a rare combination of daring entrepreneur, detailed manager, and nurturing minister. After Sligo Church's 11 o'clock service, Pitton is one of the last members deep in conversation.

It is not an accident that these presidents embody qualities *Spectrum* has endeavored to exemplify. The leaders of AAF have led by nurturing others. They have acted to embolden the Adventist community of talent to express its God-given creativity. This issue is largely a record of how *Spectrum*, for 25 years, has attempted to fulfill a pastoral form of leadership—a kind of leadership in which we all energize and encourage one another within a community of faith.

—Roy Branson



Five Most Influential SDAs—1969-1994

The people we think most affected Adventism during *Spectrum's* first 25 years.

How is history made? Fortunately, one correct answer is that people make history. Otherwise, anniversaries would be terribly dull. We herewith invite you to join in one way we have been celebrating Adventism's recent history.

To mark *Spectrum's* 25th anniversary, the editorial board asked itself the following question: "Whether we applaud or deplore their impact on the Adventist community, what five persons have most influenced the Seventh-day Adventist Church over the past 25 years?" The individuals profiled below received the highest number of votes. (For the names of the editorial board see *Spectrum's* inside front cover.)

If the Editorial Board had decided to select the Adventist names most prominent in society it might well have chosen people such as Leonard Bailey, Loma Linda University's groundbreaking infant heart surgeon; Herbert Blomstedt, the award-winning music director of the San Francisco Symphony; Benjamin Carson, the chief of pediatric surgery at Johns Hopkins University Medical School; or Take

Six, the best-selling gospel singing group.

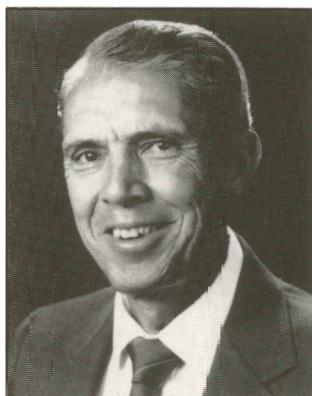
Rather, the editorial board picked those individuals who have most shaped the course of recent Adventist history. Since the persons chosen happen to be identified with major developments within the church, the profiles include references to others in those five areas who have also significantly influenced Adventism's past 25 years.

We didn't think that we should have all the fun, so *Spectrum* invited five other demographically diverse individuals to share their choices of five influential Adventists. (The selections of the editorial board and our guests have all been listed alphabetically.)

And now it is your turn. Read over these lists, then why not, this Sabbath afternoon after lunch, get everyone to join in choosing the people who have most influenced Adventism over the past 25 years? Afterwards, drop us a note, sharing whom you picked and why. Enjoy!

The Editors

Desmond Ford: Herald of Gospel Theology



Over the past 25 years, Desmond Ford, more than any other one person, made Adventists care passionately about theology. Even before this period, Ford, following in the footsteps of his teacher, Edward Heppenstall, assured Adventists that their salvation was

certain not because of their own works, but because of Christ's work on the cross. By the 1970s, Desmond Ford was also raising questions about the traditional Adventist understanding of Christ's activity in the heavenly sanctuary—investigating and judging the lives of humans.

Born in Australia and early in life a successful journalist, Desmond Ford became an Adventist minister and teacher, earning doctorates in speech from Michigan State University and in New Testament from Manchester University in the United Kingdom. For years he trained all the Adventist ministers in Australia and New Zealand. He also taught at Pacific Union College. Since Ford's 1981 disbarment from the Seventh-day Adventist ministry (he remains a member of the denomination), he has continued, through the Good News Unlimited ministry he established, to preach on radio and television, write books, and hold seminars for Adventists and evangelical Christians generally. Two of his better-known books are *The Forgotten Day* (1981), a defense and theological exploration of the seventh-day Sabbath, and *Crisis*, Vols. 1 and 2 (1982), on the book of Revelation.

Ford's views have spread throughout the Seventh-day Adventist Church. While his understanding of the sanctuary has not swept all before it, Ford's preaching of righteousness by faith—the good news he proclaimed to conscientious Adventists that they do not need to bear the enormous burden of earning their way to heaven by ever more minute observance of the law—has become a part of the warp and woof of Adventist preaching and teaching. Thousands of Adventist teachers and pastors, whether or not they express appreciation for Desmond Ford, follow his emphasis on the cross and righteousness by faith as central to Adventism.

Even though they place greater emphasis on

sanctification than does Ford, **Morris Venden**, pastor of the Azure Hills church in Southeastern California, **Hans La Rondelle**, a retired professor from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, and **Jack Sequeira**, pastor of the Capitol Memorial church in Washington, D.C., bring to Adventist members almost desperate with guilt an assurance similar to that of Desmond Ford: Personal salvation is guaranteed through faith in Christ's work on the cross.

Ford's inciting passionate debate over theology has helped to inflame a persistent and powerful conservative reaction. Another evidence of a continuing conservative reaction to Ford is the determination of some leaders in the General Conference administration who lived through controversies with Ford to strengthen linkage between the authority of higher levels of church administration over that of local conferences and churches. The denomination, they feel, must be in a better position to protect itself from the divisive impact of future challenges such as Desmond Ford's. They are determined that at the 1995 General Conference Session the upper levels of denominational administration will gain greater control over lower levels of the church.

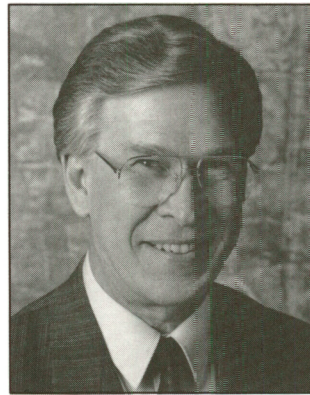
While Ford has had the most pervasive influence in setting the theological agenda for Adventists over the past 25 years, others have also had a major impact on the church's theological thinking. **Gottfried Oosterwal** introduced mission to Adventism during the 1970s. Seldom is it so clear that a single person has inaugurated an entire field of study and strategic planning to a community. With doctorates in theology and in anthropology from the University of Utrecht, Oosterwal published two books in anthropology based on his missionary experience in New Guinea before assuming the chairmanship of the department of mission and comparative religion at the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University in 1968. In his book *Mission: Possible* and in numberless lectures and workshops, Oosterwal predicted patterns of growth that have transformed the ethnic composition of Adventism. Possessing one of the most creative theological minds in the church, Oosterwal expounded the full range of Adventist teachings from the fresh perspective of mission theology. He founded the General Conference Institute of World Mission that trains missionaries. He also called for the professional attention to mission strategy that has resulted in the Global Mission office at the General Conference and centers of Global Mission in Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam. All these institutions are staffed by people who received their doctorates in

mission after Oosterwal introduced the field to the denomination 25 years ago.

Graham Maxwell, the emeritus chair of the Division of Religion of Loma Linda University, has continued to articulate a view of the history of salvation and Adventism's role within it that is different from either the fundamentalist Adventism found in lay-edited journals, such as *Our Firm Foundation*, or the evangelical writings of Desmond Ford. Maxwell's books and Sabbath school tapes are widely distributed within the United States and elsewhere. In them, Maxwell argues that Christ's return does not depend on Adventists crossing the boundaries of all the world's nations to make converts to Adventism from every "nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Instead, Christ will return when Adventists have helped create a community that is "safe to save" because it "perfectly reflects the Character of God." The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not so much making certain that Adventists win members within every ethnic or "people group" on the planet, as it is to look at ourselves, to improve our understanding of God and how we reflect his character in our relationships with one another. Maxwell has provided tens of thousands of Adventists, including many professionals and denominational leaders, with a view of the future and a mission for the Seventh-day Adventist Church that seems far more calm and reasonable than the "fire and brimstone" they were taught in denominational elementary schools.

Another theological emphasis that emerged during the past 25 years, is the increasing attention paid to ethics and social reform. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency gained greater and greater acceptance for its involvement in a wide variety of community development projects around the world. The black Adventist church in North America continued to be convinced that social reform was a part of Adventism. A group of Adventist professors of ethics successfully argued that it was part of the church's mission to address ethical questions in medical practice and research, as well as to participate in movements of social reform. These would include **Miraslav Kis, David Larson, Jack Provonsha, Charles Scriven, Charles Teel, Jr., James Walters, and Gerald Winslow**. During the past 25 years, a professor of Christian ethics was appointed to the faculty of the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University, the Center for Christian Bioethics was established at Loma Linda University, the Washington Institute was organized in the nation's capital, and the Stahl Center for World Missions was created at La Sierra University.

Gerhard Hasel: Leader of a Conservative Response



U ntil his tragic and untimely death in 1994, Gerhard Hasel was the most effective and influential leader of those movements within Adventism committed to preserving what they consider to be traditional—and endangered—Adventist beliefs and practices. Hasel's career as a professor at

the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University (1968-1994) coincided with *Spectrum's* 25 years of existence. Increasingly during that time, Hasel not only exercised influence over existing denominational institutions in the United States and internationally, but also fostered the creation of new organizations and publications aggressively defending their view of Adventist orthodoxy. Perhaps his greatest legacy was fashioning a powerful coalition of conservative thinkers and wealthy and generous Adventist entrepreneurs.

Certainly his productivity as an Old Testament scholar inside and outside the denomination was one of the foundations of Hasel's influence. Born in Germany, educated at Atlantic Union College, Andrews University, and the Old Testament doctoral program at Vanderbilt University, Hasel became a prolific author. According to his son, Michael, Hasel wrote 14 books and 319 articles and book reviews. At least four of his books were widely reviewed in scholarly journals, and at the time of his death he was working on the Amos and Hosea volumes for the *New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, being published by Eerdmans Press. Inside the denomination, he was a mainstay of the General Conference Biblical Research Institute, and wrote many articles for Adventist publications.

Another reason for his influence was his administrative position. Hasel served as dean of the SDA Theological Seminary for seven years (1981-1988), and persisted as chair of its doctoral committee for another five. During those years, Hasel had enormous influence in shaping the future of Adventist theological education. While he was dean, he was instrumental in transforming the faculty of the seminary to include more faculty with perspectives compatible with his. He was also in a position to

veto any religion professor from any other Adventist institution that an overseas division might like to have teach a doctoral extension course. He helped select the students from around the world who would become the denomination's religion teachers, and he frequently became actively involved in deciding whether their doctoral topics were acceptable. Even after he was forced by the Andrews University Board to leave the deanship of the seminary, Hasel was primarily responsible for choosing which students would receive scholarships to complete a doctorate in the theological disciplines at Andrews University.

Hasel's theological outlook proved congenial to the McKee family, so generous over the years with Southern College. When the first endowed chair at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary was created, it was occupied by Hasel. Scholarship funds for doctoral students were significantly increased. The Adventist Theological Society was organized in 1989, with Hasel as its second president. The new society helped Hasel continue to be a linchpin connecting conservative theological voices, particularly at Andrews University, Southern College, and the General Conference Biblical Research and Geoscience institutes. With Hasel as a guiding force, it was not hard for the society to quickly find funds to start publishing its own journal, as well as both the Adventist Theological Society monograph series and dissertation series.

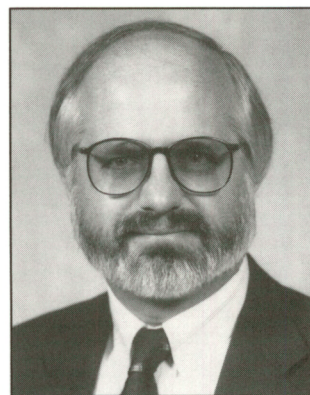
These publications, launched with an introduction to the first issue of the *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* by the newly elected General Conference president, Robert Folkenberg, express an outlook compatible with its parent organization. The Adventist Theological Society requires its members (accepted by invitation only) to reaffirm every year not only the 27 fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but seven additional affirmations as well. These include, among others: affirming that the Bible is "the inspired infallible revelation of propositional truth"; endorsing "the use of historical-grammatical Biblical interpretation"; affirming that Genesis 1-11 is "an objective, factual account of earth's origin and early history," that "the world was created in six literal, consecutive 24-hour days"; and that "the time elapsed since creation week is to be measured in terms of 'about 6,000 years.'"

Those who continue Hasel's legacy, despite his accidental and shocking death in a Utah automobile accident, include **Richard Davidson**, Hasel's student and successor as chair of the Old Testament department at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. Like Hasel, Davidson's speciality is Old

Testament theology, which he uses to analyze Adventism. **P. Gerard Damsteegt**, also at Andrews University, in the church history department of the seminary, can be expected to expand on the defense of Adventism he drafted: *Seventh-day Adventists Believe: An Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines* (General Conference, 1988). Some of the faculty at Andrews University are also involved in producing *Adventists Affirm*, a journal publishing articles that view with alarm certain tendencies within the church, particularly the growing openness to the ordination of women.

In addition to the circle of institutions and associations Hasel fostered, there is a wider circle of defenders of what they regard as traditional Adventist faith. The basic theology of these concentric theological circles is compatible. They differ from one another, in that the independent journals, such as *Watchman*, *What of the Night?*, published by the Adventist Layman's Foundation, and the widely circulated *Our Firm Foundation*, are willing to publicly and vigorously criticize church leadership.

Ronald Numbers: Transformer of Adventist History



Adventist history came of age during the past 25 years—a period when studies of Adventism by professional historians altered the church's understanding of itself. Ronald Numbers did more than anyone to bring Adventist history to the attention of writers of American history, and no

historian has affected Adventism more deeply than Ronald Numbers. The candor and thoroughness of his early writings on Ellen White made it possible for subsequent Adventist historians to write with greater freedom about perplexing and sometimes disturbing aspects of the denomination's history.

The son of an Adventist minister and grandson of a General Conference president (W. H. Branson), Numbers attended Adventist schools through college. Receiving his Ph.D. in the history of science from the University of California at Berkeley, Numbers taught at both Andrews and Loma Linda universities before joining the University of Wisconsin faculty, where he is a professor of the history of science and chair of

the department of the history of medicine. He is the editor and author of 14 books, and served as the editor of the *ISIS*, the major journal in the history of science.

Although he is not now a practicing Seventh-day Adventist, to a significant extent Numbers has established his distinguished career by writing about Adventists. He coedited *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the 19th Century* (paperback, University of Tennessee Press, 1993), and recently wrote the critically acclaimed volume *The Creationists* (Knopf, 1993), a considerable portion of which traces the impact of the Seventh-day Adventist George McCready Price on American creationism.

In this work Numbers also examines the development of the Geoscience Research Institute, including **Richard Ritland's** effort in the 1960s to develop an understanding of Biblical creation that would accommodate the scientific evidence. As Numbers recounts, this departure from traditional stands did not receive support from the church leadership. In the 1970s and 1980s, denominational administrators brought scientists such as **Harold G. Coffin, Robert H. Brown, and Ariel A. Roth**—all defenders of a short chronology and a seven-day Creation week—to the forefront of the Geoscience Research Institute.

The debate Numbers and others chronicle (see Edward Lugenbeal's essay in *Spectrum*, Vol. 15, No. 2) has raged over the past 25 years. The Geoscience Research Institute continues to look for new scientific facts and interpretive models to defend an unchanging understanding of the first chapter of Genesis. Just as vigorously, many scientists in Adventist colleges and universities believe that expanding our theological understanding of Genesis is imperative. Although many lay members avoid the technical discussions of creation and evolution altogether, those who participate continue one of the most deeply felt debates in Adventism.

However, it is one of his early books that led the Seventh-day Adventists to look at Ellen White in new ways. *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* (1976; second, expanded edition, University of Tennessee Press, 1993) minutely established that in at least the important area of health, Ellen White's visions coincided with the ideas of a particular school of reformers to which she had already been exposed. It is a mark of its influence that although the book caused a fierce reaction when it first appeared in the 1970s (the debate within Adventism was written up in *Time* magazine), *Prophetess of Health* now strikes many Adventist readers as a rather moderate revision of traditional views of Ellen White. This is partly

because, as Jonathan Butler says in his brilliant and moving introduction to the book's second edition, "Adventism could lose its innocence only once."

It is also because other Adventist historians followed Numbers with additional, far-reaching reassessments. **Donald McAdams**, while still a professor at Andrews University, showed that Ellen White's chapter on John Huss in *The Great Controversy* followed contemporary historians in not only ideas and sequence of description, but also in copying their words. Editors had even excised the only truly original material from the published chapter. **Jonathan Butler**, while a professor at Loma Linda University, wrote several essays on Ellen White. In perhaps the most influential of those pieces, Butler said that Ellen White's ideas so deeply reflected her culture that the end of the world that Ellen White accurately predicted was the end of her own Victorian world. Adventists now lived in a significantly different world. (See excerpt elsewhere in this issue.)

Ronald Graybill, while a member of the White Estate staff, wrote several essays defending Ellen White, that conceded that she did borrow from other sources. Just before leaving the White Estate to join La Sierra University, where he now chairs the history department, Graybill also wrote a successful doctoral dissertation at Johns Hopkins University. It analyzed Ellen White's early visions as an expression of the ecstatic impulses of early Adventism. It was left to **Walter Rea**, a pastor and not a trained historian, to inform a popular Adventist audience, through his book *The White Lie*, of extensive borrowing by Ellen White from contemporary writers for her books *Prophets and Kings* and *The Desire of Ages*.

Following these highly charged explorations of Ellen White and her writings—what Butler calls the most holy place of Adventist historiography—the increasing attention by other Adventist historians to Adventist history and various interpretations of its identity, has elicited little controversy. The work of **Richard Schwarz** (*Lightbearers to the Remnant*, Pacific Press, 1979) and **Gary Land** (*Adventism in America*, Eerdmans, 1986), or even the provocative historical and sociological analyses of Adventism by **Malcolm Bull** and **Keith Lockhart** (*Seeking a Sanctuary*, Harper, 1989) have caused no firestorms.

Although he sometimes pushes the church to adopt new understandings of itself, **George Knight**, a professor of church history at Andrews University, is one of the denomination's more prolific and widely accepted authors. But as Benjamin McArthur, chair of the history department at Southern College

of Seventh-day Adventists, recently said in an appreciative overview of Knight's work before the Adventist Society of Religious Studies, "without a Ron Numbers, there would not be a George Knight."

Merikay Silver & Lorna Tobler: Pioneers of Women's Rights



In 1973, two decades of change for Adventist women opened with a bang. In January, Merikay Silver filed the suit heard round the Adventist world. She charged the Pacific Press with violating U.S. law by paying women less for doing the same work as men. In September, the 23 members (more than half women) of the General Conference-appointed Council on the Role of Women in the Church met at Camp Mohaven, Ohio. Within three days they had agreed to recommend that women should be ordained as local church elders, should be issued ministerial licenses, and should be considered for



ordination as gospel ministers.

Also in September 1973, **Dr. Josephine Benton**, joined the Sligo church staff as the first female associate pastor of an American Adventist congregation. Later, in 1980, she became the first American in recent history to serve as the senior pastor of an Adventist congregation—the Rockville church in Maryland. In 1990, she produced *Called by God: Stories of Seventh-day Adventist Women Ministers* (Blackberry Hill).

During the past quarter-century, the role of women in the church has remained one of the most charged issues confronting Adventism. The early momentum has slowed. Equal pay for women employees of the church has been settled. Ordination of women pastors has not.

Merikay Silver (now Merikay McLeod) and Lorna Tobler's direct and public challenge to the church's salary discrimination against women permanently

changed more than church policy. They not only made it possible for every female Adventist employee in America to receive equal pay for equal work. Silver and Tobler helped transform the consciousness of both men and women in the church. In 1973, the majority of women at the Pacific Press opposed their action. Now, Adventist woman employees in the United States expect to be treated fairly.

When months of conversations did not bring results, Merikay Silver, a young editorial employee, brought suit the last day of January 1973 against the Pacific Press, because, although she was a married woman, the press did not provide her the "same compensation and benefits as a married man doing the same work." That summer the Department of Labor also sued, and in September 1974 the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) filed a third suit on behalf of Silver and Tobler, an administrative secretary at the press. Eventually, the EEOC would file two more suits. In 1975 the Pacific Press fired both women.

After five years, in 1978, Silver agreed to an out-of-court cash settlement. It is not generally remembered that Tobler was the person who continued to work with the EEOC for a decade, through several levels of federal courts. In 1982 the EEOC won a suit that awarded Tobler \$75,000. The next year, when the General Conference decided not to appeal *EEOC (Tobler) v. PPPA* to the U.S. Supreme Court, Tobler had the satisfaction of having her persistence succeed (along with the EEOC) in winning a class action judgment of \$600,000 on behalf of 140 women underpaid by the Pacific Press. Even more rewarding was the fact that during the decade of litigation, the church changed its salary policies. First, single men were paid the same as married men, then married female employees received the same health and maternity benefits previously given to wives of male employees. Finally, single women received the same salaries and benefits as male employees.

Both Silver and Tobler retain memberships in Seventh-day Adventist churches. Silver, who has completed an M.A. in religious studies, is a communications consultant for the California State University system. She has vividly described her experience in the widely read book *Betrayal* (Mars Hill, 1985). Lorna Tobler and her husband, Gus, live south of San Francisco, where Tobler works as a legal assistant in a San Jose law firm and holds several offices in the Mountain View Seventh-day Adventist church, including associate head deacon and chair of the personal ministries committee.

Adventist women have not filled during the past 25 years the highly visible position they occupied in the early years of the denomination—as licensed ministers, conference presidents (acting), as well as treasurers, secretaries, and heads of General Conference departments. Still, during the past 25 years women around the globe did increasingly serve as successful evangelists and pastors. Just a few examples include Finland's **Margit Suring** (the first woman to receive a Th.D. from Andrews University), and **Laura E. Gonzales**, whose evangelistic campaigns in the Caribbean resulted in well over 1,200 converts. Several women were successful evangelists in East Africa. Some of these women, like **Margaret Prange** in Germany, received the same ministerial license issued to any other pastor. However, because no Adventist women evangelists and pastors received ordination, they were not officially permitted to officiate at weddings or perform baptisms.

In 1984, the move toward full ordination of women, begun in 1973, resumed. Three women pastors, with the acquiescence of their employer, the Potomac Conference, began baptizing in the shadow of the General Conference headquarters. **Marsha Frost** (now Marsha Tuttle Collins) performed the first baptism on February 24, in the Fairfax, Virginia, congregation she was pastoring, followed two weeks later by **Jan Daffern** in the 3,000-member Sligo Church, and on June 2, by **Frances Wiegand** in the Beltsville, Maryland church. The General Conference prevailed on the Potomac Conference to stop the baptizing. Instead, the 1984 Annual Council reaffirmed the 1975 action allowing ordination of women as local elders. Now, many churches throughout North America have ordained women as local elders.

The 1990 General Conference Session rejected ordination of women as pastors, but approved what happened six years before in the Potomac Conference. That is, in areas of the world that wished to, women pastors could receive licenses that permitted them to perform baptisms. Now, women pastors in different parts of North America do baptize. On the recommendation of the 1994 Annual Council, the 1995 General Conference Session will discuss whether divisions of the world church will be able to give women the same ordination bestowed on men.

Meanwhile, during the past 25 years, educational and health institutions have provided women with the best opportunities to gradually advance into administrative positions—department chairs, deans, vice-presidents, and very occasionally president. **B. Lyn Behrens** is president of Loma Linda University, the church's largest and best-known educational institution. A pediatric physician, originally from

Australia, Behrens was picked by a search committee to become dean of the medical school in 1988. In 1990, the board of Loma Linda University, chaired by Neal Wilson, invited Behrens to become the first woman president of an Adventist college or university and the first woman to head a health-sciences university in the United States.

Behrens has reorganized the school of health and restored the university's finances. While she has been criticized for dismissal of three medical school faculty, she has guided both the medical school and the university through several rounds of accreditation. Indeed, she has become a member of teams reviewing the accreditation of nationally recognized medical schools and universities, and has been appointed by the Association of American Medical Colleges to its national advisory panel on the mission and organization of medical schools. At the invitation of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (which accredits all West Coast colleges and universities, including Loma Linda University), Behrens is serving a three-year term on the Senior Commission, the Western Association's highest governing body.

Neal C. Wilson: Nurturer of Institutional Adventism



The dominant church leader over the past 25 years has been Neal C. Wilson. Even before becoming president of the General Conference (1979-1990), he had established himself as the most prominent of the church's vice-presidents (for the North American Division, 1966-1979). During his presidency, evangelism programs, such as "1000 Days of Reaping" and "Harvest '90," were promoted, and the membership of the international church dramatically accelerated, particularly in Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America. He enjoyed visiting church members and government officials throughout the world, surprising both with his knowledge of their countries.

More than as a leader with a controlling theological outlook, or with a single grand strategy for reshaping the international church (except for growth in membership), Wilson will probably be

best remembered as the quintessential “hands-on” administrator. The son of a longtime vice-president of the General Conference, Wilson seemed to be irresistibly drawn to Adventist institutions, concrete legacies of previous leaders’ visions. He appreciated and personally nurtured the church’s institutions, retaining the chairmanship of the board of Loma Linda University throughout his presidency, staying closely attentive to Andrews University, and involving himself in reorganizing the Adventist Health Systems in North America. He favored gradual innovation, by establishing new institutions—Kettering Hospital, the Adventist Media Center and Adventist World Radio are examples. (See the article elsewhere in this issue about his involvement in the emergence of the Association of Adventist Forums and *Spectrum*.) As president, Wilson sometimes seemed to regard Adventism as one big institution, of which he was both the chief executive and operating officer.

He was the despair of idealists, liberal or conservative: “Why did he insist on hounding Desmond Ford out of church employment?” (liberal). “Why doesn’t he see to it that Ford is disfellowshipped?” (conservative). Or, “Why didn’t he approve of the ordination of women?” (liberal). “Why does he condone women being able to conduct marriages and baptisms?” (conservative).

Wilson’s unpredictability was noticeable because he followed a president who made consistent adherence to conservative theology the hallmark of his administration. **R. H. Pierson** (1966-1979) believed purifying the church was a necessary precondition for the Second Coming. A prolific writer of pastoral and devotional literature before and during his presidency, Pierson seemed never to overcome his fear that the academic community within Adventism—particularly its theologians with graduate degrees from non-Adventist universities—were a real or potential threat to the church. He expanded the role of the General Conference Biblical Research Institute, appointing individuals with clearly conservative views, and expecting the institute to monitor theological orthodoxy throughout the denomination.

The more pragmatic Wilson had one ideal to which he was unequivocally committed: racial justice. Perhaps his experience as a missionary’s child in South Africa and India and his own years as a missionary in Egypt forged his undeviating commitment to see non-whites welcomed into all levels of church leadership. Even when African-American Adventists, during the 1970s, themselves wanted to

add black unions to black conferences, they found their way blocked by a Neal Wilson unwilling to shift from his dedication to greater rather than less integration.

More than in writing articles or books, Wilson expressed his passion for racial and ethnic integration through administrative policy and action. Perhaps most obviously, Wilson cleared the path for black administrators to become leaders of the whole church. He invited **Charles Bradford** to be the secretary of the General Conference for North America. Quickly, delegates to conferences and members in the pew learned that Bradford was one of the denomination’s best-read and most powerful speakers. When Wilson became General Conference president, Charles Bradford was the obvious choice to become vice-president of the General Conference and president of the North American Division. Had his health permitted, he might well have become in 1990 the first person of color to become president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Wilson was supportive of the denomination’s universities, including its administrators. At the beginning of the last quarter-century, Andrews University was led into maturity by a near-contemporary of Neal Wilson’s, **Richard Hammill**. Hammill served longer (1963-1976) as president of Andrews University than had anyone before him, going back to the founding of the school as Battle Creek College. During his 13 years of leadership, Andrews University became the international center for theological education within Adventism, offering the M.Div. degree required of all beginning ministers in North America, and a Ph.D. in religion. The school was also approved to offer a doctorate in education. Accreditation was encouraged by construction of not only a Seminary building, but also a new university library. Hammill was also instrumental in establishing the Geoscience Research Institute. He completed his career by serving four years as a general vice-president of the General Conference.

Wilson’s lack of consistent ideological constraints and intense involvement in the denomination’s institutions were the keys to one of the church’s most daring and accomplished administrator’s returning to Loma Linda University for a second decade of leadership. **David Hinshaw**, while still in his 30s, had become dean of the College of Medical Evangelists in 1962 and promptly consolidated the church’s medical school on the Loma Linda campus. During the next 11 years Hinshaw was instrumental in the construction of two large hospitals—the present Loma Linda University Medical Center and

the nearby Jerry L. Pettis Veteran's Administration Hospital. Because of not supervising a key subordinate closely enough, Hinshaw had to leave the deanship and eventually became dean of the Oral Roberts University Medical School. Eleven years after presiding over his departure, Wilson, still chairman of Loma Linda's board, talked for hours with Hinshaw about his Christian and Adventist experience. Wilson then welcomed Hinshaw back as vice-president of medical affairs for the university and soon after as president of the Loma Linda University Medical Center and Adventist Health Systems/Loma Linda.

Under Hinshaw, the various institutions at Loma Linda now have more than 1,500 beds and annual operating revenues of approximately \$500 million. He has insisted that Loma Linda remain a part of mainstream medicine. It is the part of Adventism that has been most widely recognized as achieving

standards of excellence—for instance, in infant heart transplants and nuclear radiation therapy. Positioning the medical center in a rapidly-changing healthcare environment, Hinshaw has recently formed an alliance with Adventist Health Systems/West and three non-Adventist health systems to form what may be the second largest health system in the nation's most populous state.

When Wilson successfully urged Loma Linda's board to reinstall Hinshaw, he emphasized what even Hinshaw detractors acknowledge: Hinshaw has an extraordinary ability to envision a long-range future, which he then unswervingly wills into existence. Rather than emulating one of his predecessors, A. G. Daniells, who tried to destroy the most prominent physician in the church of his day, Wilson had the confidence to enable Hinshaw to be the most powerful medical leader in Adventism since John Harvey Kellogg.

Five Distinguished Guests Share Their Choices

Charles Bradford

Charles Bradford graduated from Oakwood College, served as a pastor in the central states and in New York City, president of the Lake Region Conference, associate secretary of the General Conference for North America, and for 11 years (1979-1990) president of the North American Division. He received a D.D. from Andrews University, and has written, among other works, Preaching to the Times and The God Between. In his retirement in Florida, Bradford is busy writing and preaching around the country to Adventists and non-Adventists. This spring, he will be a featured speaker in a lecture series at Morehouse College in Atlanta, one of the preeminent black institutions of higher learning in the United States.

George Brown: Under his leadership, the Inter-American Division became the largest division in the world, sending personnel to many other areas of the world field. The laymen's movement within the division, accelerated under his leadership, became the model for the entire church. The 1990 General Conference Session nominating committee selected Brown's name for presentation to the session as world president, the first person of color to be so honored.

Edward Earl Cleveland: Cleveland kept the tradition of public evangelism alive throughout Advent-

ism, even after the passing of the great platform evangelists of the 1940s and 1950s. A single campaign would result in as many as 1,000 baptisms. Since leaving the General Conference Ministerial Association for the classroom at Oakwood College, Cleveland has convened an annual convocation of regional conference pastors, evangelists, and administrators that regularly attracts more than 500 ministers from several divisions.

Desmond Ford: Ford's teaching, preaching, and writing caused the church to look seriously at the foundation and underpinnings of its doctrinal/theological formulations. Although Ford's differences with church leadership are regrettable, his impact on the Adventist movement is undeniable. By undergoing the process of sharpening its articulation of the "old landmarks," the Adventist Church has been strengthened.

Richard Hammill: He guided the fledgling Andrews University in its development and growth, from a collection of graduate courses to true university status, and its present acknowledged position as the church's premier educational institution.

Neal C. Wilson: During Wilson's tenure as General Conference president, the church experienced sea changes in church organization and structure. There were also major doctrinal/theological issues that had

to be faced. Wilson's strong stand on racial equality, in a time of tremendous social upheaval, served to move the church toward genuine fellowship and inclusion.

George T. Harding, IV

George T. Harding, IV is the chairman of the board of Harding Hospital in Worthington, Ohio, and a clinical professor of psychiatry at Ohio State University. An alumnus of Loma Linda University, he is president of the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems and a member of several governing boards, including the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland; the Kettering Medical Center; and Worthington Foods. His father served as dean of the school of medicine at Loma Linda University, his grandfather founded what is now Washington Adventist Hospital, and his great-uncle, Warren G. Harding, was the 29th president of the United States.

Roy Branson: Roy Branson's foresight and continued dedication to editing and publishing *Spectrum* has provided a forum for the discussion of critical issues within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and beyond. The publication has also been the stimuli for other publications with different points of view. That has further fostered discussion. Perhaps most importantly, the publication of *Spectrum* has been an encouragement to young, intellectually curious Adventists to stay in the Adventist Church and contribute to its growth. Other editors/writers such as Bill Johnsson have also impacted the Adventist Church, but not to the degree that *Spectrum* has.

Milton Murray and Tom and Violet Zapara: The opportunity and responsibility to seek out philanthropy for the support of educational and medical institutions has changed the way such institutions are funded. Milton Murray was the conceptualizer. The Zaparas (and others) believed in the concept and gave money to challenge alumni, fellow believers, and community leaders to contribute to Adventist educational institutions and make them viable.

Ronald Numbers: Ronald Numbers' book, *Prophets of Health*, has caused Seventh-day Adventists to rethink Ellen G. White and stimulated additional articles and books to give a more realistic understanding of this great leader in God's work. Ronald Numbers paid a huge price to be willing to publish;

the Seventh-day Adventist Church owes him a great debt of gratitude.

Merikay Silver: Her challenge of Adventist Church policy toward women employees led both to new opportunities for women and to new recognition by the Adventist Church of its legal requirements toward women.

Neal Wilson: As an administrator and church leader he has had a profound effect on the Adventist Church; the emphasis on Russia during the past six years being only the most recent. Charles Bradford should also be considered. It is too early to know what Robert Folkenberg's impact will be.

Ifeoma I. Kwesi

Ifeoma I. Kwesi, the pastor of the 200-member Oak Park Seventh-day Adventist Church in San Diego, California, attended Oakwood College, and received her B.A. in history and psychology from the University of South Alabama. After working for several years in social service institutions, she became associate pastor of the All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and earned her M.Div. degree from the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University.

Charles E. Bradford: Elder Bradford's personal and professional commitment to gender and racial inclusiveness during his 40-plus years of ministry as pastor/eveangelist, departmental director, conference president, and division president, qualify him to challenge the Seventh-day Adventist Church, "To unleash the awesome power of the laity to finish the work of God."

Frank W. Hale, Jr.: In the words of Calvin Rock, vice-president of the General Conference, "Frank W. Hale, Jr. has impacted the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church more directly than any other black non-clergy of this era. Through the books and articles that he had authored and edited; through the harnessing of lay energies for social justice; through his preaching and teaching classrooms and pulpits all over the land; through six wonderful years of growth and academic excellence at the helm of Oakwood College; through 17 years as departmental chair, graduate school dean and vice-provost of Ohio State University, assisting thousands of young black aspirants to higher education; through courageous leadership in the

nation's civil-rights struggles; and through the sheer force of one of the truly charismatic personalities of our time, Frank Hale has bravely 'advanced the yardsticks of our political and education processes.'"

Erylene Piper Mandy: Cultural anthropologist, Dr. Mandy challenges the Seventh-day Adventist Church "to establish parity and equity among its diverse peoples," which mirrors her philosophy and practice as a much-sought-after speaker, preacher, professor, negotiator, and counselor, who admonishes: "When the Lord gives you gifts, you are responsible for using them in the empowerment of your people."

Morris L. Venden: "Justification by faith (God's work for us) and the righteousness of Christ through faith (which includes God's healing work in us) are themes to be presented to a perishing world." During his ministry of more than 40 years, Elder Venden has authored more than 30 books that focus on Christ rather than a checklist of rules, counseled us to depend upon God instead of ourselves, and urged us to establish a daily personal relationship with Jesus. His assertion that it's *Hard to Be Lost* provides theological relief from our legalistic tendencies and traditions.

Kit Watts: "I feel called in the sense that I want to help God's voice, that His concerns, His assurance can be better heard in the world." As the first woman to serve on the pastoral staff of Sligo SDA Church, co-founder of Mary's Place: Worship and the Word Through Women's Eyes, coordinator of Association of Adventist Women's Projects for Women in Ministry, associate editor of the *Adventist Review*, and the only woman to have been a member of all the Seventh-day Adventist commissions set up to study the women's ordination issue in 1973, 1985, 1988, and 1989, Kit Watts ably amplifies the voice, concerns, and assurance of God. In her unique way she consistently raises the consciousness of the Seventh-day Adventist Church about the variety of contemporary issues that impact us collectively and individually.

Aulikki Nahkola

Aulikki Nahkola is a member of the religion department at Newbold College in England. Born in Finland, Nahkola received her B.A. from Newbold College, her M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University, and her M.Th. from King's College, University of London. She is presently completing her D.Phil. in Old Testament at Oxford University.

Charles Bradford: He provided unrivaled leadership, most notably as the church has confronted the difficult issues of race and gender equality.

Desmond Ford: Painful and divisive as it seemed at the time, the controversy sparked by Ford has, in the long run, yielded a more open attitude to discussing doctrinal issues, and forced a very beneficial re-thinking.

Siegfried H. Horn: By establishing the credibility of his biblical scholarship outside the Adventist Church, Horn helped Adventist biblical scholarship to start emerging from isolation and seeking dialogue with the wider academic world.

Leona Running: The influence of Leona Running's work and presence at the Seventh-day Adventist theological headquarters, particularly at the time when women were even further from the promised land of equality in ministry than today, is impossible to overestimate.

Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler: By refusing to take *corbin* (Mark 7:11) as an answer, when women's salaries were concerned, Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler, at enormous personal sacrifice, started the church on the road towards justice to women in the workplace.

Werner Vyhmeister

Werner Vyhmeister, dean of the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University, was born in a German-British family in Chile. He received his M.Div. from Andrews University and his Ph.D. in history at the University of Chile. After a few years of pastoring, he has been a religion teacher and administrator for 35 years: four years at Chile Adventist University (teacher and vice-president); nine years at River Plate Adventist University in Argentina (teacher and vice president for academic administration); four years at South American Division in Uruguay (director of education); nine years at the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University (professor of world mission and associate dean); six years at the SDA Theological Seminary, Far East, in the Philippines (president); and four years at the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University (dean). He has written articles on a variety of topics in Adventist publications printed in English, Portuguese and Spanish.

While individualism is generally considered meritorious in the First World, great emphasis on the commu-

nity, on teamwork, is given in the Third World. The value of Third World leaders is seen generally in the context of the community that they serve.

I have wondered if the sheer growth of the church, worldwide, is not making it more difficult to find persons with obvious worldwide influence. Therefore, the names that follow are to be seen as representative of some of the most influential roles within Adventism, under God, in the past 25 years.

Robert Folkenberg: President, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, guiding spirit of SDA Global Mission. The efforts, during the past 25 years, of more than one General Conference president towards making church organization more responsive to mission have affected the church worldwide. The most recent developments in the area of Global Mission have generated a new spirit of dedication to the central task of the world church that is bound to make a strong and growing impact on the church and the world for years to come.

Jairyong Lee: Dean, Asia Adventist Theological Seminary, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Asia-Pacific Division, and “apostle” of the “1,000 Missionary Movement” that has already prepared and sent hundreds of young missionaries to several countries. The Adventist youth volunteer missionary movement, begun a few decades ago with student missionaries, has intensified under Global Mission with volunteers in all continents going to serve, teach the gospel, and plant churches both in their own countries and abroad.

Sergio Moctezuma: Director of church ministries in the South American and Inter-American Divisions for more than 20 years. Pastor Moctezuma and his followers have inspired and guided the church in systematically recognizing and harnessing the power of the laity in fulfilling the gospel commission. The growth of the church from about 2 million to more than 8 million in these past 25 years is largely due to the dedication of lay leaders of thousands of congregations around the world who have persistently shared their faith.

Dwight Nelson: Senior pastor, during the last decade, of Pioneer Memorial Church, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, and gifted preacher and evangelist. The church pastor has been the most influential person in the past 25 years in shaping the beliefs, attitudes, lifestyles, and sense of mission of church members. Of all church leaders, the church pastor is the closest to the millions of church members, every week, worldwide. Wherever the church is fulfilling its central mission, there is normally a pastor who has inspired and guided that church.

Humberto Rasi: Director of education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, untiringly advocated of integration of faith and learning in the context of academic excellence at a time when many Adventist institutions of higher education have received government recognition—a considerable number of them as universities—virtually in all continents. The influence of these institutions as centers for the preparation of leaders needed by a rapidly growing church has significantly expanded, worldwide, in the past 25 years.



Remember, You Heard It Here First

Spectrum led in the reestablishment of an early Adventist tradition of candid reporting and lively analysis.

TWO AUTHORS AND TWO STORIES DOMINATED *Spectrum's* first years of reporting. Tom Dybdahl and Bonnie Dwyer were the reporters. The Pacific Press discrimination case and the Davenport financial scandal were the stories. These were the first of many topics for which *Spectrum* was the denomination's most reliable (and sometimes only) source of information.

After Tom Dybdahl received an M.Div. from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, he became the first Adventist to receive an M.A. from the top-ranked Columbia School of Journalism. After running an inner-city program and a U.S. Congressman's office as an administrative assistant, Dybdahl joined Rodale Press, where he is an editor and executive.

Dybdahl's first carefully researched examination for *Spectrum*—just how the General Conference invested millions of dollars in the stock market—helped establish the journal's reputation for accuracy and fairness. However, it was his extended report, "Merikay and the Pacific Press: Money, Courts, and Church Authority," (Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 1975)

which permanently identified *Spectrum* with investigative reporting. Based on meticulous study of the public record and extended interviews, Dybdahl gave Adventists detailed information they could find nowhere else. Dybdahl also introduced the denomination to the full implications of a burgeoning scandal in his long report, "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco" (Vol. 12, No. 1, September 1981).

Installed the following year as *Spectrum's* first news editor, Bonnie Dwyer reported on so many topics she became the most frequently published author in *Spectrum's* 25-year history. Dwyer kept an eye on the Pacific Press case, and significantly expanded *Spectrum's* coverage of the scandal that wouldn't go away. Among her many articles was "Disciplining the Davenport Offenders" (Vol. 13, No. 4, June 1983). A writer and editor at La Sierra University, and the recipient of a journalism degree from the California State University at Fullerton, Dwyer remained the news editor of *Spectrum* for six years. Her reports included the financial condition of the Adventist Media Center, retaining of

Worthington Foods in Adventist hands, inter-scholastic sports on Adventist campuses, and problems in the denomination's ministry to homosexuals. Dwyer now works as a development consultant in Northern California, and continues to write for *Spectrum*.

Spectrum helped to reestablish a journalistic tradition established by Adventism's pioneer editors, James White and Uriah Smith: reporting not only the official actions of denominational councils, but the debates that lead to the final votes. Somehow, this practice faded from official church publications. In the January 1979 *Spectrum*, Donald McAdams, then president of Southwestern Adventist College and now head of an international consulting firm, named names, provided quotes, and analyzed just how church leaders arrived at key decisions in the 1978 Annual Council. Years later, the *Adventist Review* and *Ministry* followed suit and began providing detailed coverage of Annual Councils.

In 1980, on a Colorado campground, the most controversial theological consultation of the past quarter-century took place. The General Conference's Glacier View Sanctuary Review Committee brought together 115 church leaders and theologians from around the world to examine and debate the views of Desmond Ford. Shortly afterwards, Raymond Cottrell, who had recently retired as associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and the *SDA Bible Commentary*, published a 25-page report in *Spectrum*. Cottrell clearly articulated the tangled theological issues, precisely quoted participants in not only the full sessions but also some of the smaller breakout groups, and

carefully recorded the committee's conclusions. It quickly became the definitive account by which to judge reports in official journals.

More recently, on the assumption that denominational leaders and committees are accountable not only to God, but also to church members, *Spectrum* expanded coverage of General Conference Sessions beyond floor debates to deliberations in key committees and caucuses. "The making of a General Conference President, 1990" was Ronald Graybill's blow-by-blow account of the forces

Spectrum gradually expanded the pages reporting on the church's actions. Accurate reporting and analysis became integral to Spectrum's mission of encouraging a sense of community and involvement in the Adventist church.

that converged in the nominating committee's selection of Robert Folkenberg. David VanDenburgh wrote a parallel story on how the North American Division caucus chose its division president (Vol. 20, No. 5, August 1990).

Just as wage discrimination dominated *Spectrum's* early reports regarding women, ordination of women has been the focus of more recent coverage—more than 30 pieces since 1984, by a variety of authors. They reported on developments within North American conferences, special commissions, Annual Councils, and General Conference Sessions.

Spectrum's reporting has included not only accounts of events, but analyses of organizations. The denomination's most complex institution, Loma Linda University, has been covered in two special sections and many other articles. Several pieces reported details of the separation of its campuses into two universities. Others provided information on disputes within the school of medicine, as well as accreditation accomplishments and recent moves to participate in reorganizing health

care in the nation's most populous state.

In 1985, Mike Scofield wondered if the Adventist Health Systems in North America could carry a billion-dollar debt (Vol. 16, No. 1, April 1985). Many reports over the past 25 years examined the dramatically changing shape of Adventist publishing in North America—everything from relocation of the denomination's three major printing plants to the shift by major unions from colporteurs to electronic methods of marketing, from doctrinal books to videotapes.

Spectrum also informed its readers of important, but little-noticed institutions. Bonnie Dwyer examined the role of the one Adventist publication that reaches the home of every church member in North America—the union paper. Joy Fuller described the work of Risk Management Services, the multimillion-dollar insurance institution at the General Conference headquarters. Harrison John provided financial and marketing data about Adventist food industries, and showed how in parts of the world the financial fortunes of Adventist food industries can propel or nearly destroy church activities.

The steady flow of reports on the international church—from Albania to the Caribbean to the former U.S.S.R.—have included facts and debates not reported elsewhere. Africa, one of the most rapidly growing parts of Adventism, received considerable attention. Readers heard the leading lay Adventist in Uganda, a physician, movingly explain why he raised money for the armed forces that overthrew genocidal dictators, and after the revolution felt an obligation to accept the prime ministership of his country. *Spectrum*

subscribers read fierce debates over whether the church in Africa should distribute condoms as part of the continent's battle against AIDS. Readers also read reports that Rwandan Seventh-day Adventist church members may well have killed hundreds, if not thousands of their neighbors (quite possibly including fellow church members). Other Rwandan members heroically risked their lives to protect others.

Reporting on the Caribbean, *Spectrum* published a profile of the leader of the governing party in Barbados who is also the country's most successful Adventist lay evangelist. In Europe, *Spectrum* found courageous Adventist responses to Marxist-Leninist dictatorships that went largely unreported in other Adventist journals. The contribution of Sabbathkeeping True and Free Adventists to the human-rights struggle under Communist dictators from Stalin to Brezhnev was even disowned by Adventist denominational leaders. *Spectrum* was able to also spotlight the courageous actions of certain Adventist youth in the largely peaceful overthrow of Communism in Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

Spectrum began as a means for Adventists to share with one another their study and creative ideas, and gradually expanded its role to include reporting on the church's actions. After all, church members must receive information if they are to participate in and take responsibility for the life of the church. Accurate reporting and analysis therefore became integral to *Spectrum's* mission of encouraging a sense of community and involvement in the Adventist Church.



A More “Liberalized” Adventist Future

An argument that Adventism will be more “liberalized”—open, inclusive, culturally aware—and “pluralistic” than it is at present.

by Fritz Guy

The Adventist future¹ will be more “liberalized”² (that is, more open, inclusive, and culturally aware) and more “pluralistic” (that is, more self-consciously diverse) than is the Adventist present.

IT MAY WELL SEEM TO SOME—EITHER MORE “conservative” or more “liberal” than I—that this statement is more normative than descriptive, and that my prediction is really a disguised prescription. Usually I am more comfortable prescribing rather than predicting. But my intention here is to describe the

Called by a younger colleague “the man everyone agreed was the leading Adventist systematic theologian of his generation,” Fritz Guy is a professor of theology at La Sierra University. He received a B.D. from the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University (where he later was associate dean), and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Guy was the first president of La Sierra University (1990-1993). He was also the first associate editor of Spectrum. (Guy’s name, and that of Spectrum’s first editor, Molleurus Couperus, are the only ones to have appeared on the masthead of every issue.) The following essay is adapted from his lecture in the 1993-1994 lecture series, “Great Disappointment, Greater Hope,” now being edited by Paul Landa into a forthcoming book from La Sierra University Press.

Adventist future as I think it will actually turn out to be. The picture I paint is what I perceive though my own eyes. These eyes are far from perfect, but they are the only eyes I have, and I am simply going to report what I see. I will endeavor to explain my picture of the Adventist future by means of four straightforward theses. The first is the most important and will receive the most attention.

Thesis 1: The Adventist future will be shaped in part by a number of “liberalizing” theological factors in the Adventist past and present.

In the spectrum of contemporary Christianity, Adventism is obviously on the conservative side. Most of us are comfortable here, with a theology and life-style that remain largely traditional, and with socio-political views that tend toward the right rather than the left.³ Nevertheless, in the Adventist heritage are some surprisingly non-conservative (even anti-conservative) liberalizing ingredients that deserve attention. Some of these ingredients are primarily theological; some are primarily his-

torical. All are part of the present reality of Adventism, and all will help to shape its future.

- The first—the earliest and most fundamental—of the theological ingredients is a profound commitment to Scripture. This commitment is reflected in our official affirmation of the Bible as the infallible revelation of [God's] will—that is, the standard of character and the test of experience, as well as the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history.⁴ The remarkable fact is that reading the Bible—really *reading* it—thoughtfully and intelligently, *document by document* (the way it was written and was originally intended to be read), letting each document speak in its own distinctive voice⁵—leads a person from biblical literalism⁶ to biblical literacy.

Curiously, many people who have the most to say about the authority of the Bible seem not to have actually *read* very much of it. For the more we truly read it (instead of merely making claims about it and quoting it to prove that our own theology is correct⁷) the more evident it becomes that biblical literalism is mistaken.⁸ The biblical documents were obviously written by a variety of persons with different vocations, temperaments, social environments, and cultural contexts. And they were written for a multiplicity of purposes—to recount an ancient story, to worship and to instruct, to comfort and inspire, to evangelize.

And as we read (and listen),⁹ it becomes increasingly clear that it is not a sentence or paragraph here or there but the Bible *as a whole* that is “the infallible revelation of [God's] will.”¹⁰ The various authors and documents, with their different purposes and perspectives, are like spotlights of colors shining on a magnificent sculpture: it is in the totality of illumination that we see most clearly what we are looking at. To turn on a single spotlight may highlight certain features, but for the best comprehension of the sculpture, we need all the light we can get. A preoccupation with

“proof texts” and “problem texts”—emphasizing the former and explaining (or explaining away) the latter—is the result of a misunderstanding of the nature and function of the biblical revelation.¹¹

Perhaps the most surprising of all the “liberalizing” ingredients in Adventism is the gospel. The gospel leads to genuine spiritual liberation as we get clear about the relation of God's love and our behavior.

The truth that God is love is, of course, is the heart and center of the gospel, the “good news” of Christianity; and to be “Adventist” is simply to have a particular eschatological perspective on this truth. It is often (and appropriately) noted that in Ellen White's Conflict of the Ages series of books, the first three words and the last three words are the simple statement that “God is love”; the whole story of salvation is surrounded by this affirmation of the real nature of God.¹²

And precisely because God *is* love, life now and in the future comes to each of us as a *gift*, not as a reward for being “good enough” or doing “well enough” or thinking “correctly enough.” A gift is not something we earn or deserve, and the person who gives it would be insulted if we tried to pay for it. When we receive a gift, the only proper response is to accept it with appreciation and thanks.

But (and this is the great paradox of the gospel) this message that God really is *love* is difficult for us to believe and easy to forget. We Adventists have been talking about “Christ our righteousness” at least since 1888,¹³ but too many of us are still “closet legalists,”¹⁴ and the rest of us are recovering legalists. Somewhere deep inside the Adventist psyche is a suspicion that we will miss salvation if we aren't good *enough*.¹⁵ Even if we know that everlasting life is a gift, we think we have to show by our good behavior that we appreciate it (and thus in some sense retroactively deserve it); and we suspect that if we don't, God

will take it back.

We say that human beings are saved by God's grace; but we also say that grace enables us to overcome sin. This is of course true: "God can do more about sin than forgive it." But we often add (by implication if not explicitly) that we had better be overcoming sin, because if we aren't, we are not actually saved and our ultimate destiny is in doubt. Thus overcoming sin becomes a requirement instead of a gift, grace is turned into a demand, and the focus of our attention is on how well we are doing—how completely we are gaining the "victory over sin." This makes us spiritually anxious and insecure, because we are not at all sure that we are doing *well enough* (or, more correctly, we are quite sure that we are *not* doing well enough). We start wondering and worrying (and arguing) about *how well we have to do* in order to be acceptable to God.¹⁶ Even worse, we start worrying about how well *others* are doing.

But the truth is we are *already* accepted. The good news is that doing well enough or being good enough or thinking correctly enough is not the crucial issue. There are many reasons for right behavior, good theol-

Adapted from Henri Matisse's "La Perruche et la Sirène"



ogy, and healthy spirituality; but being accepted by God is not one of those reasons. To put Paul's words into current American language: "Just as one person doing it wrong got all humanity into trouble with God, so one person doing it right put all humanity right with God."¹⁷ God is "the Savior of all humanity."¹⁸ *This* is the good news.

If (and only if) we are clear about the gospel, we can talk fervently (and nonlegalistically) about the profound importance of living in the light of the *torah*, the teaching of God.¹⁹ We can be enthusiastic about the spiritual maturity and moral improvement that come through love, justice, and hope.²⁰ The fact that God's ideal for us is "higher than the highest human thought can reach"²¹ is now an invitation, not a demand.

• A third "liberalizing" ingredient in authentic Adventism is the idea of "present truth,"²² the spirit of theological discovery. This idea points to the fact that, as Jack Provonsa has written, "each generation must in some ways be a first generation all over again."²³ Each generation is called to build on the foundation of the past, but it is called to *build*, not just *preserve*.²⁴

As we look back to the experience of 1844, the most important lesson to be learned is the fact that after Tuesday, October 22, a day of great disappointment,²⁵ came Wednesday, October 23, a day of new beginning.²⁶

Cherishing the heritage that gave them their religious identity and vision, the progressive Adventists of 1844 were responsive to new facts, new circumstances, and new needs. This was Adventism with Present Truth, Adventism truly on the way to the future. The spirit of theological discovery enabled the progressive Adventists to admit that they had been wrong about some things²⁷ (but not everything) and to move past their disappointment toward the better understandings they knew would come. And theological discoveries did come: the

continuing ministry of Christ on behalf of humanity, the seventh day as holy time, the prophetic role of Ellen Harmon, conditional immortality (which eliminated the horrendous notion of a soul suffering in an ever-burning hell),²⁸ the religious significance of physical health, the tithe as the beginning of financial stewardship, the expansion of the Adventist horizon to a literally global mission.²⁹

This remarkable series of theological discoveries was complemented³⁰ by a willingness to abandon invalid or inadequate views—the “shut door,”³¹ for example, obedience to the law as the crucial issues in salvation,³² and opposition to the historic Christian notion of God as Trinity.³³

- A fourth, unexpectedly “liberalizing” element in Adventism is the Advent hope: the brightness of an ultimate future with God makes it impossible to be pessimistic about the future. The Advent hope means knowing that the future will bring the completion—not the frustration—of everything that is good in human existence. Whatever one is looking forward to—professional success and satisfaction; children or grandchildren; financial security—the personal presence of Jesus our Lord—will be even better. It will bring the continuation of the best aspects of humanness—the love of family and friends, the awareness that our lives matter to God, the experience of beauty, and the joy of discovery and understanding. It will also bring transformation into everlasting life in a world where neither human existence nor the natural environment is distorted by the consequences of sin.

So it doesn't make sense for an Adventist to be a pessimist. This doesn't mean that there are no Adventists pessimists; it means that the pessimism is a temperamental contradiction of one's belief. Because the final outcome of history is sure, one need not be overly anxious about what will happen in the meantime. The “time of trouble,” is a reminder that the future will not be all fun and games; but the primary

focus of attention is the ultimate future.

Even the announcement of eschatological judgment³⁴ is “good news,” because it means that God is more powerful than all the insanity, perversity, and brutality of our world. Everyone knows what it is to be misunderstood and misjudged—to go the second, third, or fourth mile and be criticized because one didn't run fast enough and carry a backpack. The news media continually bring reports of horrendous tribal warfare by terrorism and atrocity, resulting from hatreds that are deep and old. The fact of final judgment means that, however much misunderstanding and prejudice, domination, and exploitation there is in our world and even in one's own life—however bad things may seem, and however bad they may actually *be*—in the long run God's intention for human existence will be realized.

A fifth “progressive” and “liberalizing” theological element in authentic Adventism is its recognition of “spiritual gifts,” particularly the idea of a contemporary prophetic witness. It is precisely the vocation of a prophet to articulate insights that go beyond what is already known, believed, and experienced; a prophet is by definition a theological discovery.

This has been the actual Adventist experience with the ministry of Ellen White. Her encouragement (and sometimes insistence) helped to initiate major Adventist efforts in publishing, health care, world missions, and education. Theologically, she encouraged and exemplified openness to the possibility of new and more adequate understandings: “the truth,” she said, “is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light.”³⁵

- A sixth “liberalizing” theological factor is the Sabbath: the experience of time for being fully human relativises all hierarchical relationships and all efforts to produce, achieve, and accomplish. For Sabbath time is uniquely

graced time; it is time that comes, like human existence itself, as a gift. It is a time when no person is defined as master or servant, rich or poor, time when every person experiences the reality and dignity of being a daughter or son of God. It is time that unmask all human pretensions to power and authority over others, time that discloses humanness in authentic relationship to God, to God's world, and to God's whole human family. It is the liberating (and thus liberalizing) time of *Shabbat shalom*.

- A seventh "liberalizing" factor in Adventism is its moral seriousness, the Adventist understanding of human personhood as the integration of moral, physical, spiritual, and social dimensions of human existence leads to ethical concerns about racial and gender justice, stewardship of global resources and the natural environment, and the expansion of personal freedom.

These "liberalizing" theological factors pro-

vide the conceptual foundation for a number of historical factors that are much more obvious but would not be so powerful without their theological support.

Thesis 2: The Adventist future will also be shaped in part by a number of "liberalizing" sociohistorical factors in the Adventist past and present.

Clearly the most important historical factor in the "liberalizing" of Adventism is education, a logical outgrowth of the Adventist idea of "present truth." Knowledge and critical thinking about human experience and the natural world lead to questions about religious doctrine, about life-style, and about church policies and practices.

Ever since Socrates was condemned for corrupting the youth of Athens, education has been subversive of established ways of thinking and therefore of established authority.³⁶

On SDA Internet By the Year 2020 . . .

GENERAL CONFERENCE

At the General Conference Session the possibility of allowing individual divisions to ordain women is again postponed for discussion at the 2025 General Conference Session.

At General Conference Session, Deborah Adjeonu, an attorney and a lay person elected General Conference president, announces that she will move General Conference headquarters from Sao Paulo, Brazil, to Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

Biggest job is moving virtual reality communications equipment for headquarters staff of 40 people. President Adjeonu vows to use new technology and cut travel of G.C. officers in half, reducing by one-quarter the total General Conference budget.

ARTS

Pulitzer Prize for fiction goes to Jonathan Butler's bestseller, the *Shaking Time*. His previous work, *The Remnant*, had been ignored by all but a few appreciative critics.

For Easter celebration televised worldwide, *Take Six* perform with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir their rock version of Bach's B Minor Mass.

CNN interviews young Russian Adventist from St. Petersburg who has just become musical director of the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

NORTH AMERICA

More missionaries arrive in North American Division than it sends elsewhere.

President of Loma Linda University, a naturalized U.S. citizen originally from Barbados, accepts appointment as Assistant Secretary for Health in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

McKees introduce Little Debbie Granola, receive public commendation from U.S. Surgeon General for product's nutritional value.

Time magazine features Adventist Colleges in California and Texas because the majority of their faculties are bilingual and teach in both English and Spanish.

This explains why educational enterprises are usually regarded with considerable ambivalence by organized religion, government, and the general population. Educational institutions are prized for the prestige they bring to their sponsors; and they are at the same time accused of undermining traditional beliefs, practices, and values. Yet we Adventists have been “true believers” in education. In all ethnic groups, Adventists in North America are significantly better educated than the general population.³⁷

When the church prepares its college and university graduates to be “morally courageous” as a countercultural force in society,³⁸ it cannot prevent them from becoming a countercultural force in Adventism, too. Furthermore, expanding knowledge and developing skills facilitate upward socioeconomic mobility, often accompanied by an increasing interest in the contemporary world and a corresponding decline in otherworldly con-

cerns and commitments.

• A second historical factor is the Adventist interest and investment in health and healing. This has several consequences. For example, a scientific understanding in the medical sciences (such as biochemistry and neurophysiology) leads to scientific thinking about earth sciences (including geology and paleontology). One cannot enthusiastically endorse the medical sciences because they are useful and then simply discount the earth sciences because they are troublesome. Nor can one properly use *a priori* theological arguments to come to conclusions about empirical reality—whether we are considering the nature of biblical inspiration³⁹ or the age of the earth. If one is going to think scientifically, empirical questions must be answered by objective evidence. And facts are facts. In spite of all we know about the fallibility of science and the foibles of scientists, and about paradigms and paradigm shifts in the history of science,⁴⁰

EDUCATION	THEOLOGY	WORLD CHURCH
<p>Professor occupying endowed Richard Schwarz Memorial Chair in Adventist history at Andrews University, after publishing a fifth book, accepts invitation to become professor of American religious history at the University of Chicago. His inaugural lecture, later published, is entitled “Ellen White Was More Than A Feminist: Shifting Methodologies in Millerite and Adventist Studies.</p>	<p>The Public Broadcasting System in the United States syndicates for world release a series called <i>Jubilees</i> with a female Seventh-day Adventist theologian as host. It explores sacred time in world religions, with the final segment devoted to film clips of celebrations of the Seventh-day Sabbath around the world.</p>	<p>UN gives Adventist Church in Uganda award for mobilizing other religious groups to work with World Health Organization to dramatically decrease spread of AIDS.</p>
<p>A graduate of Adventist Medical University in Argentina is first to be accepted into radiology residency program at Loma Linda University. She hopes to work with head of department who has won a Nobel Prize for medicine for successfully miniaturizing proton accelerator to the point it can be carried and operated by one person almost anywhere in the world or in space.</p>	<p>The Adventist Society for Religious Studies and the Adventist Theological Society agree that their simultaneous annual professional meetings will, for the first time, gather for a worship service in the same Adventist congregation. This will take place despite the first group wanting to decrease the 27 Fundamental Beliefs to seven, and the latter insisting the 27 should be increased to 49 (seven times seven).</p>	<p>General Conference Session gives final approval to creation of a new European Division, with headquarters in Geneva. The Europeans have the first two-chamber division committee. In the larger chamber, each union has one vote, from the 100,000-member Romanian Union to the 6,000-member Hungarian Union. In the much smaller chamber, voting strength is determined by size of tithes contribution. In this chamber business is almost always conducted in the German language.</p>
		<p>Papua New Guinea reaches its goal of being a tobacco-free nation. Government invites Adventist world president to Port Moresby celebration.</p>

facts and their logical implications⁴¹ must still be taken into account. There is no substitute for honesty with the evidence. "Truth," as Ellen White put it, "can afford to be fair."⁴²

The Adventist interest in health has also produced some other liberalizing effects. For example,⁴³ the level of remuneration of health-care personnel (especially physicians) in the United States facilitates swift upward mobility that is accompanied not only by the increasing interest in the contemporary world we noted earlier in connection with education, but also by increasing political influence in the church.

A third "liberalizing" historical factor is its sense of world mission, symbolized by the apocalyptic angel flying across the sky carrying a message for every nation, every ethnic group, every language, and every culture.⁴⁴

Communicating the Advent message leads inevitably to interaction with contemporary life and thought. For to communicate successfully requires an understanding of the intended audience, including its language. It is obvious that if we are going to speak to the Chinese culture, we must learn to speak a Chinese language. It is perhaps less obvious, but certainly just as true, that if we are going to communicate to a modern, secular, and scientific culture, we must learn to speak modern, secular, and scientific languages. But learning a new language entails an investment of time and effort to understand not only words and sentence structure and grammar, but also ways of thinking and valuing and being. This means truly *listening* and *bearing*. The inevitable

result will be new ideas and insights. For there can be no real communication without genuine conversation, and genuine conversation changes all its participants. It goes like this: if I expect you to listen to me, I must truly listen to you.⁴⁵ If I truly listen to you, I will learn from you. If I learn from you, I will be a little more like you by the end of the conversation.

Thus an encounter with cultural diversity, whether ethnic or intellectual, leads to a recognition of different ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. The result is not necessarily a thoroughgoing cultural relativism, in which all beliefs, attitudes, and values are regarded as equally valid and appropriate. The result is, rather, an awareness that no one

culture or subculture is a perfect expression of humanness, and that every culture, including one's own, should be open to the possibility of learning from the others.

Ellen White was involved in the initiation, development, and survival of many of the other liberalizing ingredients: righteousness by faith; a long list of education, health care, world mission and publishing activities; and certain kinds of social responsibility.

A fourth "liberalizing" historical factor is the presence and social impact of Adventist institutions, which bring stability, prosperity, and community recognition.

These factors in turn lead to a sense of respectability that contrasts sharply with the original Adventist self-understanding as a marginalized "remnant." The persecuted minority becomes a *prophetic* minority.⁴⁶ The idea of "remnant" remains, but its existential meaning is transformed.

Also, as they involve interaction with a larger social, cultural, and intellectual world, Adventist institutions become places of cultural and intellectual openness. They provide a context for thinking critically and constructively about what it means to be Adventist as

an academic or as a health-care professional, and for thinking about the fundamental nature, meaning, and mission of Adventism.

- Finally, a fifth “liberalizing” historical factor is the Adventist enthusiasm for printing and publishing, which leads to a proliferation of Adventist voices.

Beginning with the Millerite Adventist *Signs of the Times* in 1840, the *Present Truth* in 1849, the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* in 1850, and the *Youth’s Instructor* in 1852, Adventism has given birth to a host of periodicals of various sorts (and varying quality). Today’s list runs the gamut from general and official publications like the *Adventist Review* and the union conference papers to specialized magazines like *Ministry* and the *Journal of Adventist Education* and to unofficial publications like *Spectrum*, *Our Firm Foundation*, and *Adventist Today*, all promoting particular viewpoints. While the intention and effect of some periodicals has been anything but progressive, the very fact of their existence and diversity is in principle a “liberalizing” force.

The same can be said for books. Some have served to preserve traditional views: we think of *Daniel and Revelation*, by Uriah Smith,⁴⁷ along with *Bible Readings for the Home*,⁴⁸ and, more recently, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*.⁴⁹ Some have encouraged new ideas along with the old: *Questions on Doctrine*,⁵⁰ for example, and the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*.⁵¹ Some have been more deliberately innovative: *Festival of the Sabbath*⁵² and *Pilgrimage of Hope*,⁵³ edited by Roy Branson; *The Openness of God*, by Richard Rice;⁵⁴ and *Inspiration*, by Alden Thompson.⁵⁵ Some have offered alternative views of doctrines and events: *Prophetess of Health*, by Ronald Numbers;⁵⁶ *The Adventist Crisis of Spiritual Identity*, by Desmond and Gillian Ford;⁵⁷ *Betrayal*, by Merikay McLeod;⁵⁸ and *The Word Was Made Flesh*, by Ralph Larson.⁵⁹ Whatever their content or intent, these books reflect a diversity that is both a cause and a consequence of

the liberalizing of Adventism.

After thinking about these “liberalizing” factors in Adventism, I would offer two observations. The first is the remarkably pervasive influence of Ellen White. While her work is often regarded as a symbol and bulwark of conservatism, I see it also as a major factor in the “liberalizing” of Adventism. Not only did she encourage a thoughtful openness to “new light”; she was also prominently involved in the initiation, development, and survival of many of the other liberalizing ingredients. She consistently advocated personal Bible reading; she emphasized God’s love and endorsed the doctrine of righteousness by faith; she vigorously supported a long list of education, healthcare, world mission, and publishing activities; she was a champion of certain kinds of social responsibility. So, although it will be disputed on both the left and the right, I want to say that much of the credit (or blame) for the “liberalizing” of Adventism properly belongs to Ellen White.

My second observation is that the continued liberalizing of Adventism is inevitable. For some people this is good news; for others it is very bad news. But however the prospect is evaluated, the forces involved are too obvious to be honestly denied and too strong to be effectively resisted. This is why I say that the Adventist future will be more “liberalized” rather than that it will be more “liberal.” The passive participle points to the fact that the process of “liberalization” is something that is *happening to Adventism* rather than something that is *chosen by Adventists* (or by the “liberal” Adventists, whoever they might be).

But this is not the whole picture.

Thesis 3: The Adventist future will also be shaped by other, anti-liberalizing ingredients.

The intellectual and social development of a religious community is never rapid, easy, or smooth; and there is no reason to

suppose that Adventism on the way to the future will be a special case. These “anti-liberalizing” ingredients are of slightly different kinds. There are “conservative” ingredients that tend to make the Adventist future a *continuation of the present*, and there are “reactive” ingredients that tend to make the Adventist future a *return to the past*.

• I see two main “conservative” ingredients. In the first place, religion is, as Paul Tillich used to say, a matter of “ultimate concern”⁶⁰—and we do not take lightly to religious change. Indeed, we expect religion to be a rock of stability amid the shifting sands of historical, social, and cultural flow. It is a citadel of permanence amid the “change and decay” we see all around and, even worse, feel within ourselves.⁶¹ So the theological and moral seriousness that is one of the great strengths of Adventism also encourages resistance to change. Adventism is both a theological perspective and a way of life, and change of any sort can be viewed as “lowering the standards” of belief or behavior.

In the second place, institutional structures lead inevitably to hierarchical thinking and bureaucratic practices, both of which reinforce the intellectual and procedural inertia of large organizations. The larger and more complex the organization, the more difficult and costly is any change of thinking. And Adventism surely qualifies as being both large and complex. It is notoriously difficult for us to discontinue any program, policy, department, or institution, even if the reason for its existence has disappeared. And it is just as difficult for us to change our thinking about our beliefs and our mission. Paradoxically, the more we feel change occur-

ring within the church, the more we feel a need to maintain unity by resisting change. Although there may be wide and deep dissatisfaction with the reality of the present, there is equally wide and deep disagreement about any specific proposal for change.

So, there is a strong tendency to try to make the Adventist future an extension of the present. But the present is hardly an ideal model for the future. Adventism in North America is becoming a sabbatarian version of the kind of mainline Protestantism that is increasingly respectable, increasingly gray, and increasingly bland—culturally comfortable, experientially unimportant, and theologically stagnant; accompanied by decreasing church attendance, decreasing financial support, and decreasing school enrollment. Nobody—not the people, the pastors, or the church officials—really wants the future to be a continuation of the present.

• It is not at all surprising, therefore, that there is also a tendency to try to make the future a return to the past. This tendency is encouraged by some “reactive” ingredients. For one thing, a long Adventist history of biblical literalism has encouraged simplistic thinking and attitudes. These in turn provide fertile soil for the self-appointed critics who claim to be the only authentic Adventists left amidst widespread apostasy.

For another thing, our typical evangelistic and missionary fundamentalism—that is, preaching a simple, unambiguous message with complete certainty from a position of religious superiority—has understandably attracted to Adventism people with a fundamentalist mentality. There is a steady influx of “true believers”—people who not only

The “liberalizing” ingredients I see in Adventism are not merely incidental; they are some of its defining characteristics. They are part of what Adventism is. They are ingredients of the spirit, the fire, of authentic Adventism.

have a simple faith but for whom simplicity *is* faith.

And for a third thing, our effectiveness in world mission has led to a demographic shift toward continents with traditions of conservative authoritarianism which contrast rather sharply with the tradition of liberal democracy in North America.

But Adventism cannot simply become a 19th-century island, or even a 20th-century island, surrounded by a 21st-century ocean.

An attempt to return to the past is not a recovery of faith but a failure of nerve.⁶² For genuine faith is a commitment to the whole truth—to the truth we do not yet know as well as to the truth we think we know. It is not so much a “hanging on” as it is a moving forward, “an unreserved opening of the mind to truth, whatever it may turn out to be.”⁶³

Trying to go back to the past, furthermore, is actually an abdication of the church’s mission to the world, which is necessarily the world of the present. This abdication is reflected in the fact that many of the reactionary “independent ministries” have no mission to the world at all, but are completely parasitic on the Adventist community.

Every new generation lives in a new world, with new questions to address, new challenges to meet, new problems to solve. The gospel of God’s love is everlasting; but our understanding of it—our theology—is a snapshot of it from a particular perspective at a particular point in time.⁶⁴ As Ellen White once said, “The truth is an advancing truth, and we must walk in the increasing light.”⁶⁵

So the task of Adventism on the way to the future is not to try to relive the original Adventist experience or respond to the original Adventist questions with exactly the same answers—any more than it is my duty to go back to Minnesota and live in the place where my grandfather lived and where my father and I were born.

The Adventist future will be shaped by

some combination of progressive, conservative, and reactive ingredients, because none of these ingredients is going to capitulate, be converted, or go away. None of them will let itself be swallowed by the others; nor will any one of them become dominant. This situation will yield one of two consequences: pluralism or fragmentation.

Thesis 4: For better or for worse, Adventist pluralism is already here.

Since 1980 the word *pluralism* has become something of an obscenity among some church officials in North America, but whatever one chooses to call the phenomenon—“pluralism” or “diversity” or “pluriformity”—it is a reality. The picture of a universally homogeneous Adventism—with every believer around the world studying the same Sabbath school lesson, singing the same hymns, having the same life-style, and understanding Advent beliefs in the same way—is an illusion.

The evidence of real pluralism is abundant and inescapable. Hundreds of Adventist congregations are identifiable according to ethnicity, language, form of worship, life-style, or theological emphasis; some of these are identified officially, some unofficially. Regional and national differences increase the diversity: Adventism in Argentina is different from Adventism in Austria or in Alabama—and it should be. This diversity is not a weakness but a richness. Parachurch organizations institutionalize the diversity: The Adventist Women’s Institute, Hope International, SDA Kinship, and the Adventist Theological Society—all illustrate the variety of interests and viewpoints. In Adventist higher education, Southern, Atlantic Union, and Walla Walla colleges are different in more than geography.

Pluralism tends to perpetuate itself by creating space for isolated elements that are

immune to dialogue and criticism—intellectual and ideological ghettos for both left-wing liberalism and right-wing reaction. These kinds of differences have already made uniformity impossible, and they also make pluralism necessary if Adventism is going to avoid organizational fragmentation. Attempts to impose uniformity on diversity⁶⁶ are never more than temporarily successful; sooner or later they result in some kind of separation. On the other hand, while pluralism makes spiritual unity more difficult to maintain, it does not necessarily subvert it; the subversion of unity comes from attitudes of pride and arrogance, desires to dominate and control, and practices of exclusion.

“When you visit the altars of the past, somebody once said, bring back the fire, not the ashes.”⁶⁷

“Bringing back the fire” has been the intention of this whole series of presen-

tations (see author identification, p. 18) as they have reviewed the past and anticipated the future. It is always easier, of course, to bring back the ashes. It is also much safer; playing with any kind of fire is hazardous. But in the long run it is better to take the riskier option—choosing the fire rather than the ashes, recognizing that great disappointment is transcended by greater hope.

The “liberalizing” ingredients I see in Adventism are not merely incidental; they are some of its defining characteristics. They are part of what Adventism is. They are ingredients of the spirit, the *fire*, of authentic Adventism. They are also the impetus for moving beyond the present, into the 21st century and an Adventist future that is theologically progressive, spiritually healthy, and organizationally inclusive. They therefore encourage the possibility of envisioning the future as God’s future and going out to meet it—with confidence and vigor, freedom and creativity, gratitude and hope.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In this presentation the word *Adventism* means the Adventist community in North America. Whatever insight or understanding I may have about Adventism comes from life and work almost entirely on this continent. Yet within this geographical focus, I will use the word *Adventism* broadly, to mean the community as a whole, not merely (or even primarily) its organizational structures and institutions, and to include practices, functions, and relationships as well as beliefs.

The phrase “on the way” [in the title of the original lecture, “Adventism On the Way to the Future”] points to the fact of being in process—in transit and transition. As an approximation of the Latin *in via*, it connotes both movement and incompleteness. The movement is inevitable and intentional—inevitable because the future (and the change it brings) cannot be forestalled, and intentional because one need not let the future (and change) simply happen (one can anticipate it, go out to meet it, and help to shape it). The incompleteness is entailed by the fact that the process continues: it has not yet attained its goal. The word *future* means, of course, what is coming, what is ahead, what has not yet arrived; and it also means direction and destination. The idea of

the Adventist future has at least three dimensions: not only Adventism’s own future, arising from its past and present, but also its relation to the future of the world and (even more important) to the future of God.

2. There is no reason why the connotation of words like *liberal* and *liberalizing* should be determined by persons who are hostile to their authentic content. It may have been the poetical campaigning of Ronald Reagan that made “the L-word” an epithet; in any case, its use as a negative value-judgment (rather than an objective description) is now common in American political and religious rhetoric. In any event, the word may refer to a particular intellectual position (as in the phrase “19th-century liberalism”) or to a general attitude of intellectual openness (as in “liberal-mindedness”). It is in the latter sense that the word is used throughout in this discussion; it is used descriptively, not as a positive or negative value-judgment.

3. Yet Adventism is not in general “fundamentalist,” and in some ways it is not properly classified as “evangelical” since that once-general term has been commandeered as a partisan self-designation by, for example, the groups that constitute the National Asso-

ciation of Evangelicals. See Roger L. Dudley and Edwin I. Hernandez, "Do Adventist Voters Lean Left or Right?" *Spectrum* 23:3 (October 1993), pp. 5-13.

4. "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists," par. 1.

5. See Charles M. Wood, *The Formation of Christian Understanding: An Essay in Theological Hermeneutics* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981), "The Canon of Christian Understanding," pp. 82-105, and "Christian Understanding as a Critical Task," pp. 106-120.

6. To be precise, one should speak of degrees of literalism; I do not personally know anyone who holds an absolute literalism, nor do I know anyone who does not let scientific knowledge influence one's understanding of Scripture. Without any explicit biblical evidence, readers of Scripture believe, for example, that the earth is spherical, rotates on its axis, and revolves around the sun, and that the sun came into existence at least as soon as the earth. Here I use the term "biblical literalism" to point to a *relatively* literalistic reading of Scripture, recognizing a minimum of metaphorical and symbolic language.

7. A danger of theological polemics is the almost irresistible temptation to use Scripture as the servant of one's theology rather than its master and judge.

8. See the objections to Alden Thompson, *Inspiration*, raised by various contributors to *Issues in Revelation and Inspiration*, Frank Holbrook and Leo Van Dolson, eds., *Adventist Theological Society Occasional Papers*, 1 (Berrien Springs: Adventist Theological Society, 1992), pp. 31-199. A curiosity of current Adventist theological discussion is that those who most emphasize the humanity of Christ often have an almost docetic view of Scripture.

9. See Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* (Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1896), p. 1: "Let us in imagination go back to that scene, and, as we sit with the disciples on the mountainside, enter the thoughts and feelings that filled their hearts. Understanding what the words of Jesus meant to those who heard them, we may discern in them a new vividness and beauty, and may also gather for ourselves their deeper lessons."

10. See Dalton D. Baldwin, "Openness for Renewal Without Destructive Pluralism: The Dilemma of Doctrinal Dissent," in *Christ in the Classroom: Approaches to the Integration of Faith and Learning*, 3 (Washington, D.C.: Department of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1989), pp. 65, 66: "It is the underlying harmony of the Bible as a whole that is infallible."

11. A wider recognition of the "canonical" nature of Biblical authority would eliminate much if not all of the opposition to the ordination of women in professional

ministry.

12. *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn, 1913), p. 33; *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1911), p. 678.

13. See Arthur G. Daniells, *Christ Our Righteousness* (Washington, D.C.: Ministerial Association of Seventh-day Adventists, 1926); Norval P. Pease, *By Faith Alone* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1962), pp. 107-176; LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, rev. ed. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1978), passim; Robert J. Wieland, *The 1888 Message: An Introduction* (Nashville: Southern Publ. Assn., 1980).

14. This phenomenon may be called "the Adventist disease."

15. See Roger L. Dudley with V. Bailey Gillespie, *Valuegenesis: Faith in the Balance* (Riverside, Calif.: La Sierra Univ. Press, 1992), p. 272: "We have seen that though our youth have heard the words of the Gospel of righteousness by grace through faith, the Adventist emphasis on behavioral standards has led the majority to believe that they must somehow do something to merit salvation. It is very difficult for an Adventist adolescent to emotionally accept the fact that his or her salvation rests entirely on the merits of Jesus Christ and the he or she cannot contribute to it in any way."

16. For the discussion of perfectionism, see Hans K. La Rondelle, *Perfection and Perfectionism: A Dogmatic-Ethical Study of Biblical Perfection and Phenomenal Perfectionism* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews Univ. Press, 1971); Herbert Douglass, et al., *Perfection: The Impossible Possibility* (Nashville: Southern Publ. Assn, 1975).

17. Rom. 5:18; translation based on Peterson, p. 314. NRSV reads, "Just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all." For a brief discussion of the universalistic thrust of the New Testament, see my essay, "The Universality of God's Love," in *The Grace of God, The Will of Man: A Case for Arminianism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), esp. pp. 42-46.

18. 1 Tim. 4:10.

19. One of the most unfortunate phenomena in the history of religious language has been the translation of the Hebrew word *torah* by the Greek *nomos*, the Latin *lex*, and the English *law*. The positive connotation of teaching or instruction that is prominent in the Hebrew word is eclipsed in the others by the dominant idea of legal compulsion.

20. The principles are often illustrated rather than specified in the Bible, which is for the most part better understood as a "casebook" than as a "code book." See

Alden Thompson, *Inspiration: Hard Questions, Honest Answers* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1991), pp. 98-109.

21. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1903), p. 18.

22. *Present Truth* was the name of the first Seventh-day Adventist periodical; it was taken from the King James Version of 2 Peter 1:12 and explained by James White in an introductory note on the front page of the inaugural issue (1:1, July 1849): "In Peter's time there was present truth, or truth applicable to that present time. The Church [has] ever had a present truth. The present truth now, is that which shows present duty. . . ."

Thirty-five years later, in *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan: From the Destruction of Jerusalem to the End of Time* (Oakland, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1884), p. 118, Ellen White echoed her husband's words: "There was a present truth in the days of Luther,—a truth at that time of special importance; there is a present truth for the church today." See also *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1950), p. 143.

23. Jack W. Provonsha, *A Remnant in Crisis* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1993), p. 13.

24. Ellen White wrote several times about the progressive nature of truth. See, for example, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1889), vol. 5, pp. 706, 707: "Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. [People] rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative and seek to avoid discussion."

"Search the Scriptures," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (July 26, 1892), p. 465; reprinted in *Counsels to Writers and Editors* (Nashville: Southern Publ. Assn., 1946), p. 37: "We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed."

"Christ Our Hope," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (December 20, 1892), p. 785, reprinted in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 35: "There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions

of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation."

25. See Arthur W. Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1961), p. 98; C. Mervyn Maxwell, *Tell It to the World: The Story of Seventh-day Adventists*, rev. ed. (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1977), pp. 48, 49; George R. Knight, *Millennial Fever and the End of the World* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1993), pp. 217-224.

The most memorable account is the poignant recollection of Hiram Edson contained in an undated manuscript fragment located in the Heritage Room of the James White Library at Andrews University and published in *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the 19th Century*, Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1987), p. 215: "Our expectations were raised high, and thus we looked for our coming Lord until the clock tolled 12 at midnight. The day had then passed and our disappointment became a certainty. Our fondest hopes and expectations were blasted, and such a spirit of weeping came over us as I never experienced before. It seemed that the loss of all earthly friends could have been no comparison. We wept, and wept, till the day dawn.

"I mused in my own heart, saying, My advent experience has been the richest and brightest of all my Christian experience. If this had proved a failure, what was the rest of my Christian experience worth? Has the Bible proved a failure? Is there no God—no heaven—no golden home city—no paradise? Is all this but a cunningly devised fable? Is there no reality to our fondest hopes and expectation of these things? And thus we had something to grieve and weep over, if all our fond hopes were lost. And as I said, we wept till the day dawn."

26. Spalding, Vol. 1, pp. 98-113; Maxwell, pp. 51-54; Knight, pp. 304-319. Again Edson's memoir provides a vivid account (in Numbers and Butler, p. 216): "Heaven seemed opened to my view, and I saw distinctly, and clearly, that instead of our High Priest coming out of the Most Holy [Place] of the heavenly sanctuary to come to this earth on the tenth day of the seventh month, at the end of the 2300 days, that he for the first time entered on that day the second apartment of that sanctuary; and that he had a work to perform in the Most Holy before coming to this earth. That he came to the marriage at that time; in other words, to the Ancient of days, to receive a kingdom, dominion, and glory; and we must

wait for his return *from the wedding* and my mind was directed to the tenth ch. of Rev. where I could see the vision had spoken and did not lie; the seventh angel had began [sic] to sound; we had eaten the littl [sic] book; it has been sweet in our mouth, and it had now become bitter in our belly, embittering our whole being. That we must prophesy again, etc., and that when the seventh angel began to sound, the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament, etc.”

Maxwell, pp. 51, 52 raises the question of the precise nature of Edson's experience: “Did Hiram Edson, as some suggest, have a prophetic vision in the cornfield? He may have. He does not, however, state that he actually saw Jesus enter the most holy place. Instead, in his best-known account, he says that he saw ‘that’ Jesus entered it on October 22. In a different account he says nothing about ‘seeing’ anything, but recalls instead that he heard a voice speaking to him. Possibly he himself did not know exactly how his valuable insights came to him.”

27. See, for example, Joseph Marsh in *Voice of Truth* (Nov. 7, 1844), p. 166, quoted in Knight, pp. 230, 231: “We cheerfully admit that we have been mistaken in the nature of the event we expected would occur on the tenth of the seventh month.”

28. See Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1915), pp. 48-50.

29. See P. Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977).

30. Theological change is evident also in the various ways the doctrine of the sanctuary in heaven has functioned in the history of Adventism: first as a way of understanding the disappointment of 1844, then as a reinforcement of the continuing importance of the fourth commandment, later as a symbol of “victorious living,” and more recently as a mark of Adventist identity and orthodoxy, and as a call to moral seriousness. See Roy Adams, *The Sanctuary Doctrine: Three Approaches in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews Univ. Press, 1981); and Jon Dybdahl, “The Sanctuary as a Call to Moral Seriousness,” *Spectrum* 14:1 (August 1983), pp. 47-51.

31. See Damsteegt, pp. 149-164; Knight, pp. 313, 314.

32. See the references in note 13, above.

33. See *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: An Explanation of Certain Major Aspects of Seventh-day Adventist Belief* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1957), pp. 35-37, 645, 646. Published without identified authorship, this is evidently the work of LeRoy E. Froom, W. E. Read, and Roy Allen Anderson. See also LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Move-*

ment of Destiny (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1971), pp. 322, 323.

34. Rev. 14:6.

35. Ellen G. White, in *Review and Herald* (March 25, 1890), reprinted in *Counsels to Writers and Editors* (Nashville: Southern Publ. Assn., 1946), p. 33.

36. See Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* (New York: Delacorte, 1969).

37. See Monte Sahlin, “Who Are North American Adventists?” *Spectrum* 21:2 (March 1991), p. 18: “The percentage of Adventists with less than a high school diploma is half that of the general population in the United States and Canada. Two out of five Adventist males and a third of the females have college degrees. The majority have spent some time in postsecondary schools. . . . The percentage of highly educated church members is significant in all ethnic groups. In fact, the percentage of males with college degrees among black and Hispanic Adventists may be slightly greater than among white Adventists.”

38. See Robert Folkenberg, “The Challenge for La Sierra University,” *University Vitae Extra* (February 3, 1994), p. 3. The term “countercultural force” occurred in the public presentation but does not appear in the published version.

39. For an Adventist endorsement of a deductive approach to an understanding of the nature of Scripture, see John T. Baldwin, “Inspiration, the Natural Sciences, and a Window of Opportunity,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 5:1 (Spring 1994), p. 134.

40. Beginning with the influential work of Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1962). For an example of the ensuing discussion, see Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1970).

41. Science involves more than the reporting of data (facts); it also entails the coherent interpretation of data (theory). So the claim, “We don’t dispute the facts; we just reject the theory,” is not scientifically credible unless it is accompanied by a more adequate theory.

42. Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald* (Dec. 20, 1892); reprinted in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 35.

43. Another example is the prominence of health care in Adventist life and mission, which has encouraged thinking about sin, salvation, and the Christian life in metaphors of disease and healing (or wholeness)—metaphors that soften the legal language of “transgression” and “justification,” imply a gradual development rather than absolute contrast between life “in the world” and “life in Christ,” and relativize the notion of “perfection.” Besides the motto of Loma Linda University, “To make man whole,” there is the linguistic connection of

the word *salvation* to the Latin *salvus*, which means both "safe" and "healthy."

44. Rev. 14:6.

45. This is a version of what Dalton D. Baldwin has named "The Golden Rule of Evangelism." For a more formal description of the "ideal speech situation," see Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Vol. 1 (Boston: Beacon, 1970), p. 17; and William Nacher, *Unapologetic Theology: A Christian Voice in a Pluralistic Conversation* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1989), pp. 76, 77, 105-122.

46. See Jack Provonsha, "The Church as Prophetic Minority," in *Pilgrimage of Hope*, Roy Branson, ed. (Takoma Park, Md.: Association of Adventist Forums, 1986), pp. 98-107.

47. Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation. The Response of History to the Voice of Prophecy* (Nashville: Southern Publ. Assn., 1897).

48. *Bible Readings for the Home* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1915; rev. ed. 1949).

49. *Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . . : A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines* (Washington, D.C.: Ministerial Association, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1988).

50. *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine: An Explanation of Certain Major Aspects of Seventh-day Adventist Belief* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1957). Published without identified authorship, this is the work of LeRoy E. Froom, W. E. Read, and Roy Allen Anderson.

51. *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1957).

52. Roy Branson, ed., *Festival of the Sabbath* (Takoma Park, Md.: Association of Adventist Forums, 1985).

53. _____, *Pilgrimage of Hope* (Takoma Park, Md.: Association of Adventist Forums, 1986).

54. Richard Rice, *The Openness of God: The Relationship of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1980); reprinted as *God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1985).

55. Thompson, *Inspiration*.

56. Ronald L. Numbers, *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976); rev. ed.: *Prophetess of Health: Ellen G. White and the Origins of Seventh-day Adventist Health Reform* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1992).

57. Desmond and Gillian Ford, *The Adventist Crisis of Spiritual Identity* (Newcastle, Calif.: Desmond Ford, 1982).

58. Merikay McLeod, *Betrayal: The Shattering Sex*

Discrimination Case of Silver vs. Pacific Press Publishing Association (Loma Linda, Calif.: Mars Hill, 1985).

59. Ralph Larson, *The Word Was Made Flesh: One Hundred Years of Seventh-day Adventist Christology, 1852-1952* (Cherry Valley, Calif.: Cherrystone, 1986).

60. See Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper, 1957), pp. 1-4.

61. See Henry F. Lyte, "Abide With Me," *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1985), No. 50:

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me.

62. See Arthur Peacocke, *Theology for a Scientific Age: Being and Becoming—Natural, Divine, and Human* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), p. x: "The current resuscitation of very conservative positions . . . is a sign not so much of a recovery of faith as of a loss of nerve before the onslaught of new perceptions of the world."

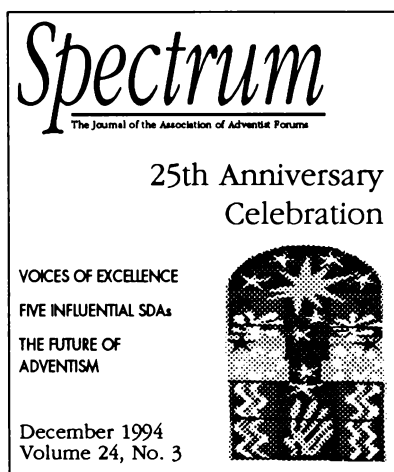
63. Watts, p. 24.

64. See Heinz Zahrt, *The Question of God: Protestant Theology in the 20th Century* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969), p. 359: "For only the gospel is eternal, and theology is temporal; it must always translate the eternal gospel anew for the changing times. . . . We must always begin to build once again, and we must always dare once again to do the unheard of thing which consists of men, sinful, finite, imperfect and mortal men, daring to speak in human words about God. Here too it is God's grace alone which can make good what in every case man does badly. God must also forgive us our theology, our theology perhaps most of all."

65. Ellen G. White, "Open the Heart to Light," *Review and Herald* (March 25, 1890), p. 177; reprinted in *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, p. 33.

66. For a current example of such an attempt, see Alan Cowell's report, via the New York Times News Service, in the *Riverside Press-Enterprise*, May 31, 1994: "Pope John Paul II told the world's Catholics yesterday to abandon any thought of women being ordained as priests, saying that the issue was not open to debate and that his views must be 'definitively held by all the church's faithful.' Although the pope's words fell just short of a formal statement of infallible doctrine, the particularly severe and authoritative tone of his letter to bishops suggested that he was seeking to remove the idea from the Catholic agenda for decades to come."

67. Original source unknown.



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The Establishment of the Adventist Forum and *Spectrum*



by Richard C. Osborn
Volume 10, No. 4 (March 1980)

Richard C. Osborn, director of education for the Columbia Union, served for over a decade as executive secretary, then treasurer of the Association of Adventist Forums. A historian, with a doctorate in American history from the University of Maryland, Osborn produced the closest thing to an "official" history ever written about the founding of the Association of Adventist Forums and Spectrum. Sorting out the slightly varying memories of close friends was probably one of the

most delicate writing assignments of his career.

Many of these second, third and fourth generation Adventists began leaving the church because their questions and needs were not being addressed—indeed, they were held in suspicion. So many were leaving that some who still desired to remain Adventists saw a need for forming groups to maintain ties to a church they had been reared in. Many of them thought they might be able to grow within the church and ultimately serve it if someone could help them through this critical transition in their maturation process.

In major educational centers such as Cambridge, Massachusetts; Ann Arbor, Michigan; and the San Francisco Bay Area, California, groups of concerned Adventists began informal discussion groups. Although some remained very informal with home meetings, the Cambridge

group experienced rapid growth. The Cambridge group had started in 1963 under Roy Branson's direction with a few people meeting socially on Sabbath afternoons as a book discussion group, which included such individuals as Joe and Adrienne Battistone, Bruce Wilcox and Vinson Bushnell. In 1964, Alvin and Verla Kwiram joined the group when he took a position in Harvard's chemistry department. In 1966, as a result of Verla Kwiram's initiative, the group's mailing list had reached 150 and resulted in a constitution and membership dues. Throughout this period, the Cambridge and Ann Arbor groups began to talk of communicating with like groups in other parts of the United States, and of possibly tying them together in one organization with a newsletter or journal. Vinson Bushnell, a Harvard graduate student in music, even worked on a constitution. . . .

During May 1967, Bietz and Wilson led out in a discussion of the proposal in Washington, D.C., where Bietz felt most of the leaders displayed "very good interest." Next, the ideas were taken to a group of college presidents, academic deans, and board chairmen, which resulted in the establishment by the General Conference of a 23-member Committee on SDA Graduate Students in Non-SDA Schools chaired by Wilson.

From this stage on, Wilson became the key church contact and liaison for the association's beginning and throughout its first decade. In fact, without Wilson's support there would have been no association. . . .

Plans progressed rapidly, and on October 6, 1967, the General Conference convened a Committee on National Association of Graduate Students with the church paying for the travel expenses of three discussion group representatives out of the seven who came to Washington, D.C. . . .

The proposed journal proved to be the most controversial aspect of the committee's work. Agreement came easily on the purpose of the journal, basically following the original proposal. However, Wilson insisted that each article be read and approved by one of the General Conference representatives, thus giving the denomination veto power. He noted that the church had never recognized such an organization where it did not have such controls. The graduate student representatives could not agree to this condition. Kwiram, for one, wanted an independent organization established on the basis of mutual respect and admiration. The group felt that a journal could provide a kind of "loyal opposition" in which sophisticated, informed analysis and evaluation could be provided the church through constructive study reports and articles in a journal. At one point, someone suggested that the journal be completely on its own, but the lay people wanted a church relationship. Over the noon hour, Branson met with Wilson in his office to see if any accommodation

Spectrum first appeared in March 1969. Couperus proved to be an excellent choice for editor. He had studied theology and served as a missionary before training as a doctor, and retained a lifelong interest in the relationship between science and religion.

could be achieved. Although Wilson pressed his points vigorously, he was not ready to break off negotiations. During the afternoon session, the church's representatives agreed that their tie to the journal would be through five out of 20 editorial consultants. These five would be selected by the association board from a list of 12 names to be submitted by the North American Division Committee on Administration (NADCA). . . .

On October 25, the Autumn Council through a session of NADCA approved the plans of the committee for an association of graduate students with a local and regional organization and a magazine to serve as a forum for the students. The church leaders no longer demanded official representatives on either the association board or journal. Rather, they agreed to serve in an advisory capacity at the invitation of the association.

The "founding fathers" were delighted at the outcome, and by a telephone vote decided to ask Neal Wilson, Charles Hirsch, and Wilber Alexander to serve as the first official church guests. Meanwhile, the first board meeting was scheduled for December in Loma Linda, California.

At the first board meeting, the direction of the association began to take shape. *Spectrum* became the name of the journal, [and] membership dues were established. . . .

A name for the association remained the major unfinished business. The board tentatively approved the name, "The Adventist Forum," tentatively because of the need for further consultation with church leaders who objected to the word "Adventist" appearing so early in the title lest people think the association was being given official status. New names suggested included "*Forum: An Association of Academic and Professional Adventists*," "FORE (Forum of Re-

sponsible Exploration): A Forum of Adventists dedicated to responsible exploration of truth," and "Associated Adventist Forums." Finally, both the association and church leadership compromised on "Association of Adventist Forums" (hereafter referred to as AAF).

During 1968, the hard work of building membership and developing a journal proceeded. The *Review* on January 11 printed the all-important NADCA action approving the association. However, without a tangible product to sell, membership grew slowly. Initially, some AAF leaders thought optimistically that as many as 5,000 might join, but only 600 members joined by November. Andrews University provided AAF valuable help by giving Executive Secretary Branson a phone budget and the right to use his Andrews University secretary part time on AAF business.

Spectrum Editor [Molleurus] Couperus spent 1968 soliciting articles for the journal. He had established as a condition for taking the job that he be allowed time to collect enough manuscripts for four issues before beginning publication. Loma Linda University also gave help by providing free office space for *Spectrum*.

Meanwhile, local chapters grew in New England, New York, Washington, D.C., Ann Arbor, Andrews University, Walla Walla College, Seattle, Berkeley, and Stanford University. Popular topics during these years included the church's relationship to civil rights, inner-city ministry, politics, war, and the arts. In some areas such as the Southern New England Conference, a part-time chaplain, Charles Teel, Jr., graduate student at Boston and Harvard University, was provided to minister to graduate students with the support of conference president, Lowell Bock. The association's relations with the General Conference remained cordial, but as Branson pointed out in a

newsletter to AAF members, "the journal hasn't appeared yet."

Spectrum first appeared in March 1969, representing the organization's first tangible product and its most successful accomplishment of the first decade. Couperus proved to be an excellent choice for editor. Early in his career, he had studied theology in the United States and served as a missionary in Indonesia. Even after training as a medical doctor with a specialty in dermatology, he retained a lifelong interest in theology with special emphasis on the relationship between science and religion. During the 1950s, he edited a journal devoted to the defense of creationism. Because of his independent financial status and friendship with affluent individu-

als, he also aided the journal's financial undergirding. Couperus solicited articles and made the crucial decisions about balance of topics and articles that would appear in each issue. Fritz Guy, then a religion teacher at Loma Linda University's La Sierra campus, did a great deal of editorial rewriting. Major credit for the appearance and accuracy of the journal goes to Ada Turner, the well-trained and tireless executive editor. She was largely responsible for the journal's design, and followed the "old school" of editing copy—checking every footnote. This Loma Linda-based group produced six volumes of *Spectrum*, each volume consisting of four issues with each issue averaging 80 pages. . . .

Ellen White's Pastoral Authority as Bible Commentator



by Joseph J. Battistone
Vol. 8, No. 2 (January 1977)

Joseph J. Battistone, now retired, was pastor of the Fletcher, North Carolina church when he wrote this first articulation within Adventism of Ellen White's role being a pastoral one. Prior to producing what has become a widely-quoted article, Battistone had earned a doctorate in New Testament from Duke University and taught for years in the religion department of Andrews University.

In her study of the old Testament prophets, including Elijah, Ellen

White focuses more attention on their actions than on their words. She is more interested in relating the practical results of the prophetic preaching than in explaining the theological significance of the actual messages. Consequently, her writings tend to be more homiletical than exegetical. This becomes more apparent in the frequent parallels she draws between the time of the prophets and the period of the church today. These parallels enable her to draw lessons from the biblical material which relate to the theme of the great controversy.

This points to a fundamental feature of her writings, an interest in the practical nature and value of Bible study. To her way of thinking, Bible study is more than a matter of learning facts or concepts. It is an exercise that generates from an attitude of prayer, faith and humility, culminating in the spiritual edification or enrichment of the student. . . .

The tendency of Ellen White to draw attention to the controversy between Christ and Satan, particularly as it relates to the individual, clearly demonstrates her own understanding of the practical significance of Bible study. . . .

What, then, do we mean when we affirm a unique place—a place second only to the Bible—for her writings in the church? We mean that we cannot simply place them on the same level of importance and authority as that of other commentaries. Such a high view of her writings, can be easily misunderstood and misapplied, however. It would be inappropriate to use her writings to settle questions relating to the reading of a text, the meaning of a word, the authorship or date of a biblical book, etc. . . .

On the basis of the observations advanced above, it seems more accurate to describe her interpretation of Scripture as primarily a religious exposition of the great controversy theme on a cosmic, historical and personal level, than to characterize it as scientific exegesis in a technical sense. In no way is such a classification denigratory. To the contrary! It may help prevent further misunderstanding and misuse of her writings. If her writings were designed to answer questions of a scholarly nature, their significance would be restricted to a relatively small group, and would in time become dated. Such is the nature of scholarship. But her writings have a deeper purpose and a wider scope.

etarian, he stands close to our conception of the reformer of life . . . Still, some worry.

There was no need for Adventists to be concerned, Pastor Mueller advised. Jesus' statement, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and God what is God's," meant that every Adventist should be subject to the government, pay his taxes, assist the government with good works and pray for the authorities.

Yet, the Nazi regime demanded more. Mueller said that Adventists needed to adjust quickly to these new circumstances, but unfortunately some church members were slow in changing. They refused to salute the Swastika flag and to use the Hitler greeting. This refusal, Mueller argued, was bad for the church's image. Besides, every "Christian can without concern" salute the Nazi flag, the symbol of sovereign Germany. Likewise, he said, Adventists could raise their arms and give the Hitler greeting with a clear conscience.

Mueller concluded that under no circumstances did any Adventist have the right to resist the government, even if the government prevented him from exercising his faith. Resistance would be unfortunate because it would mark Adventists as opponents of the new state, a situation that should be prevented. . . .

Because offspring of [state ordained] unions were to be healthy and racially pure specimens, they were to be bred carefully. To guarantee this outcome, Adventists assisted in many government-sponsored programs for women, teaching not only hygiene and child care, but also such Nazi topics as eugenics, race and civics.

The government asked all free churches and denominations to defend these and all other Nazi policies at home and abroad. There is sufficient evidence to conclude

Seventh-day Adventist Publications and the Nazi Temptation



by Erwin Sicher
Vol. 8, No. 3 (March 1977)

Erwin Sicher is chair of the social science department at Southwestern Adventist College in Keene, Texas. Sicher's background drew him to the topic of this essay, one of the most meticulously researched and hardest hitting in the history of the journal. (Spectrum is still the only Adventist journal to print material on this subject.) Sicher was born and reared in Austria, also the birthplace of Hitler. Sicher served as a pastor in Vienna before com-

ing to the United States, where he earned a doctorate in history at the University of Southern California, and taught in the history department at Andrews University.

The president of the East German Conference, W. Mueller, said that the Christian

welcomes with joy the reawakening of Germany and the fight of the Hitler government against unemployment. He is happy for the defense of Christianity, for morality and order, incorruptibility and justice in government, for the attack on class consciousness and the elevation of the ethnic community [Volksgemeinschaft] . . . The Christian is happy to know that the direction of his country is in the hands of a man like Hitler, who frequently emphasizes that he received his post from God to whom he is responsible. As non-drinker, nonsmoker and veg-

that many Adventists accepted this demand. Hulda Jost, Adventist welfare leader until 1938, stated as early as 1933 that after her return from Sweden, she reported to the Nazi propaganda ministry "that I was able to defend our present government in a choice society. . . ."

On the next level of Nazi indoctrination, the Labor Service, Adventists found a satisfying rationalization for participation. Johannes Langholf wrote that Adventists approved, in accordance with their biblical understanding, every effort that brought people closer to work. "We expect every member," he continued, "to follow the divine command, 'pray and work.' It would be absolutely contrary to our understanding if we refuse the Labor Service." The author, however, was fully aware that a significant percentage of the Labor Service participants were members of the SA, SS and Stahlhelm, the most fanatical Nazi groups who indoctrinated and militarized the youth.

The outcome of all this was that most Adventist students joined the Hitler Youth, the BDM [Association of German Girls], the Labor Service and the German Red Cross. And, in 1937, the Adventist college town, Friedensau, voted 100 percent for Adolf Hitler.

At least some Adventists came to support sterilization, whose overriding aim, like that of most Nazi programs, was the protection of the German blood. . . .

After the passage of the law, though, discussion ceased and the church supported sterilization either through direct Adventist statements or through the reprinting of non-Adventist articles. The mentally weak, schizophrenics, epileptics, blind, deaf, crippled, alcoholics, drug addicts—all were to be sterilized.

"This law," an article in the Seventh-day Adventist paper *Jugend-Litstern* said, was "a great advance

in the uplifting of our people."

Because it was for the good of the nation as well as for the individual, the article argued, the ethic of the state and of Christianity were in full accord on this point. "The national socialist state is aware of its responsibility to heighten the physical and moral values of its people through purification of its blood." Although sterilization was hard on the patient, it was said, once he understood the contribution he was making to the well-being of his people he would accept it.

"Only sterilization can protect a people from the decline of their race," another article claimed. Furthermore, some writers suggested, the chronically ill should be sterilized because they place too great a financial burden on the state, for the costs go into the billions of reichsmarks.

With the liquidation of Czechoslovakia, all pretense that Hitler simply wanted to rightfully unite all Germans should have vanished. Yet, Adventists agreed with the Nazi extinction of Czech sovereignty. Then came the attack on Poland, an even more brutal act. Still, an Adventist author could write that in view of the "inhuman tortures our Volkscamrads have suffered among this foreign people" the German attack was probably justified. The Führer wanted only to correct these injustices. "In the East there is now peace. Humanly everything is being done to strengthen and secure it . . . Meanwhile, the Führer has shown the way to peace also in the West. By the time this *Adventbote* reaches the readers, the dice will have fallen. What will the enemy have decided? Certainly, there exists not a single German who does not want peace like the great Führer of our people." But if this wish should be unfulfilled, "we know that God is in control, and that things happen

only through his will and permission."

God, according to this version, apparently did not want peace, because war erupted also in the West with the German invasion of Denmark and Norway on April 9, 1940.

Still, Adventists continued to support Hitler. In fact, they sang his praises on his 51st birthday, which came on Sabbath, April 20, 1940. *The Morning Watch Calendar* stated:

Trust in his people has given the Führer the strength to carry through the fight for freedom and honor of Germany. The unshakable faith of Adolph Hitler allowed him to do great deeds, which decorate him today before the whole world. Selflessly and faithfully he has struggled for his people; courageously and proudly he has defended the honor of his nation. In Christian humility, at important times when he could celebrate with his people, he gave God in Heaven honor and recognized his dependence upon God's blessings. This humility has made him great, and this greatness was the source of blessing, from which he always gave for his people. Only very few statesmen stand so brilliantly in the sun of a blessed life, and are so praised by his own people as our Führer. He has sacrificed much in the years of his struggle and has thought little about himself in the difficult work for his people. We compare the unnumbered words, which he has issued to the people from a warm heart, with seeds which have ripened and now carry wonderful fruit.

Adventist publications said nothing about the 1933 purges when hundreds were murdered in cold blood. Nor did they raise a voice against the persecution and execution of countless Jews. Neither the atrocities in the concentration camps or the occupied territories

received mention, nor the euthanasia program, which the Catholics, largely alone, were able to stop. The war itself was never questioned.

Although some individual Adventists seemed to have resisted the Nazi temptation, no active official opposition to the inhuman Nazi regime seemed to have existed nor even to have been permitted among Adventists. Yet, many Adventists did die, unfortunately, for the dia-

bolical policies of that state. Then it was possible to pen a parting word for the dead, saying, as happened in one instance, that in "faithful execution of his duty he gave his young life, so that his Volk might live and prosper."

Finally, even such statements ceased. There was only silence as the government ordered all church publications to close. All raw materials, including paper, were needed for the war.

known Christian Darwinists in the United States, having long promoted a theistic view of evolution. Although he faithfully defended the Bible's historical accuracy, he saw no conflict between Genesis and geology and no reason to insist on a worldwide flood. It was not until after World War I, when Price emerged as their scientific spokesman, that fundamentalist leaders began insisting on a 6,000-year-old earth and a universal deluge.

On the eve of the Scopes trial in July 1925, in which a high school biology teacher in Dayton, Tenn., was found guilty of violating a state law prohibiting the teaching of evolution in public institutions, the high priest of fundamentalism, William Jennings Bryan, invited Price to assist the prosecution as an expert witness. Price was a logical choice, being both an acquaintance of Bryan's and the best-known scientist in the fundamentalist camp. Unfortunately, Price was teaching at the time in an Adventist college outside London and could not attend the trial. Instead, he wrote Bryan a letter advising him to avoid any *scientific* arguments and to charge the evolutionists with being un-American for compelling a parent to pay taxes "to have his child taught something that he utterly repudiates and considers anti-Christian."

At one point during the epic trial, Clarence Darrow asked Bryan if he respected any scientist. When Bryan named Price, Darrow scoffed: "You mentioned Price because he is the only human being in the world so far as you know that signs his name as a geologist that believes like you do . . . every scientist in this country knows [he] is a mountebank and a pretender and not a geologist at all." Eventually, Darrow browbeat the broken old man into conceding that the world was indeed more than 6,000 years old and that the six days of Cre-

Sciences of Satanic Origin: SDAs on Evolutionary Biology



by Ronald L. Numbers
Vol. 9, No. 4 (January 1979)

Ronald L. Numbers is William Coleman Professor of the History of Science and Medicine at the University of Wisconsin. He incorporated this essay featuring George McCready Price into his recent prize-winning book, The Creationists: The Evolution of Scientific Creationism (Knopf, 1992). Numbers, the son and grandson of Seventh-day Adventist ministers (his grandfather, W. H. Branson, was president of the General Conference), grew up in the mission field, graduated from Southern Missionary College and received his doctorate in the history of science from the University of California at Berkeley before teaching at both Andrews and Loma Linda universities. He is the editor and author of many books that emphasize the part Adventist

figures have played in American history. He also served for several years as the executive secretary of the Association of Adventist Forums. (For more on Numbers, see the profile elsewhere in this issue and Jonathan Butler's "The Historian as Heretic," the brilliant and moving introduction to the enlarged edition of Prophets of Health [University of Tennessee Press, 1993]).

Through his numerous articles and books, [George McCready] Price significantly altered the course of fundamentalist thought, slowly but perceptibly steering it in the direction of the traditional Adventist interpretation of Genesis. Prior to the appearance of Price on the fundamentalist scene, many evangelicals had compromised with the teachings of modern science. As late as 1910, for example, the editors of *The Fundamentals*, the series of pamphlets whose publication [is often said to mark] the beginning of the so-called fundamentalist movement, chose George Frederick Wright, a clergyman geologist from Oberlin College, to write on evolution and religion. His selection is surprising in retrospect, because Wright was one of the best-

ation had probably been longer than 24 hours each—departures from strict fundamentalism that Price never forgave. . . .

Despite the rise of Clark and Marsh, who themselves disagreed on the limits of speciation and the role of amalgamation, Price continued to influence Adventist science until his death in 1963 at age 93. During the last decades of his life, he worked closely with a small but growing community of Adventists in southern California interested in problems related to creation and evolution. As early as 1936, this group had urged the General Conference to sponsor field work in areas like the Grand Canyon, but the expense of such a program apparently frightened the Takoma Park brethren. Rebuffed, Price and his friends in Los Angeles area organized the Deluge Geology Society in 1938 to collaborate “in the upbuilding of a positive system of faith-building science.” Between 1941 and 1945, they published *The Bulletin of Deluge Geology and Related Sciences*, mailed to over 200 subscribers. As described by Price, the society consisted of “a very eminent set of men. . . . In no other part of this round globe could anything like the number of scientifically educated believers in Creation and opponents of evolution be assembled, as here in Southern California.” Among the active members of the group were several physicians, including Cyril Courville and Molleurus Couperus, and Benjamin F. Allen, an amateur geologist and frequent contributor to *Signs of the Times*.

A schism in 1945 between the physicians and Allen resulted in the disbandment of the original group and the creation of the Society for the Study of Natural Science, composed largely of the same membership, except for Allen. Until 1948, this organization published *The Forum for the Correlation of Sci-*

ence and the Bible, edited by Couperus. During this time, *The Forum* devoted considerable attention to the age of the earth, with Price and Couperus arguing for an earth “probably older than two billion years” and Clark defending the “ultra-literal view. . . that the matter composing the earth was spoken into existence as the first step in the six-day creation process.” . . .

Before long, the Research Division, renamed the Geoscience Research Institute and moved to Berrien Springs, Mich., split down the middle. Marsh insisted on using the historic Adventist interpretations of the Bible and the writings of Ellen White as the foundation of his scientific investigations. Hare and Ritland, on the other hand, expressed a willingness to reinterpret the Biblical account of creation and writings of Mrs. White if the scientific evidence so indicated, an “open-minded” approach their colleague regarded as “satanic.” . . .

Through the early 1960s, Marsh, who directed the institute, urged the General Conference to endorse his conservative views. President Figuhr, however, apparently felt “that this discussion [regarding the age of the earth] has gone on during the 40 years that he’d been in the ministry, and he didn’t think that it really amounted to much, it wasn’t something that we should put too much time on.” In 1964, the General Conference retired Marsh, who attributed his fall to “a no-holds-barred process of indoctrination” carried on by his “open-minded” colleagues. A consolation appointment in the Andrews University Biology Department seemed to him little better than “banishment into the farthest corner of Siberia.”

Marsh’s successor, Ritland, did indeed prove to be more “open-minded” than his predecessor. Unlike Marsh, who allowed his understanding of the Bible and the

writings of Ellen White to determine his science, Ritland believed that God had revealed Himself both through nature and the Scriptures. Apparent conflicts between the two revelations might just as easily result from misreading the written work as from misinterpreting the natural record. Using this approach, Ritland prompted many Adventist scientists and not a few administrators to re-evaluate their attitudes toward geology and paleontology and to abandon the notion that the Noachian flood explained virtually the entire geological record. In his book *A Search for Meaning in Nature* (1970), he emphasized the positive evidence of design in the world rather than the negative aspects of modern science. . . .

This approach, however, proved too liberal for the administration of Robert H. Pierson, who soon after his election to the presidency in 1966 made his position clear: “In our controversy with proponents

Ritland believed that God had revealed himself both through nature and the Scriptures. Apparent conflicts between the two revelations might just as easily result from misreading the written work as from misinterpreting the natural record. Ritland emphasized the evidence of design.

of the evolutionary theory," he declared in the *Review and Herald* in 1968, "we must keep in clear perspective—the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are not on trial." It soon became evident that Ritland's days as director were numbered, that Marsh was now more attuned than he to the pulse of the church. In 1971, Ritland, finding it increasingly difficult to function within the constraints imposed by the administration in Takoma Park, resigned his position as director of the Geoscience Research Institute and joined Marsh in what was becoming an Adventist Siberia, the An-

draws University Biology Department. The church's brief experiment with "open-mindedness" thus came to an end.

Under its new director, Robert H. Brown, the Institute quickly swung into line behind the Pierson administration. Those scientists who resisted the revival of the White-Price-Marsh philosophy soon found themselves without a platform or, worse yet, without a job. . . .

Adventist leaders as late as the mid-1970s still considered evolutionary biology and geology to be "sciences of satanic origin."

for the first time, two days of those discussions on Ellen White. Many consider that in Spectrum's 25 years of existence it is these pages that have most affected Adventist thinking. It is a fact that extra copies of this issue quickly sold out.

What follows are excerpts from Couperus' introduction and from the two days of the 1919 discussions that followed it in Spectrum.

Introduction

The struggle that has been present in the Seventh-day Adventist Church to come to an acceptable and honest decision about the place which the writings of Ellen White should have for our church and those in other churches is illustrated by the discussions which took place at the Bible Conference in Takoma Park, from July 1-21, 1919, and which was followed immediately by a three-weeks long meeting of the Bible and History Teachers Council. In the *Review and Herald* of Aug. 14, 1919, W. E. Howell lists 22 delegates from our colleges attending the Bible and History Teachers Council, and other evidence indicates that the total number attending the Bible Conference was over 50. The president of the General Conference at that time, Arthur G. Daniells, reported on the Bible Conference in the *Review and Herald* of Aug. 21, 1919, and informs us that the meeting was attended "by editors, Bible and history teachers from our colleges and seminaries, and members of the General Conference Committee." Among those present at the Bible Conference, besides A. G. Daniells, were G. B. Thompson, field secretary of the General Conference; F. M. Wilcox, editor of the *Review and Herald*; M. E. Kern, formerly president of the Foreign Mission Seminary (now Columbia Union College); W. W. Prescott, formerly

The 1919 Bible Conference



by Molleurus Couperus
Vol. 10, No. 1 (May 1979)

Molleurus Couperus, now retired in Angwin, California, has lived one of the most physically and intellectually adventurous Adventist lives of his generation. It is not surprising that he became the first editor of Spectrum, serving through its first six volumes. Couperus, born in Holland, graduated from Emmanuel Missionary College (now Andrews University) and the College of Medical Evangelists. He served as a missionary in what was then the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). He later settled in the United States, where for many years he chaired the department of dermatology at the Loma Linda University School of Medicine.

On his hundreds of international

trips he met many famous figures, including King Hussein of Jordan, whom he treated when the king was still a child, and Louis B. Leakey, the world-renowned Eastern African anthropologist of early man. Leakey many times stayed at Couperus' home and lectured in Couperus' course on physical anthropology at the University of California at Los Angeles.

In the crucial first years of its existence, Couperus established Spectrum's reputation for excellence and irenic independence. (See the excerpt from Richard Osborn's essay printed above.) Couperus' editorial coups continued after he left the editorship. He secured for Spectrum a long-lost transcript discovered by the denomination's archivist, Donald Yost. The 2,400 pages record discussions of two meetings held in Takoma Park, Maryland in 1919: a Bible Conference, held July 1-21, followed by a three-week long Bible and History Teachers Council attended by some of the church's highest elected leaders, including General Conference President A. G. Daniells. The full transcript has yet to be published. However, 60 years after the event, Spectrum published,

editor of the *Review and Herald* and then a field secretary of the General Conference (who had a major part in the revision of the book *The Great Controversy* in 1911); H. C. Lacey, religion teacher at the Foreign Mission Seminary; W. E. Howell, editor of the *Christian Educator*; W. G. Wirth, a religion teacher at Pacific Union College, and later at the College of Medical Evangelists; M. C. Wilcox, book editor for the Pacific Press; A. O. Tait, editor of the *Signs of the Times*; C. M. Sorenson, history teacher at Emmanuel Missionary College; C. S. Longacre, secretary of the Religious Liberty Association; W. H. Wakeham, Bible teacher at Emmanuel Missionary College; J. N. Anderson, Bible teacher at the Washington Foreign Mission Seminary; C. L. Taylor, head of the Bible Department, Canadian Junior College; L. L. Caviness, associate editor of the *Review and Herald*; and T. M. French, head of the school of theology at Emmanuel Missionary College. . . .

The record of the 1919 Bible Conference was lost until December 1974, when Dr. F. Donald Yost found two packages wrapped in paper at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Takoma Park. The packages contained some 2,400 pages of typewritten material, transcribed from stenographic notes taken at the Conference.

July 30, 1919

W. W. Prescott: How should we use the writings of the spirit of prophecy as an authority by which to settle historical questions?

A. G. Daniells: Well, now, as I understand it, Sister White never claimed to be an authority on history, and never claimed to be a dogmatic teacher on theology. She never outlined a course of theology, like Mrs. Eddy's book on teach-

ing. She just gave out fragmentary statements, but left the pastors and evangelists and preachers to work out all these problems of scripture and of theology and of history. She never claimed to be an authority on history; and as I have understood it, where the history related to the interpretation of prophecy was clear and expressive, she wove it into her writings; but I have always understood that, as far as she was concerned, she was ready to correct in revision such statements as she thought should be corrected. I have never gone to her writings, and taken the history that I found in her writings, as the positive statement of history regarding the fulfillment of prophecy. I do not know how others may view that, but I have felt that I should deal with history in the same way that I am

exhorted to deal with the Bible—prove it all carefully and thoroughly, and then let her go on and make such revisions from time to time as seem best.

Just one more thought: Now you know something about that little book, "The Life of Paul." You know the difficulty we got into about that. We could never claim inspiration in the whole thought and makeup of the book, because it has been thrown aside because it was badly put together. Credits were not given to the proper authorities, and some of that crept into "The Great Controversy,"—the lack of credits; and in the revision of that book those things were carefully run down and made right. Personally that has never shaken my faith, but there are men who have been greatly hurt by it, and I think it is because they claimed too much for these writings. Just as Brother White says, there is a danger in going away from the Book, and claiming too much. Let it have its full weight, just as God has fixed it, and then I think we will stand without being shaken when some of these things do appear that we can not harmonize with our theory. . . .

I will tell you one thing, a great victory will be gained if we get a liberal spirit so that we will treat brethren who differ with us on the interpretation of the Testimonies in the same Christian way we treat them when they differ on the interpretation of the Bible. That will be a good deal gained, and it is worth gaining, I want to tell you, for I have been under criticism ever since the controversy started at Battle Creek. Isn't it a strange thing that when I and some of my associates fought that heresy year after year, and we got message after message from the spirit of prophecy—some of them very comforting and uplifting messages—and all that time we were counted as

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heretics on the spirit of prophecy? How do you account for that? Why didn't the spirit of prophecy get after us? I claim that I know as well as any man whether I believe in the spirit of prophecy or not. I do not ask people to accept my views, but I would like the confidence of brothers where we differ in interpretation. If we can engender that spirit, it will be a great help; and I believe we have to teach it right in our schools.

Suppose students come to you with questions about the Bible that you do not know what to do with,—or do you always know? I would like to go to a teacher for a year that would tell me everything in here that puzzles me! What do you do when students come to you with such questions?

W. H. Wakeham: I tell them I do not know, and I do not lose their confidence, either.

A. G. Daniells: Well, when they come to you with something in the spirit of prophecy that is puzzling, why not say, as Peter did, that there are some things hard to be understood. I do not think that destroys the confidence of the people. But we have got the idea that we have got to just assume full and complete knowledge of everything about the spirit of prophecy and take an extreme position in order to be loyal and to be true to it. . . .

August 1, 1919

C. M. Sorenson: Does Sister White use the word "inspiration" concerning her own writings, or is that merely a theory we have worked up ourselves? I ask for information? I have never seen that in her writings.

A. G. Daniells: I hardly know where to begin or what to say. I think I must repeat this, that our difficulty lies in two points, especially. One is on infallibility and the other is on verbal inspiration. I think James White foresaw difficul-

ties along this line away back at the beginning. He knew that he took Sister White's testimonies and helped to write them out and make them clear and grammatical and plain. He knew that he was doing that right along. And he knew that the secretaries they employed took them and put them into grammatical condition, transposed sentences, completed sentences, and used words that Sister White did not herself write in her original copy. He saw that, and yet he saw some brethren who did not know this, and who had great confidence in the Testimonies, just believing and teaching that these words were given to Sister White as well as the thought. And he tried to correct that idea. You will find those statements in the *Review and Herald*, like the one Brother Wilcox read

the other day. If that explanation had been accepted and passed on down, we would have been free from a great many perplexities that we have now.

F. M. Wilcox: Articles were published in those early *Reviews* disclaiming that.

A. G. Daniells: Yes, but you know there are some brethren who go in all over. We could mention some old and some young who think they cannot believe the Testimonies without just putting them up as absolutely infallible and word-inspired, taking the whole thing as given verbally by the Lord. They do not see how to believe them and how to get good out of them except in that way and I suppose some people would feel that if they did not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, they could not have confidence in it, and take it as the great Book that they now see it to be. Some men are technical, and can hardly understand it in any other way. Some other men are not so technical in logic, but they have great faith and great confidence, and so they can go through on another line of thought. I am sure there has been advocated an idea of infallibility in Sister White and verbal inspiration in the Testimonies that has led people to expect too much and make too great claims, and so we have gotten into difficulty.

Now, as I have studied it these years since I was thrown into the controversy at Battle Creek, I have endeavored to ascertain the truth and then be true to the truth. I do not know how to do except that way. It will never help me, or help the people, to make a false claim to evade some trouble. I know we have difficulties here, but let us dispose of some of the main things first. Brethren, are we going to evade difficulties or help out the difficulties by taking a false position? [Voices: No!] Well, then let us

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take an honest, true position, and reach our end somehow, because I never will put up a false claim to evade something that will come up a little later on. That is not honest and it is not Christian, and so I take my stand there.

In Australia I saw *The Desire of Ages* being made up, and I saw the rewriting of chapters, some of them written over and over again. I saw that, and when I talked with Sister Davis about it, I tell you I had to square up to this thing and begin to settle things about the spirit of prophecy. If these false positions had never been taken, the thing would be much plainer than it is today. What was charged was plagiarism would all have been simplified, and I believe men would have been saved to the cause if from the start we had understood this thing as it should have been. With those

false views held, we face difficulties in straightening up. We will not meet those difficulties by resorting to a false claim. We could meet them just for today by saying, "Brethren, I believe in the verbal inspiration of the Testimonies; I believe in the infallibility of the one through whom they came, and everything that is written there I will take and I will stand on that against all comers."

If we did that, I would just take everything from A to Z, exactly as it was written, without making any explanations to any one; and I would not eat butter or salt or eggs if I believed that the Lord gave the words in those Testimonies to Sister White for the whole body of people in this world. But I do not believe it.

M. E. Kern: You couldn't and keep your conscience clear.

amendment. The National Reform Association, formed in 1864, spearheaded this drive, and it was this right-wing movement that particularly disturbed Mrs. White and other Adventists.

Ellen White shared the evangelical idea that the Sunday-Sabbath was crucial to the future of civilization. Only, she turned the concept on its head by declaring that the enforcement of a Sunday-Sabbath would destroy America and civilization at large rather than improve the world. Like other evangelicals, she ascribed cosmic significance to the Sunday-Sabbath, but in a negative rather than a positive sense. The real confrontation between her and evangelicals on the sabbatarian issue involved the question of whether to protect the American republic and Anglo-American civilization with [a] national Sabbath or without it. Again, Mrs. White and other Adventists hoped to preserve a Protestant America by staving off Sunday legislation. In 1888 and 1889, an anxious Adventist minority contributed to the defeat of Blair's Sunday legislation to prevent a Protestant apostasy and national ruin. As a prophetic people, Adventists used their voice to sustain the republic as long as possible, borrowing time to preach Adventism throughout the world. Paradoxically, they wished to delay the end in order to preach that the end was soon. . . .

In the 1880s, however, it was still plausible for Ellen White to project that "when Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall stretch over the abyss to clasp hands with *spiritualism*, when under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods

The World of E. G. White and The End of the World



Jonathan Butler
Vol. 10, No. 2 (August 1979)

Jonathan Butler is probably the most creative of a brilliant generation of trained historians of Adventism (see profile on Ronald Numbers in this issue). Butler received his B.A. from La Sierra University, his B.D. from the SDA Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. in the history of American religion from the University of Chicago, where he studied under Martin

Marty, America's best-known historian of religion. He has taught history at both Union College and La Sierra University. Below is the first of the many original essays that he has published in many journals. Butler has written Softly and Tenderly: Heaven and Hell in American Revivalism, 1870-1920 (Carlson Publishing, Inc., 1991), and with Ronald Numbers co-edited The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the 19th Century (University of Tennessee Press, 1992).

Many evangelicals were quite willing to rely fully on voluntary means in working toward a Christian commonwealth that worshipped on a "Christian Sabbath," but there were a number who sought guarantees of the nation's Christian character by constitutional

and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near." Certainly, this testimony was "present truth" for any Adventist in the 1880s, as the end seemed near, even at the door. To be sure, Mrs. White's eschatology included the future as well as the present tense, but it was the near future. Her predictions of the future appeared as projections on a screen which only enlarged, dramatized and intensified the scenes of her contemporary world.

Mrs. White was herself a Protestant American whose biography offered an abridgment of America's Protestant era. From her early days as a Methodist New Englander, she invested her considerable energies in the nineteenth-century Protestant concerns of millennialism and sabbatarianism, anti-Catholicism and antislavery, temperance, and education. When this Protestant world began slipping away, Mrs. White was aghast. She saw the Victorian Protestant America declining in the face of religious and ethnic, intellectual and social changes. Mrs. White's eschatology envisioned the end of *her* world.

With Victorian Protestant America on the wane, Mrs. White

preserved in the Adventist community many aspects of its world. Anthony C. Wallace has defined a millenarian group like ours as "a deliberate, organized conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture." Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and attitudes on the Second Coming, the Sabbath, health, education, social welfare, church and state, big labor and the cities all show Adventism to be a Victorian Protestant subculture sustaining itself long after the larger host society has disappeared. In the twentieth century, then, Seventh-day Adventists form a "cognitive minority" that holds on to an earlier, religious worldview in a new, more secular and pluralistic world. Nothing accounts for Adventist distinctiveness in this new era quite so much as the continuing impact of Ellen White on Seventh-day Adventists. Hence, if Victorian Protestant America has ended, Adventists continue to illustrate the remarkable vitality and human significance of that earlier vision. And, while the Second Coming has not yet materialized, the Adventist culture provides an example of a kind of "realized eschatology" from which the world may benefit in our time.

comfortably, found themselves trying to explain Deuteronomic health laws along with their particular slant on health reform to a secular and uncomprehending public. Indeed, until a few years ago, vegetarianism was probably considered by most people as an eccentricity confined to a few religious fanatics, nature freaks, and anemic-looking health nuts. . . .

Society has finally seen the light. This means that all of us who were raised vegetarians, and were slightly embarrassed about it, can now "come out of the closet" and admit that we have been practicing vegetarianism for most of our lives. . . .

I wish to draw the issues as clearly as possible in conclusion. First, because I believe that animals have an intrinsic right to life, thus the right not to be exploited as a means to human ends, I have argued that it is ethically wrong, in fact immoral, to perpetuate the centuries of speciesism against animals by eating meat produced by . . . intensive farming methods. . . .

Second, I have argued that the killing of animals for the mere tastes of the human palate is unjustified when so much food of other kinds is available. In an affluent country such as the United States, few people need meat in their diet to survive and lead healthy lives. Therefore, it seems to me that what the suffering animals go through to gratify an acquired human taste far outweighs the necessity for meat eating. Thus, I believe that it is ethically wrong, and indeed immoral, for the citizens of an affluent countries where food is abundant to insist on meat eating.

Third, I have argued that the increasing demand for meat, particularly beef, and the "green revolution" in crop production have tended to create a situation in which more grain is being used to fatten cattle than is consumed directly by humans—especially humans in the

A Radical Case for Vegetarianism



by Barry Casey

Vol. 11, No. 3 (February 1981)

Barry Casey, chair of the division of arts and communication at Columbia Union College, received his

B.A. from Pacific Union College, his M.A. in communications from Andrews University, and his Ph.D. in philosophy of religion and contemporary theology from the Claremont Graduate School. In addition to writing several theological essays for Spectrum, Casey created its present design.

It has long been a commonplace in Adventism that one was a vegetarian because the Bible seemed to recommend it and because the "health message" demanded it. Adventists, perhaps un-

famine areas of the Third World countries. In addition, the wasteful inefficiency of converting grain and plant protein not only contributes to the spiraling costs and the greed of an overconsuming society, but directly affects [the] . . . starving poor in the Third World. In short, the world is reaching the point where it can no longer afford the

affluent countries' consuming many more times their share of the world's resources and goods. I believe that this, too, is immoral, and that a vegetarian diet is a first step toward alleviating world hunger and undermining support for oppressive economic and political structures, both in the affluent countries and in the Third World.

always been working somewhere.

Later on, I decided that I would have to be asexual in order to be Christian, that I couldn't be homosexual. Needing something to take the place of sex, I turned to the church, and also the school. When I was in school, I was president of my sophomore, junior, and senior classes, and then, after graduating, I started an alumni association and was president of that for three years. I was very active trying to deny that I was sexual, and yet all the time I knew that I was very sexual.

After graduating from La Sierra, I got a job as a youth pastor and then went on to teach school in Hawaii. . . . I was told that I was not going to be rehired. I asked why, and they said, "Well, we think you'd have a better opportunity to find a wife on the mainland than here in Hawaii because there are very few single women your age." By the end of the school year, I still hadn't been offered a job, even though I had several inquiries from mainland schools. Later, a friend told me he'd overheard the academy principal telling someone who called for a reference concerning me that I was a suspected queer. Those were the terms, my friend said, that were used.

After not receiving a job, I went to Glendale to the union office, where I knew personally the head of education in the Pacific Union. I said, "I would really like to have a school. I have lifelong Adventist credentials, I'm a teacher, I want to teach." He replied, "With your problem . . ." and I interrupted, "What is my problem?" "You know what your problem is. I don't want to talk about it." After the conversation ended, I went down to my car, and wrote a letter in the parking lot of the union office requesting that my name be dropped from the church. Fortunately, I didn't have a stamp. When I got home, I tore up

Growing Up Gay Adventist



Anonymous
Vol. 12, No. 3 (April 1982)

The excerpts below are taken from the first accounts from Adventist homosexuals to appear in an Adventist publication. They were testimonies given at one of the yearly camp meetings of SDA Kinship, an organization serving and representing homosexual Adventists. The camp meetings are still held annually.

In August 1980, six delegates accredited by the General Conference, including three seminary professors and two pastors, attended a camp meeting at Payson, Arizona, sponsored by SDA Kinship, an organization serving and representing homosexual Adventists. At one meeting the delegates asked Kinship members to tell their personal stories. "Growing Up Gay Adventist" contains excerpts from the accounts.

Speaker Six: I have just a couple of things to say. As the lover of an Adventist lesbian, I've had prob-

ably a unique experience. We do attend church together; the pastor is aware of our situation. I must admit that our pastor has been kind in every respect, and I really have to give him a lot of credit for that. Initially, he did not know at all how to relate to me. What do you say to the lover of a lesbian? And so, about all he could muster was a "hello," a quick exit and turning red. But, gradually, we began to talk, and he has encouraged me both personally and spiritually and that has met a need for me. Yet even though I feel accepted by him, there is no way for me to identify within the church and so I often feel very isolated. And that's difficult.

Speaker Seven: I'm a fourth-generation Adventist. I knew that I was different from about the age of six, but I didn't know the correct name for what I was. I knew the names of pansy, queer, sissy—all these things that society gives us to grow up with. It was perhaps in the fourth grade that I got my hands on the book called *On Becoming a Man* and found out my condition was very, very bad and I was probably going to be lost eternally unless I could find some way to redeem myself. So I got as involved in the church as I possibly could. When I was a junior in high school I was the earliten Sabbath school leader. And that's how I got into doing things. I have never been in an adult Sabbath school; I have

the letter. I decided that the Adventist church was stuck with me. I would always be an Adventist. I would stick it out.

Up to this time, I still had never had any sexual experience with anyone, male or female. I decided, here I am, unemployable, it's time I find out for sure. By accident I found where gays in my town meet at night. I went there three weeks in a row, every day, meeting people, and I finally met a person I felt really comfortable with.

Later on, I came out to my parents. In the first initial shock they were very supportive. After about a week, they got to thinking about it and decided, "You know, this is something that should be prayed about." So they requested that the pastor make an announcement in church. As a result, I came out to the entire church and they have been very supportive. . . .

Speaker Ten: . . . About a year-and-a-half ago I finally came to complete emotional breakdown and I admitted to my wife and to my pastor that I knew that I was gay. Well, the first response was "You go home and pray about it," which I knew wasn't going to help. I'd been doing that forever. And then he handed me a whole bunch of books of the sort that were supposed to deal with problems in marriage. It had nothing to do with me and my problem. And within a week I found out that he had announced it to the whole church. He had also called my children and announced it to them. Well, I lived through that, and then they asked me to go see a psychologist, which I did—an Adventist psychologist. A dear lady, I must say. She at least helped me in some respects to regain my personhood, although she didn't know anything about homosexuals. After five months of weekly 10-hour trips to go through this, and it wasn't doing much good, I finally had to tell my wife

and my pastor I could not go back to living a lie. I couldn't do it conscientiously.

This time my wife and my pastor—I live in a very small community of about 5,000 people, very red-necked—went to every business in the community informing them of what I was. I lost half my customers, and for the next three months I got phone calls and letters threatening my life. Three times shots have been fired through the windshield of my car as I drove along. I've had no more

communication with the church, except for the pastor one time coming to say he felt that he'd made a mistake. I've continued to attend church. Only two people from church have spoken to me in over a year. One of those dear ladies, a church board member, called last week to tell me that my name was being removed from the books. They have never contacted me about it. More recently, three elders of the church visited me and asked me to stay away from church altogether.

What Does the New Testament Say About Divorce?



by John C. Brunt
Vol. 13, No. 4 (March 1983)

John C. Brunt, the vice-president of academic administration and professor of biblical studies at Walla Walla College, is the author of several books for the Adventist reading public, including his most recent, Good News for Troubled Times (Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1993). He has written several of the groundbreaking essays that have appeared in Spectrum over the past 25 years, including his piece on clean and unclean meats, "Unclean or Unhealthful? An Adventist Perspective" (Vol. 11, No. 3, February 1981). A graduate of La Sierra University, he received his M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. in New Testament from Emory University.

Undoubtedly this brief survey of the New Testament material on divorce is complex and confusing. What does it all mean for our attitude toward divorce and our actions with regard to it? I tentatively set forth the following conclusions.

First, no "divorce policy" for the church can be attained from the New Testament material. Never does the New Testament explicitly connect divorce with church discipline. The New Testament writers did not intend to set down a church policy; rather they related Jesus' teachings to various situations that their communities faced. As a result there is some degree of diversity of detail among the New Testament writers, which makes harmonization into a single "biblical" policy impossible. In addition, the interpretive problems in these passages are too great to permit us to draw a detailed policy from them. There is simply too much that we don't know. For example, we cannot be absolutely certain whether Paul allows for remarriage after the divorce he permits, or precisely what *porneia* means in Matthew. If we

were to have a precise biblical policy, we would certainly need to have definite answers to both of these questions. This is not to say that the church should have no policy, nor is it to say that it cannot be informed by the New Testament. But when we formulate a policy we will have to accept responsibility for its content. We cannot simply call it the biblical policy.

Second, although the material does not provide us with a policy, it is useful for us. It not only sets forth some things that are quite clear, in spite of interpretive difficulties, but also gives us examples of inspired, moral reasoning in relationship to the divorce issue. Close attention to the material is therefore helpful in allowing us as individuals and as a church to reflect on this issue. We need not despair simply because there are difficult elements in the text. We can concentrate on what *is* clear. The recognition that we cannot draw clear-cut policies from the material does not render it irrelevant.

Third, the New Testament presents a consistent and clear presumption against divorce. All of the New Testament writers agree that Jesus opposed divorce and that God's ideal is that there should be no divorce. God intends that marriage should be permanent. He himself joins husbands and wives together, and humans are called upon to preserve his work and not undo it. This is the basic core of Jesus' teaching on divorce. Divorce thwarts God's will and misses his ideal.

This is by far the most important conclusion of the New Testament material on divorce, and it flies in the face of much of our contemporary culture. In an age when "till death do us part" all too often means "as long as everything goes well," the New Testament challenges us with God's will from creation for the permanence of

marriage. Every attempt on our part to look for grounds that we might use to justify divorce misses the point. The goal is no divorce. When we truly listen to the New Testament, we are responsible to do everything we can to reach that goal.

Fourth, in the New Testament, particularly in Paul and Matthew, there is a realization that in a less than ideal world humans will not always meet God's ideal. In fact, at times this ideal may conflict with other values and ideals, such as the ideal that God has called us to peace. The New Testament expresses a gracious realism that attempts to relate God's will to actual circumstances that are sometimes less than ideal. This is most apparent in Paul.

Our Most Prolific Authors

Bonnie Dwyer (33)

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Charles Scriven (10)

Jonathan Butler (9)

Paul's exception in the case of mixed marriages is based on a principle—God has called us to peace. This would seem to imply that Paul believes that other values, in addition to God's ideal for the permanence of marriage, are important and must, in at least some cases, be considered. As Furnish says of Paul:

He would appear to be unwilling to sanction the idea that marriage is an end in and of itself that must be maintained at any cost. Here Paul shows a sensitivity to the *quality* of a marriage relationship, for which he is seldom given credit.

Thus Paul presents us with an inspired example of principled, moral reasoning in relationship to a specific marital situation. Rather than legalistically making Paul's (or Matthew's for that matter) specific exception the only possible exception, it would seem more in keeping with the spirit of the New Testament material to engage in the same type of moral reasoning with regard to specific cases, asking, for example, what would be most in keeping with God's ideal for marriage and his call to peace, and recognizing that the strong presumption against divorce would make any exception bear a very strong burden of proof.

Fifth, although no policy can claim to be the biblical policy, certain requirements would seem necessary for any church to be able to claim that its decisions concerning divorce were consistent with the New Testament. What would such a policy need to do?

It would affirm and give witness to God's ideal that marriages are to be permanent. Anything less would dilute the clear and consistent teaching of the New Testament.

It would also attempt to mediate God's redemptive grace and heal-

ing in those situations where this ideal is not met. This would include the same gracious realism found in the New Testament.

It would be sufficiently flexible to allow for principled moral reasoning, such as we find in Paul, to be applied to specific cases. All too often, in an attempt to be consistent, the Matthean exception has been absolutized into a hard-and-fast law, with little if any reference to the Pauline approach. While this may satisfy our need to have cut-and-dried answers for

every situation, it loses the richness of the New Testament's moral thinking.

These criteria do not establish a policy but they do aid in evaluating any policy's consistency with the New Testament.

Finally, the affirmation of God's ideal for marriages must be seen not only in the church's divorce policy but in its total ministry. Even more important than how we treat cases of divorce and remarriage is what we do to promote good marriages and help troubled ones. . . .

Camp Meeting Adventist Style: Soquel Through a Glass Darkly



by Jan Daffern

Vol. 14, No. 2 (October 1983)

A graduate of La Sierra University and the recipient of an M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary, Jan Daffern was one of the first Adventist woman pastors to perform a baptism (see profile of Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler). Now a pastoral counselor in Frederick, Maryland, Daffern revealed how memories of Adventist camp meetings are the stuff of which short stories—and theologies—are made.

The camp meeting I remember best, the camp meeting of my youth, is held each year in Soquel, a tiny coastal town in Central California. Soquel is a faded and drab town in an area of spectacular beauty. The most notable aspect of

Soquel is the light. Filtered through a gray mist, it makes lettuce grow in Salinas and illumines a whole genre of literature in and around Monterey. In Soquel, this fragile light is nearly suffocated by the yellow dust which sifts down from the hillsides and settles in the eucalyptus groves. Each August somewhere around 15,000 Adventists enter this suffusion of light and dust.

In those early years I went to Soquel only on Sabbaths. One of those years I went with my stepsister Sally [names have been changed], who did not attend church but never missed Soquel. We arrived in her 1968, metalflake-blue Corvette. As we walked through the campground that day, Sally commented that all that was missing was a rock band like, say, Country Joe and the Fish, set up near the vegeburger stand. Although their music would have fit the scene, years later it occurred to me how utterly out of place the Fish would have been: none of them had ever attended academy with anyone I knew.

It has been estimated that a quarter of us who gathered there in

the late 60s and the early 70s were the products of the baby boom of California Adventism. Superficially we were indistinguishable from others of our time and place. As a group we participated in the restlessness of our generation and our presence resulted in the temporary doubling of the Soquel police force. We got high, celebrated free love, and as the era mellowed, turned on to Jesus and self-help. The recollection which burns through the swirl of those events is that rarely did any of us ever do these things with anyone who had not gone to academy at Fresno, or Glendale, or Rio Lindo. That we were so thoroughly immersed in the turbulence of that time only with each other, and most deeply at camp meeting, reveals a sincere obedience to sectarian Adventism.

Physically, the camp at Soquel offers the appearance of a combination parking lot and tented desert. On one end, the camp meeting tents stand in perfectly pitched rows, the remains of a time when the pious of the frontier abandoned the comforts of home for a season of spiritual refreshing. At Soquel in my teen years, the tents were giving way to recreational vehicles. These were parked in the southwest end and came complete with showers, toilets, and even color television. I can recall entering a 40-foot recreational vehicle meticulously decorated in white French provincial with accents in blue. The lady of the mobile home greeted me in a baby blue dressing gown and gold slippers.

In 1970 I made the transition from weekend visitor at Soquel to a resident for the full 10 days. I stayed in a camp meeting tent with my best friend Betsy and her family. Betsy and I walked through a cold fog at dawn to the youth tent to hear Morris Venden present the precise parsing of the phrase, "a total submission to Christ." There

we were also told that the youth of the church would "finish the work." Betsy and I were confident of our place in the cosmic struggle for the return of Christ. That we did not know what the reproduction of the life of Christ might look like in adolescent females was only vaguely unsettling. That we were responsible for the return of Christ and the end of all things was certain. However, by noon each day, the sun had burned through the layer of gray and we were headed for the beach with Scott and Bobby, where the possibility of "perfect submission" took on a more exquisite clarity. Betsy and Scott were a solid couple; that is, they were still together at the next camp meeting. I learned of the end of all things that first year when Bobby, the son of a literature evangelist, told me at camp tear-down that he was in love with someone back at home.

In scheduled camp meeting seminars Betsy and I learned how to cook without eggs or milk, develop self-esteem through the pages of *The Desire of Ages*, and discover our history and future through the *Great Controversy*. But we also joined small spontaneous prayer groups on campus. I can recall that in one such group a 19-year-old from Lodi announced, "if the Lord wants us to speak in tongues here, we're going to go with it." It was in these groups that we developed both a sense of importance and impatience. Following one such camp meeting experience, Betsy and I insisted on attending a conference executive committee meeting to ask for money to start a youth center. That we were scarcely 16 and arrived at the meeting in mini-skirts only made us more certain of our rightness for the task. When the conference president gently suggested that we work with the youth department for guidance and money, we announced that the Lord was coming, that our friends were dying, and that we did

not have time to work with committees. When we left that meeting we were confident the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the Central California Conference Committee and taken up residence with us.

At the official level, communication at Soquel was clear. Several conference employees worked on it full time. Those of us who stayed through the week came to depend on a voice over the loudspeaker to wake us in the morning and give a summary of the day's events. At headquarters a complete list of campers with their tent or vehicle location was posted. The bookstore handed out lists of camp meeting specials. But this kind of communication only assured me that I would be told of a sale on the latest gospel music album, or could find an old roommate, or that I might have my blood pressure checked on Tuesday. It did not suggest that I would be changed, and yet a pervasive awareness of the cataclysmic spread among us through labyrinthine channels. A young woman camped in row K had been mysteriously healed of a blood disease which might or might not have been terminal. A hitchhiker from somewhere near Los Angeles was brought to the front gate of Soquel and left by a driver who did not reveal his name or final destination. A retired minister from Merced or Modesto had a dream in which he was told that we had little time left.

I remember that in 1972 Bonnie Letcher and two seductively spiritual young men sang of our apocalyptic anxieties. "But tell me where am I now? Am I almost there? Is that heaven's bright glory I see? Is that Jesus I hear calling out my name? Is the door standing open for me?" I also remember that my good friend Brad almost died at Soquel that year after swallowing several reds and a fifth of Southern Comfort.

During my adolescence at Soquel

it was a common, even mundane, impression among youth growing up on the edges of places like San Francisco, Berkeley, and Big Sur, that change was imminent and would not be effected through established channels. Revolution had been assimilated into the mainstream of our consciousness and in the particular intensity of Soquel, 10 days was not too short a time to work a radical restructuring of our lives.

And I was changed at Soquel in ways I did not imagine. It was at Soquel that a sweet faced 18-year old from my senior class was arrested for threatening to shoot up the campground. He was carrying a concealed and loaded .38. It was at Soquel that I first realized that the thirst for souls was related to drought in the conference coffers. It was at Soquel that I learned even

We go on this ritual errand into the wilderness because there, finally, our fury of Apocalyptic words is swallowed up in a sea of glass. Camp meeting is a promise of grace, an assurance that the covenant and community still hold fast, that in a sky churning with clouds the size of a man's hand, the rainbow still shines.

the church is not always as it appears to be.

It was at Soquel that I first saw a woman, Madelyn Haldeman, preach a sermon. One evening as she walked through the youth tent, tall, forceful, and feminine, I first dreamed of preaching my own sermon. At Soquel I also listened to the wit, intelligence, and integrity of H.M.S. Richards, Sr. Summer by summer he created an oasis in a desert of chaos. That he had withstood a lifetime of camp meetings, had made peace with the "boys at the G.C.," as he called them, that he never appeared without his Bible, assured me and my generation that the center would hold.

Many question the relevance of camp meeting. It is an administrative headache. It is expensive and anachronistic. There are problems with health departments and city officials. There are summer storms

which threaten tents. But camp meeting still stands.

That we ought not to return to camp meeting another year is often the theme of the Sabbath sermon. Speakers at camp meetings in 1964 repeatedly said that we were 120 years from the disappointment and that "as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man." This same message was proclaimed at camp meetings in 1983. As surely as every Adventist camp meeting repeats these words, year after year we return again. I suspect that we go on this ritual errand into the wilderness because there, finally, our fury of Apocalyptic words is swallowed up in a sea of grace. Camp meeting is a promise of grace, an assurance that the covenant and community still hold fast, that in a sky churning with clouds the size of a man's hand, the rainbow still shines.

Radical Discipleship and the Renewal of Adventist Mission



by Charles Scriven
Vol. 14, No. 3 (December 1983)

Charles Scriven, now president of Columbia Union College, in this essay opened a drive, now joined by others, to convince Adventists that they are more heirs to the "radical reformation" of the Anabaptists, than to the "magisterial reformation" of Luther and Calvin. It is a part of his attempt to expand theological discussion

within Adventism beyond debates over theories of salvation to involvement in social reform.

Scriven is one of several theologians and ethicists who have, over the past 25 years, helped to put social ethical questions on the agenda of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (see profile of Desmond Ford). Scriven, who graduated from Walla Walla College, received a B.D. from the SDA Theological Seminary and a doctorate from the Graduate Theological Union. He has written, among other books, The Demons Have Had It (Southern Publ. Assn., 1976), and The Transformation of Culture (Herald Press, 1988). One of Spectrum's most prolific contributors, Scriven also served six years as associate and co-editor of the journal.

Historians have come to believe that both Methodism and Baptism belong to a distinctive type of Christianity, profoundly different not only from Roman Catholicism but also from the "magisterial state-church" religion of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism. This is the "believers' church," or "sectarian," or "radical Protestant" type of Christianity. . . .

Anabaptism . . . is the founding movement among the many movements that make up the radical Protestant tradition. More than Lutheranism or Calvinism, it is the radical Protestant tradition that acquaints us with the Methodist and Baptist pioneers of the Adventist way. This radical Protestantism is what we should especially attend to as we try to faithfully fulfill the promise of the Reformation. . . .

Anabaptism helps . . . by setting before us a *distinctive and radical interpretation of devotion to Christ*. In this view, true devotion requires, first of all, discipleship. . . .

The memory of Anabaptism can give us the courage to strike a different emphasis from Luther, to stress the reality of new life in Christ as strongly as we affirm the truth of justification by faith. Until the scriptural witness to Christ persuades us to think otherwise, we may regard our church's emphasis on sanctification as a thing not to be ashamed of, but to vigorously uphold. . . .

In Anabaptism we find historical precedent for faithful lives serving as missionary witness. . . .

There are two ways in which we can make this sort of witness; both reflect the Anabaptist heritage and both are present, if not fully developed, in contemporary Adventism. Consider first non-violence. . . . Is the time not here for non-violence to become a central motif of Adventist identity? Are we faithful to our own past if we avoid the simple

question, Can disciples ever kill or prepare to kill? . . .

A second way to sharpen our witness is through the style of our lives together. True Christians live and even suffer for one another, the Anabaptists said; they build up a kind of family solidarity. . . .

In our relations as male and female, black and white, ordained and unordained, do we exhibit harmonious equality or do we erect dividing walls of hostility? . . .

Anabaptists believed that true Christian witness, true Christian evangelism, confronts not only individuals but also nations and

institutions. . . .

That is where a final element of Anabaptist heritage within radical Protestantism comes into play: the sense of coming apocalyptic transformation. We today are familiar with apocalyptic consciousness; it is central in Adventism as it was central in Adventism's Reformation predecessors. The coming apocalypse keeps us always mindful of divine judgment on the present age, and always hopeful that, by whatever miracle, a new heaven and a new earth will truly come and our witness will truly matter. . . .

Adventist Tithesaying—The Untold Story



by Brian E. Strayer
Vol. 17, No. 1 (October, 1986)

Brian E. Strayer is a professor of history at Andrews University. In addition to tithesaying, his original research in Adventist history includes the role of women and Adventist education. He is the author of Where the Pine Trees Softly Whisper (Union Springs Academy Alumni Association, 1993). A graduate of Southern College (B.A.), and Andrews University (M.A.), Strayer's doctoral dissertation in French history at the University of Iowa has also been published: Lettres d' Cachet de L'Ancien Regime (Peter Lang, 1992).

Many Seventh-day Adventists think our 19th-century pio-

neers' giving habits probably outshone those of their 20th-century descendants. Hence, tithing—practiced by 86 percent of all Seventh-day Adventists today in some form—must indeed be one of the oldest financial traditions within our church. In truth, however, this method of systematic giving entered the pantheon of Adventist practices quite late in the 19th century. While most Adventists have been sacrificial givers, they have not always given systematically. . . .

Up to 1859 no regular giving plan emerged in Adventist circles. While many sabbatarian Adventists gave sacrificially, most members gave sporadically. The three angels' messages given to the Philadelphia church in prophecy could not be spread like the leaves of autumn using the Laodicean methods of 1850s Adventists. Somehow, a new financial program had to be shaped to fit the urgency of the message. . . .

The third giving plan—Systematic Benevolence—actually originated with a church committee at Battle Creek, and not with any one

individual. James White explained to *Review* readers in February 1859 that on the previous January 16, a group of men had met to consider what he called “a System of Benevolence” that would induce every member to give regularly to fully sustain the cause while relieving the few who had given beyond their means. J. N. Andrews, J. B. Frisbie, and James White joined forces to propagate the Battle Creek plan in the *Review*. . . .

It is well worth noting that whenever James White or others discussed the Systematic Benevolence plan, they usually emphasized its nonsacrificial nature. White saw the giving ratios as low enough so those in the poorest circumstances (except widows, the infirm, and the aged, he felt) could give, while those in better circumstances, he hoped, would give even more than the stipulated amounts. At no time did anyone in 1859 mention Malachi 3:8-10, nor did any *Review* writer stress the personal blessings of faithful giving. Writers placed primary emphasis on the needs of the cause. . . .

In practical terms, how did the faithful implement this plan? James White described the procedures in Battle Creek in 1861. Every Sunday the Systematic Benevolence treasurer visited each member's home, carrying his hand trunk and the Systematic Benevolence record book. “All expect him, and all get ready for him, and meet him with open hands and benevolent feelings.” A few hours' labor netted \$25. Yet “no one feels poorer but all feel happier after casting their small sums into the treasury.” To assist the treasurers and each member in keeping track of his weekly giving, the *Review* prepared ledgers with columns for dates, names, weekly giving amounts, and monthly totals.

One sample ledger, printed in the January 6, 1863, *Review* leads

one to draw several enlightening conclusions regarding early Adventist giving. First, the emphasis is upon the giving of adult property owners; the ill, aged, and those under 18 need not participate in the full Systematic Benevolence plan. Second, the plan stresses regular giving of “donations,” not tithes and offerings as such. Finally, as will become clearer later on, the Systematic Benevolence plan asked believers to give a tithe or 10th of their *increase*, not from their *income*. James White and others would later specify that one’s increase represented about 10 percent annual growth of one’s assets; so a 10th of that really amounted to only 1 percent of one’s total assets or income. . . .

The 32-page 1876 tract “Systematic Benevolence” came out under James White’s name, but in reality represented an amplification of Canright’s lengthy articles in the February, March, and April issues of the *Review*. White advanced no new texts, arguments, or ideas that Canright had not already presented, but the fact that the editor who had earlier rejected the “Israelitish tithing plan” now put his name to a pamphlet endorsing this plan shows how far James had come in his understanding of biblical tithing. . . .

Even in 1875, Ellen White referred to the giving plan variously as “Systematic Benevolence” and the “tithing system.” “God’s plan,” she stated, is “the tithing system.” Yet she referred as well to paying “one tenth of the increase” (not income) as the amount God requires today as he did according to the Mosaic law. While she quoted Malachi 3:8-10, Ellen White still averred that tithing should be voluntary. “Systematic Benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion,” she warned.

Her real burden was to persuade Adventists to “make giving a

habit without waiting for special calls.” . . .

Gradually by the 1880s, Adventists adopted the full tithing plan as a replacement for the old “Sister Betsy” plan. . . .

Canright—not White—explained the tithing system to the 1879 General Conference. Therefore, the ex-Adventist preacher in 1913 told Colcord “the denomination can credit me with millions of dollars brought in to the treasury” through the tithing plan. The *Review* for April 24, 1879, attests that Canright did indeed address the General Conference on tithing on April 18. . . .

As calls for funds became especially urgent during the 1930s depression, church leaders decided to spell out tithing duties for officers and members in a *Church Manual*, the first of which was published in 1932. . . . The 1932 *Manual* stated, . . . “all church officers should be tithepayers.” Elders must encourage members to “pay a full and faithful tithe” by preaching sermons on the topic of stewardship and by personal visitation “in a tactful and helpful manner.” But what they learned

To All the World

A sampler of the 50 countries our subscribers call home.

Barbados
Botswana
Czech Republic
Iceland
Martinique
New Caledonia
Papua New Guinea
Russia
St. Vincent
Seychelles Islands
Singapore
Sri Lanka
Tahiti
Trinidad and Tobago
Zimbabwe

about members’ tithing habits, the *Manual* warned, must be kept confidential. Later manuals in 1938, 1940, and 1942 repeated this counsel to local church elders. . . .

The *Manual* then told readers: “From its early days the Seventh-day Adventist church has followed the scriptural method for financing its work.” But as this study reveals, never before the 1880s at the earliest had the church followed anything like the “scriptural method” of true tithing. . . .

Then, establishing a 50-year tradition, the 1932 *Manual* asserted that while tithing “is not held as a test of fellowship,” those “conference workers and church elders and other officers and institutional leaders who failed to pay tithe, should not be continued in office.” Also for the first time, tithing entered the roster of “Fundamental Beliefs.” No. 18 stated:

That the divine principle of tithes and offerings for the support of the gospel is an acknowledgment of God’s ownership in our lives, and that we are stewards who must render account to Him of all that He has committed to our possession.

. . . The first major revisions of the *Church Manuals* in matters of finance came in 1951. For the first time, a section on “Doctrinal Instruction for Baptismal Candidates” was included, and doctrine No. 15 read:

The tithe is holy unto the Lord, and is God’s provision for the support of His ministry. Freewill offerings are also part of God’s plan for the support of His work throughout the world.

. . . Also listed in the 1951 *Manual* were the baptismal vows, No. 10 of which asked: “Do you believe in church organization, and is it your purpose to support the

church by your tithes and offerings, your personal effort, and influence?" Candidates have usually answered "Yes" to this same question for more than 30 years.

The 1951 *Manual* also tightened some loopholes in tithe-paying rhetoric. Church elders who failed to be faithful tithe payers now faced not only expulsion from the office of local elder, but also found themselves barred from any other church office. This regulation also has been repeated in subsequent manuals. . . .

One very important additional statement on page 252 of the 1981 *Manual* clarified the relationship

between tithe paying and church membership. It stated:

A member should never be dropped from the church rolls on account of his inability or failure to render financial help to any of the causes of the church. Church membership rests primarily on a spiritual basis yet it is the duty of every member to support the work of the church in a financial way to the extent of his ability.

The church, in short, should not be seen as an exclusive spiritual club in which nonpaying members are not welcome. . . .

fare Association. The aims of the association are to render material and moral assistance to the destitute and the bereaved, and to provide scholarships to Adventist young people who would otherwise be unable to attend school. The association has also at times been able to supplement the salaries of church workers and thus help sustain them in the work. With its accumulated experience, the association has recently formed an insurance company, the Sedawa Mutual Insurance Co. Ltd., to provide inexpensive insurance protection to the members of the Adventist community. Besides maintaining a medical practice, Kisekka has been a very successful dairy cattle farmer, a director of companies in many other areas—fishing, coffee ginning, horticultural farming, printing, general trading, pharmaceuticals, and insurance. He was also the administrator and majority shareholder in a 50-bed nursing home that brought together more than 10 highly trained medical specialists and provided specialized services to the community. . . .

In Uganda participation in political activities has been taboo in Seventh-day Adventist circles. Adventists have considered politics intrinsically "dirty" and "worldly." But Prime Minister Kisekka testifies that politics is a mighty avenue for witnessing. At his public rallies Kisekka often cites the Bible and tells the people of his Christian convictions. . . .

In 1954 he made plans to form a political party but his plans were thwarted by what he calls "interference" by a "prominent" Adventist missionary. Nevertheless, his political ambitions did materialize in 1959 when he was popularly elected to the Great Lukiiko (then the Parliament of the Kingdom of Buganda within the nation of Uganda). He later became Buganda's minister for health and works. During his

Samuel Kisekka, M.D.: Adventist Revolutionary Leads Uganda



by D. D. N. Nsereko
Vol. 17, No. 4 (May 1987)

This profile of Samuel Kisekka, M.D., is one of many pieces in Spectrum that have examined how Adventists around the world participate in the public life of their nations. D. D. N. Nsereko, a Seventh-day Adventist member of the Ugandan Bar, holds law degrees from New York University and the Hague Academy. At the time he wrote this article, Nsereko chaired the law department at the University of Botswana.

Seventh-day Adventists now generally know that Uganda is a country where the prime minister, Dr. Samson Babi Mululu Kisekka, is a fellow believer. He is the first

Adventist anywhere in the world to rise to such a high office of state. How did this happen? How does Dr. Kisekka as an Adventist feel about being in politics? What are his government's domestic and foreign policies? . . .

Son of an Anglican chief, Kisekka was born on June 23, 1912. He attended Anglican missionary schools and Makerere College, now Makerere University, where he studied medicine. As a youth he was an active soccer player, Boy Scout leader, and church choir member. He accepted the Adventist message in 1954 after stumbling into an evangelistic effort that he decided to attend out of curiosity. He became an active and faithful member of the church and an outstanding lay leader. An ordained local church elder, he has represented his local union at several General Conference sessions. Perhaps the most notable of the many contributions that Kisekka has so far made to the Uganda Adventist community was the establishment in 1955 of the Seventh-day Adventist Wel-

tenure in office Buganda's health services underwent tremendous improvement. He again ran for a parliamentary seat in the 1980 elections on the UPM ticket, but lost. A year after the National Resistance Movement launched its armed struggle, Kisekka's home and farm were attacked and razed by government troops. He himself narrowly escaped death before fleeing into exile. While there he joined the political wing of the movement. After the death of Professor Yusufu Lule, the movement's first chairman, Kisekka in January 1985 was appointed the external coordinator of the National Resistance Movement. . . .

Does the biblical teaching to turn the other cheek forbid wars of liberation? Prime Minister Kisekka does not think so, and he is right. Wars of liberation are an exercise of the right of self-defense, not revenge. Rulers who tyrannize subjects they are supposed to protect cease to be legitimate and thereby forfeit the allegiance of the subjects. In the democratic era the people are sovereign and have the right to change their governments even by force if force is the only means available. The imperatives of love legitimize the revolt against tyranny. As Kisekka told the missionary, it is well-nigh impossible to appreciate the ethical dilemma that faces victims of tyrannical regimes unless one has lived under them. Pastor Bekele Heye, president of the Eastern Africa Division, seems to agree. In the presence of this author he praised President Museveni for liberating Uganda and restoring to it peace and human rights. He told President Museveni that Adventists had all along been praying for him and for the success of his Movement. . . .

In spite of its "safe" apolitical stance the church found itself banned, its missionaries expelled from the country, its church buildings, schools, and clinics desecrated

or destroyed, and its members imprisoned or killed. When the guilty regimes were removed by force, Adventist Ugandans, along with the general population, sighed with relief. As this essay has argued, they cannot be faulted.

While it is understandable that the church would avoid exposing itself by publicly criticizing governmental authorities, the Adventist church, as the "light of the world," has a moral obligation to help shape the public ethic and to speak out against injustice and oppressive demonic systems. The Seventh-day Adventist church has a duty to remind rulers, as did the prophet Isaiah, to "Learn to do

good; seek justice; correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isaiah 1:17, RSV).

How should the Seventh-day Adventist church act prophetically? The church should cooperate with other responsible church groups on matters of grave public concern, such as peace, justice, and human rights. In unity there is strength. Additionally, the Adventist church should educate members of their duty as citizens to speak out on moral issues and shape public opinion. Otherwise the denomination will be dismissed as irrelevant. Dr. Kisekka is showing the Adventist church how members can act against injustice and right grievous wrongs.

Trumpet Blasts and Hosannas: A Once and Future Adventism



by Roy Branson

Vol. 18, No. 3 (February 1988)

Roy Branson, Spectrum's editor and a senior research fellow at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics, Georgetown University, is director of the Washington Institute. A graduate of Atlantic Union College, he received an M.A. in religion from Andrews University and a Ph.D. in religious ethics from Harvard. His essays have appeared in the Dictionary of Christian Ethics, the Journal of the History of Ideas, and elsewhere. He is 1995 president of the Adventist Society for Religious Studies.

My mother was a fifth-generation Adventist. She grew up

in the mission field and married a minister. She worked with him through World War II as he became president of the Middle East Union. She taught in the school he founded there—Middle East College. My father, at the age of 54, died of a massive heart attack. After Elder H. M. S. Richards' funeral sermon and the burial in the cemetery at Loma Linda, mother and I sat next to each other in the car taking us back to our home. We both knew that in a day or two I would leave to resume my studies at the seminary at Andrews. She finally broke the silence. "I wonder if we'll ever see him again." I was stunned. I talked about seeing Dad soon, about meeting him in the resurrection. She turned directly to her seminarian son and said very quietly, very slowly, "We never know for sure." A fifth-generation Adventist.

My mother was not wondering if Dad's sins had been forgiven, or hers, or mine. . . . My mother was not asking, "Has Dad been saved?"

but, "Where is God?" She was not worried about transgression of law; she was not asking me to provide her with a theory of the atonement. She was devastated by her loss, by loneliness, by death. She was anguished at the absence of God. And so are we—as individuals and as a church.

Many mistakenly think that the *Apocalypse*, so important for Adventist identity, merely points Christians to the future, to the second coming of Christ; that it is a detailed history of the future. Actually, the apocalyptic imagination spends more time drawing the heavenly realms—the sanctuary, the emerald throne, the risen and active Lord of thousands times thousands—into the Christian's present experience. . . .

The early Seventh-day Adventists were so steeped in the apocalyptic imagination that when the Millerite setting of times for the future return of Christ failed, they shifted the emphasis of apocalyptic to the present. In the image of the sanctuary they re-emphasized the present activity of God in the cosmos.

Sanctuary symbolism brought them assurance. God might not be immediately breaking in from the future, but he was active in the present. Where is God? He is in the heavenly sanctuary. John the Revelator's portrayal of divine activity and majesty in the heavenly realms provided sanctuary to the disappointed. The little flock could be warmed by glory. Their present had become a part of the most holy.

The experience of the disappointed was also rekindled by the radiance of Ellen White's experience. An absent God again came near through an Ellen returning, in their midst, from visits to the Holy City and its temple suffused with the "eternal weight of glory." "Our faces," she reported, "began to light up and shine with the glory of God

as Moses did when he came down from Mount Sinai." What the apostles were for the early church, Ellen White was for Adventists: a living sacrament, a visible means of experiencing God's invisible presence.

The absent God also came near in the Sabbath. We usually think of the Sabbath conferences simply as theological disputes, intellectual clarifications, casuistry of divine law. But the fundamental importance of the Sabbath was its experience of the divine. The Great Day of the Lord remained beyond, but in the Sabbath day one encountered the holy now. To cross its threshold was to enter God's dwelling place; to become contemporary with God himself—a sacrament in time. Where is God? He is in this moment. For the disappointed what had been a present devoid of divinity again glowed with God's

The church in our time is to embody the apocalyptic vision: a community whose disappointments are overwhelmed by its experience of the Divine. The Adventist Church is to be a visionary vanguard, revolutionaries of the imagination, propelled into action, shattering routines of oppression with the shock of the holy.

presence. . . .

The apocalyptic communities of the early Christian church and 19th-century America first felt despair at the absence of God, began to experience renewal through sacraments of his presence, then set about transforming their worlds. To be drawn into the apocalyptic experience is to be thrust from anguish to hope, from defeat to revolution. . . .

In the early 1890s Adventists were among the earliest to take on the challenge of transforming urban America. . . . Seventh-day Adventists, assured by sacraments of God's presence—the Sanctuary, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Sabbath—set about embodying in their institutions their apocalyptic vision of an ideal society. . . .

Just as creation of the state of Israel became the Jewish answer to the absence of God at the Holocaust, the growth of the Adventist church became for some the persuasive answer to the Great Disappointment. . . . For some, the visible, organized Adventist church became the most potent of all sacraments—a visible means for experiencing God's invisible presence. . . .

Those Adventists not working for the denomination know that many people in their offices do not define themselves as sinners against God and yearn for forgiveness. . . . Offer them the promise of divine forgiveness and they will greet you with a friendly, indulgent smile. That's nice, but who needs it?

Of course many people—if not all—do ask religious questions. . . . Many people fear boredom and meaninglessness in their lives; almost all tremble at the prospect of death. At the moment of their annihilation, people dread the void. They do ask, "Where is God?"

Indeed, no matter how secular it may appear, our culture fears its annihilation. Confronted by nuclear

winter, by the ultimate holocaust, humanity is chilled by a cosmic loneliness, a consciousness of the absence of God.

It is precisely that dread of the void—of meaninglessness and annihilation—that is overwhelmed by the apocalyptic vision. A truly apocalyptic Adventism draws people into experiences of worship that are encounters with the holy. Our Sabbaths are sanctuaries reverberating with the *Apocalypse's* coda to 2,000 years of religious worship: trumpet blasts, voices like the sound of many waters, shouts of the archangel, choirs of harps, amens and hallelujahs from myriad hosts. Sabbath worship is a refraction of the divine radiance; the color, movement, and vitality of the *Apocalypse's* sanctuary, filled with golden candlesticks, billows of incense, pillars of

fire, thrones of precious stones. In the apocalyptic vision divine power reaches our place, our time.

In the sanctuary of the Sabbath experience the despairing not only sense that God exists, but that His presence encompasses the creation—not some distant event, but a continuing divine activity. Ordinary events erupt with meaning. All creation becomes attractive; all creatures reflect divine glory; all people become objects of wonder, of respect.

Contemporary Adventism should regard a rekindling of the apocalyptic vision as its special gift to contemporary culture. . . . It will set out to make the excitement and drama of apocalyptic an integral part of the experience of all Christians. . . .

Where is God? Many of us have

moments, like my mother, when we wonder why God is absent, when we despair, when we are lonely beyond speaking. We are modern persons. But somehow in our small, tight darkness, we have seen a great light. We have been warmed by Sabbath fellowship. We have glimpsed divinity in the passion of 19th-century spirituality and the cosmic imagery of the *Apocalypse*.

The Adventist church in our time is to embody the apocalyptic vision: a community whose disappointments are overwhelmed by its experience of the divine; a church empowered by God's presence. The Adventist church is to be a visionary vanguard, revolutionaries of the imagination, propelled into action, shattering the routines of oppression with the shock of the holy.



The White Family at Elmshaven, California, in 1913. Left to right: standing, Mabel White-Workman, Wilfred Workman, Henry White, Herbert White; seated: Does Robinson, Ella White-Robinson, Ellen G. White, May White, William White; on ground: Virgil Robinson, Mabel Robinson, Arthur White, Grace White. This picture appears in Arthur White's biography of Ellen White. Although Ella's necklace was originally airbrushed out, the Review and Herald has determined that in future editions the photo will be reprinted unretouched. Photo courtesy of the Art Library, Review and Herald Publishing Association. Vol. 20, No. 2 (December 1989).

The Radical Roots of Peruvian Seventh-day Adventism



by Charles Teel

Vol. 21, No. 1 (December 1990)

Charles Teel, professor of Christian ethics in the School of Religion, La

Sierra University, and a member of the Ethics Center at Loma Linda University, has written liturgies and more than one essay in Spectrum on the relationship of apocalyptic to social reform. In the late 1980s, Teel discovered that the revered missionaries, Fernando and Ana Stahl, had been such successful social reformers that they permanently transformed the social and political structure of Peru's highlands. In addition to taking study tours to Latin America, Teel established The

Stahl Center for World Missions at La Sierra University, Riverside, California 92515 (909) 785-2041. It is currently involved in an international AIDS project for children.

Fernando and Ana Stahl, converts to Seventh-day Adventism as young adults in the mid-western United States, volunteered for a mission appointment to South America during the first decade of this century. When the church told them it could not finance their passage, the Stahls paid their own way and that of their two children. The family left Main Street, U.S.A., and landed in Bolivia in the year 1909. In the capital of Bolivia, La Paz, and its environs, Ana bartered her professional skills as a nurse to the social elite and served the destitute. Fernando stumbled about indigenous villages, intuitively exploring what it meant to be a missionary. He first attempted to missionize by selling religious magazines. He soon discovered that the indigenous population could not read. More importantly, he came to realize that the privileged classes, in order to maintain their social and economic advantages, had every reason to keep these peoples uneducated. By 1911 magazine peddling had taken a back seat to establishing schools. It was in this same year that the Stahls located on the Peruvian side of Lake Titicaca and linked up with Manuel Camacho, an indigenous visionary and early Adventist convert.

Cacique Amauta Manuel Zunega Camacho Alca lived no ordinary life. Accounts identifying him as a descendent of revolutionary Tupac Amaru are open to question, but that he embraced revolutionary causes, filed countless memorials, and led numerous delegations on behalf of the indigenous movement is beyond dispute. No less indisputable is the fact that his



Four generations of Seventh-day Adventists: Seated right, with necklace, Marietta Walker Aldrich. At the age of 15, Marietta was hired by James White as one of the first three typesetters at the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Later, she was a kindergarten superintendent in the Battle Creek church. Her husband, Homer Aldrich, served as press foreman at the Review and Herald for 33 years, and her father, Eli S. Walker, was the first treasurer of the General Conference. Her father-in-law, Jotham M. Aldrich, chaired the meeting that organized the first General Conference session. Photo courtesy of Madeline Johnston. Vol. 20, No. 2 (December 1989).

early forays beyond the altiplano to Iquique, Arequipa, Meyieu, Culiluinia, and Chile offered contacts with Protestantism and education, reinforced his fiercely independent spirit, and fed his passion to mediate salvation to the peasants or campesinos of the altiplano: "The only sure way of salvation from the subjugation in which we find ourselves is learning to read," he wrote.

Accordingly, Camacho returned to the Platería soil of his early years to enact his vision. Immediately he faced fierce opposition from the *mestizo* overlords. In 1898 Camacho had the temerity to conduct classes for 25 adult indigenous peoples, albeit behind closed doors—"de una manera clandestina." About four years later he founded a free school in his Utawilaya, Platería, home. Valiantly but vainly he tried to keep the school open in the face of bribes, threats, terror, beatings, arrests, and imprisonments. (An Aymara-speaking Maryknoll priest in Platería—who assisted the local Adventist pastor at the funeral of Camacho's son, Victor—volunteered that contemporary Catholics as well as Adventists view Camacho as a "Christ-figure." They still vividly remember ecclesiastical and civil authorities confronting Camacho at his school and leading him to jail with his "hands lashed together behind his back.") Stahl's editor makes a spiritual as well as temporal statement in identifying this indigenous activist as "the beginning of the Lake Titicaca Mission." . . .

Stahl might not have been able to articulate a cogent academic definition of a "near-feudal social system," the term employed by historians to describe the altiplano at the beginning of the century. Yet in his book, *In the Land of the Incas*, published in 1920 in English and later in Spanish, Stahl clearly pinpoints an unholy and unjust

alliance of town judge, village priest, and wealthy landowner. Leaving Ana in charge at Platería, assisted by Manuel Camacho and his young protégé Luciano Chambi, Fernando embraced the indigenous altiplano as his parish. For a full decade, the Stahls traveled by muleback, horseback, and later on a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, to establish schools, chapels, clinics, and free-standing markets.

In the schools, only the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught. Still, as one chronicler pointed out: "That was enough to enable the Indians to read God's word and to avoid being cheated in the marketplace. In the clinics and in the mud huts of the Aymara and the Quechua peoples, the Stahls together set bones, soothed fevers, pulled teeth, lanced boils, amputated limbs, and delivered babies.

In the free-standing markets es-

The activities of Adventists in the Lake Titicaca basin provide valuable insights into how Protestantism has been a force for social change in Latin America, functioning as a reforming and progressive movement, which contributed to reordering the social and political structure of the Peruvian highlands.

tablished by the Stahls, entrepreneurial students not only utilized their newly acquired mathematical skills, but also escaped the domination of their *mestizo* overlords and the hacienda company store. In the chapels, worshipers were invited to accept the Good News that God loved them on the basis of their own personhood, rather than on the merit of religious systems and intermediating functionaries. Imbibing alcohol at the fiestas and paying taxes to the village priests for feast days, baptisms, weddings, christening, and other rites, were replaced by clean living and simple worship.

A tabulation of students, schools, churches, and members suggests that vast numbers welcomed the Stahls' ministry. The Adventist educational system came to entirely encircle Lake Titicaca and include as many as 200 schools. These ranged from humble village home schools to large boarding institutions. By 1916, 2,000 students were registered in 19 schools; by 1924, 4,000 in 80 schools; and by 1947, a high of nearly 7,000 students in 109 schools. Stahls successor, E. H. Wilcox, reported that on one unforgettable day, 12 requests for schools arrived from indigenous villages. . . .

Numerous progressives remarked about the contrasts between the Stahl's method of evangelization and that of the priests'. Francisco Mostajo, a liberal spokesperson from Arequipa, observed that while Puno's priests planned religious feasts, their Protestant counterparts established clinics and schools. Mostajo's colleague Ernesto Reyna agreed that while the Protestant leaders taught and healed, their Catholic counterparts sang masses and planned fiestas. Anticlerical Manuel Gonzalez Prada—in a rare compliment to organized religion of any stripe—noted approvingly that whereas the Jesuits contented

themselves with teaching the wealthy elite while enjoying the comforts of Lima, the Adventists braved the rigors of the altiplano to teach the disinherited classes. Educator and politician José Antonio Encinas wryly observed that whereas the village priests worked to save souls, Stahl worked to save lives. And in 1916, after a particularly savage attack in which the Stahls barely escaped with their lives, Catholic citizens took to the press in the Stahls' defense. They disparagingly contrasted the "two Yankees, who generously cure sickness, dispense remedies, and teach the people to read, gratis," with "the priests [who] have kept the native race in the most deplorable and inhuman conditions" for more than three centuries. . . .

Near the end of the Stahls' tenure in the altiplano, José Antonio Encinas led the call for a commission to investigate local abuses and instigate reforms. The call was answered affirmatively by an executive decree of June 19, 1920. . . .

When the commission arrived in a tense Azangaro, they were met by fully 8,000 such greeters, also massed in military formation. Nervous landowners wired Lima for troop reinforcements and at least one local *Indigenista* leader was placed in preventive detention. Newspaper accounts report that the local power interests debated whether the same fate ought not to befall Fernando Stahl. . . .

In recent decades, researchers from South America, North America, and Europe have swarmed upon the altiplano to pursue research in disciplines ranging from anthropology to zoology. A number of these investigators, while pursuing their particular areas of study, have given more than a nod to Adventism's presence in Puno. Within the past decade, two researchers—Ted Lewellen, a University of Colorado anthropologist, and Dan

Hazen, a Yale University Latin Americanist—have devoted the most extensive attention yet to the Adventist experience. . . .

In documenting Adventism's impact on Puno, Hazen asserts that "Adventists have consistently been in the forefront of change in the altiplano." Hazen thinks that Adventists enjoyed an edge in achieving reform because "the missionaries combined appeals for individual salvation with a broad-based program of medical, educational, and market facilities open to all." Moving from the subject of programs to implementation, Hazen cites the Adventist "organization, attitude, and ability to get things done" as factors that enabled Adventism to be "one of the major inputs for change in early-century Puno. He supports this assertion by explaining that: (1) the missionaries minimized imposition by only expanding on villager requests; (2) doctrinal controversies were played down in favor of new standards of hygiene, temperance, health care, and morality; (3) literacy was actively fostered as students read from the Bible and Peruvian texts; (4) religion was taught, but it did not dominate the curriculum; (5) Ad-

ventist instruction was generally better-regarded than state efforts; (6) native workers were quickly trained and put to work in schools and churches; and (7) finally,

Adventist missionaries carried with them a willingness to seek new answers. They also embodied a less status-conscious life style than local *mestizos* and whites.

Hazen concludes simply: "The members addressed one another as 'hermano' and 'hermana' or 'brother' and 'sister.'" . . .

The activities of the Adventists in the Lake Titicaca basin provide valuable insights into how Protestantism has been a force for social change in predominantly Roman Catholic Latin America. Here, beginning with the leadership of Camacho and the Stahls, Adventism functioned as a reforming and progressive movement, which contributed to reordering the social and political structure of the Peruvian highlands. In effect, this altiplano Adventism—grounded in indigenous schooling—may demonstrate for Latin America an alternative to both an authoritarian status quo and violent revolution.

Large SDA Churches: Adventism's Silent Majority



Monte Sahlin
Vol. 22, No. 2 (May 1992)

Monte Sahlin, assistant to the president of the North American Divi-

sion for ministries and executive director of Adventist Community Services, is author of the book, Sharing Our Faith With Friends Without Losing Either (Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1990). He has encouraged the leadership of his division to increasingly employ empirical social research of its membership.

When we think of the standard local church experience for North American Adventists, most of us have a picture of a few dozen

people gathered for worship. The congregation in our mind has one or two adult Sabbath school classes, meager basement rooms for children, "not enough" teenagers to have a real youth group, no office for the pastor and no organized outreach ministries: a congregation dominated by a small circle of poorly educated, out-of-touch people who are more interested in maintenance than mission.

Actually, more than half of the 775,000 Adventists in North America gather on Sabbath morning in a church with a membership of more than 300. One-quarter of North American Adventists meet in churches with 600 or more members. It is a little-known fact that the majority of the 775,000 Seventh-day Adventists in North America are members of the 600 largest churches. Less than half of the membership is found in the other congregations—the nearly 4,000 small churches that have tended to set the norms for church life in North America.

In reality, a typical Sabbath experience for North American Adventists features a congregation of hundreds, professional musicians and pastoral staff, sparkling programs for children and youth, a wide range of adult classes and small group ministries. These large congregations have the resources to address all kinds of needs, organize many meetings throughout the week, and undertake innovative forms of outreach. Most Adventists in the United States and Canada attend these large churches because they enjoy being a part of congregations with the resources to fund and staff significant and even ground-breaking programs of nurture, evangelism, and service. . . .

Typically, the small churches in the conference have a much lower ratio of members per pastor and their tithe does not cover the cost

of their pastoral staffing. The large churches have fewer pastors per capita, and the financial savings are used to subsidize pastoral staffing for small churches, as well as the conference educational institutions. In other words, the largest congregations are the "cash cows" of most local conferences.

Yet, at conference constituency meetings, a disproportionate number of the delegates represent smaller congregations. Because most conference bylaws prescribe one, two, or even three delegates per church in addition to the delegates apportioned by church membership, there are usually more delegates representing small churches than large churches. This is exacerbated by the fact that large churches typically do not bring to constituency meetings as many delegates as they are entitled to. . . .

At a deeper level it is possible

Spectrum as Source

The following volumes draw significantly from *Spectrum* essays:

Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream

—Malcom Bull and Keith Lockhart

Adventism for a New Generation

—Steve Dailey

Adventism in America: A History

—Gary Land

The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century

—Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler

Millennial Dreams and Moral Dilemmas: Seventh-day Adventism and Contemporary Ethics

—Michael Pearson

The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology in Seventh-day Adventist Perspective.

—Richard Rice

that many Adventists are simply prejudiced against large churches. "They are unfriendly," is a common attitude. I have often been told that "people go there who want to hide out and not do anything." "Worldly," is another often-heard description. Yet, recent surveys indicate that members of small churches are as likely to be uninvolved in witnessing or ministry as are members of large churches. It appears that the common impressions about large churches are simply myths.

Large churches are often looked upon as costly and nonproductive by the denomination's evangelism strategists. The facts are the reverse. Analyses conducted in two local conferences demonstrate that in those fields, the net growth in those conferences came entirely from a handful of the largest congregations. Significant growth rates in some of the small churches were equaled by larger losses in other small churches, with no net effect on growth in membership of these two conferences.

Large churches have more resources for outreach and more contacts in the community. They are better able to absorb prospective members. There is strong evidence that as the Baby Boom generation begins to return to church, they prefer large churches with a menu of quality programs. Large Adventist churches tend to be located where there is the greatest degree of favorable public awareness of the Adventist message. All of this means that large churches are key to the North American Division leadership's emphasis on a revitalization of evangelism.

The significant church growth in largely black regional conferences has often been contrasted with the slower growth rate in "white" conferences. The average size of local churches in regional conferences is much larger than the average across the division.

These larger churches are a key to the higher growth rate in regional Conferences.

The more than 50 percent of North American Seventh-day Adventists who are members of these large churches are not the ones who are most likely to write scorching letters to conference presidents, cancel subscriptions to denominational periodicals, or send their tithe to private organizations that have a reactionary agenda. They

are less likely to stand up and make emotional speeches at constituency meetings or buttonhole speakers at camp meetings. But these large churches provide most of the human and fiscal resources that are so necessary to the Adventist global mission. Even though they are the majority, they are not heard from by denominational leaders as often as are other voices. They are the vital "silent majority" of the North American Adventist Church.

My Disability, My Church



by Kathy Roy
Vol. 22, No. 2 (May 1992)

Kathy Roy is the congressional liaison for the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board. She previously worked for both the federal government and private sectors on public policy regarding persons with disabilities.

In my professional life, I work on public policy issues that enable persons with disabilities and their families to live independent and productive lives. I am also a practicing Seventh-day Adventist, a convert who was lucky enough to find a community I could call my own. I also happen to have cerebral palsy. Thus I live in two worlds: developing policy on the one hand, and on the other hand recognizing that all the federal legislation in the world cannot replace a higher law to which I am accountable. . . .

I must say that my own church has, in a sense, been converted

over the years. In my early days of attendance at Sligo church, I think many in my congregation didn't quite know how to take me. But gradually, I think that members at my church have come to understand that my disability is not an impediment to being a full part of the fellowship. Now, I feel a part of the family. Now I can be teased and hugged on Sabbath morning and pulled onto committees just like everyone else. And this acceptance—acceptance by the church—is critical. This enables me, like other members, to live out my faith in the context of a community.

All too often, people with disabilities are greeted with pity and not empathy. But pity and empathy are two entirely different things. Pity says that you are inferior and need "taking care of," whereas empathy looks at the individual as a human being—a child of God—and seeks to understand that individual as a person. It's funny, but as someone with a lifelong disability, you can smell pity a mile away. And don't get me wrong, these folks mean well, to be sure. For example, I have a speech impairment and when I meet someone for the first time, I'm usually tense, which only makes things worse. (Besides, it's Sabbath, and by the end of the week we're all tired, right?) So I slur

a "Hello" introduction, and I quickly pick up that the individual assumes that all my cookies aren't in the jar. (A word of honesty here: All of my cookies aren't in the jar, but this has nothing to do with my disability!) I've developed a method of very quickly letting that individual know that yes, I work, I pay bills, and I'm happily married, thanks very much. I give this illustration to make the point that many people have preconceived ideas about people with disabilities. Often, people believe that having a disability means that the individual is, by necessity, dependent on others. But all of us are dependent in one way or another. And isn't this what the church is about?

When I was young I was taught and believed for many years that "God has given you cerebral palsy for a reason." I grew up thinking that my own disability was a part of God's grand scheme. It was not until I had attended Sligo for many years that then-senior pastor James Londis and I had a long and rather heated debate about God, cerebral palsy, and the universe. I remember that Jim had just finished a sermon entitled, "Why Bad Things Happen to Good People." His conclusion, not surprisingly, was that God does not do terrible things to "teach us a lesson." Further, God wants only good things for his children. To those of you who have had the blessing of growing up in our church, this is no great revelation. I was flabbergasted. I vividly remember speaking to Jim after the service in a rather animated discussion. I even recall stating that this could not possibly be correct, that this flew in the face of how I'd been raised. But this fundamental Adventist understanding of God's grace has gradually helped me, not only with my personal understanding of my disability, but in other personal tragedies I have experienced. And it is this fundamental

belief which perhaps makes our church uniquely qualified to welcome persons with disabilities into our fellowship.

Today, many churches of other denominations are reaching out to persons with disabilities. Many have one or more services interpreted for persons who are deaf. Many churches are also being made physically accessible to persons who use wheelchairs or other assistive devices. And I understand that some

churches are working on study curriculums that can be used by the cognitively impaired. I am pleased with all of this progress. In fact, I think these types of reforms are well overdue and *must* be embraced by our church, and many congregations are doing just that. But I also believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church may have a unique role to play in enabling persons with disabilities to reach their full God-given potential.

monkeys, lions that roared till the ground shook, and poisonous snakes invading the children's quarters of their bungalow on the mission compound. The ebony elephants and carved ivory tusks that decorated the parlor of their Maryland home substantiated the exotic stories.

My personal roots in the Adventist community grew strong during a protracted family crisis. My parents' marriage disintegrated over a period of six years or so, and as things became more and more difficult at home I began to look elsewhere for emotional stability and personal support. I found it in the close-knit and caring community of our church and the church school my sister and I attended. Caring teachers, church leaders, and even childhood friends were always there for us. They seemed to understand our situation and respond to our needs for companionship without prying for explanations or offering advice.

These troubling experiences had some lasting effects on my religious outlook. Our family's problems made me sensitive to life's larger questions at a rather early age, and the church's teachings provided me with helpful answers to these questions. Moreover, the profound reassurance I drew from my religious community and its beliefs validated my convictions on something much deeper than an intellectual level. So, I began to identify the things about religion that really mattered, and my confidence in them became firmly established.

At the age of 10 I requested baptism. And three years later I enjoyed the most intensely religious phase of my life. Over a period of several months, God became a vivid personal presence in my life. He occupied my first thoughts in the morning and my last thoughts of the evening. I spent

Why I Am a Seventh-day Adventist



by Richard Rice
Vol. 24, No. 1 (July 1994)

Richard Rice, professor of theology at La Sierra University, received his M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. in systematic theology from the University of Chicago. He is the author of several books, including The Reign of God (Andrews University Press, 1985) and Reason and the Contours of Faith (La Sierra University Press, 1991). His first book, The Openness of God (Pacific Press, 1980), received considerable attention inside and outside the Adventist community, and has been republished under a new title by a non-Adventist publisher: God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will (Bethany Press, 1985). Rice published his first academic article in Spectrum—"Adventists and the Welfare Work: A Com-

parative Study" (Vol. 2, No. 1, Winter 1970).

By one great aunt's account, I am a fourth- or fifth-generation Adventist. I'm not sure which. I only know that my ancestors were looking for Christ's return long before I arrived. And they not only looked forward to it, they spent their lives preparing for it and helping the church finish the work. My grandparents on both sides left the United States for overseas mission work. In fact, church leaders encouraged my mother's parents to marry and leave college before they graduated. The end of time was near, the fields were white with harvest, and church policy prevented my grandfather from entering mission service as a single person. After their wedding, the couple went directly from the church to the railway station and caught a train to San Francisco. There they boarded a ship to the Far East, where they spent seven years helping to establish the Adventist work in Korea. My mother was born in Seoul in 1919.

My father's family served for a seven-year term in Portuguese West Africa. I grew up riveted by Granddaddy's accounts of boisterous pet

hours in prayer and personal Bible study. Those months were the high-water mark of my religious life. Ever since, I have regarded them as the time when I became thoroughly "converted." My later decisions to study theology in college and prepare for a career in ministry were in large measure a natural consequence of that experience.

With the exception of ninth and 10th grades, I attended Adventist schools all the way through seminary. Religion classes were a regular part of the curriculum, and of course they formed my academic concentration at La Sierra College. I was the type of student who generally enjoyed school, and with few exceptions I found things to appreciate in all my classes and teachers. However, with my natural tendency to

look at religious questions from a philosophical perspective, I found the classes Fritz Guy taught during my first two years of college in the Gospels and in theology especially stimulating. (He took a study leave after my sophomore year to complete his doctorate in theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School.)

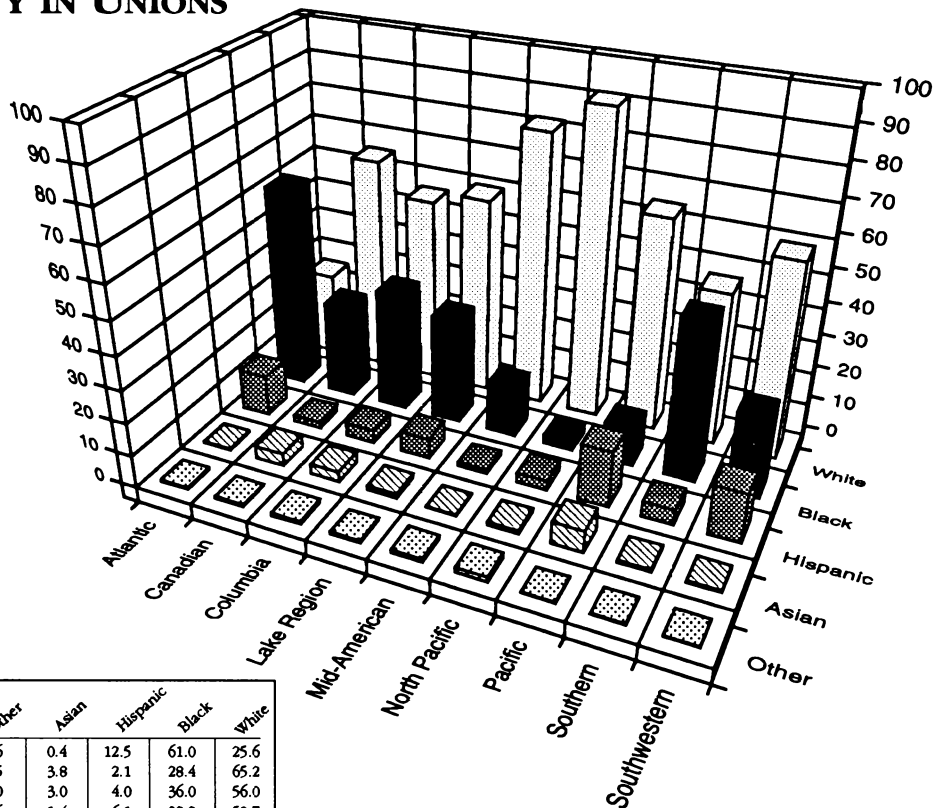
Guy insisted on raising tough questions and probed issues from several different view points. He not only encouraged but demanded intellectual rigor from his students. Under his direction, supposedly settled points of doctrine became topics for vigorous discussion. Some of my fellow students in the ministerial program tired of his constant urging to think things through, but I found the regimen exhilarating.

Here was an invitation to do our own thinking about our religious convictions and a demonstration that the endeavor could be exciting. There is no question that Fritz Guy's classes turned me on to theology. Looking back, I think it was only a matter of time until I followed in his footsteps—from pursuing graduate study at Chicago to teaching theology at La Sierra. . . .

My perspective on the Adventist Church also includes a healthy respect for Christian doctrine and the task of Christian theology. . . .

Theology rests on the assumption that the contents of Christian faith deserve and ultimately benefit from careful examination. Admittedly, in the short run, serious examination may have negative effects. Traditional explanations may

ETHNICITY IN UNIONS



	Other	Asian	Hispanic	Black	White
Atlantic	0.6	0.4	12.5	61.0	25.6
Canadian	0.5	3.8	2.1	28.4	65.2
Columbia	1.0	3.0	4.0	36.0	56.0
Lake Region	0.6	1.4	6.1	32.2	59.7
Mid-America	1.0	0.2	1.1	15.3	82.3
North Pacific	1.5	1.0	2.9	2.8	91.8
Pacific	0.2	6.6	17.0	11.8	64.5
Southern	0.3	0.9	4.6	47.8	46.5
Southwestern	0.2	0.6	15.0	24.9	59.3
TOTAL	0.6	2.6	8.5	28.9	59.4

1992 membership statistics compiled by the Office of Human Relations, North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. Issued November 15, 1993. (Other includes Native Americans in both ethnicity graphs.) Vol. 23, No. 5 (April 1994).

appear inadequate; time-honored positions become less secure. As a result, people looking for snappy answers to religious questions, quick fixes for spiritual problems, or windfall profits from minimal intellectual investment—to mix several metaphors—find theology irritating, because it seldom provides any of these things. People looking to theology for reassurance are often disappointed, because theology frequently raises as many questions as it answers.

The benefits of theology emerge over the long haul. The full wealth of conviction that understanding brings, to quote the book of Colossians, requires great patience. It builds confidence, but not at the price of devising easy answers to

difficult questions. Theology calls the church to complete honesty in long-term, serious reflection. In the final analysis, I believe those who are willing to subject the church's beliefs to careful examination manifest great confidence in them.

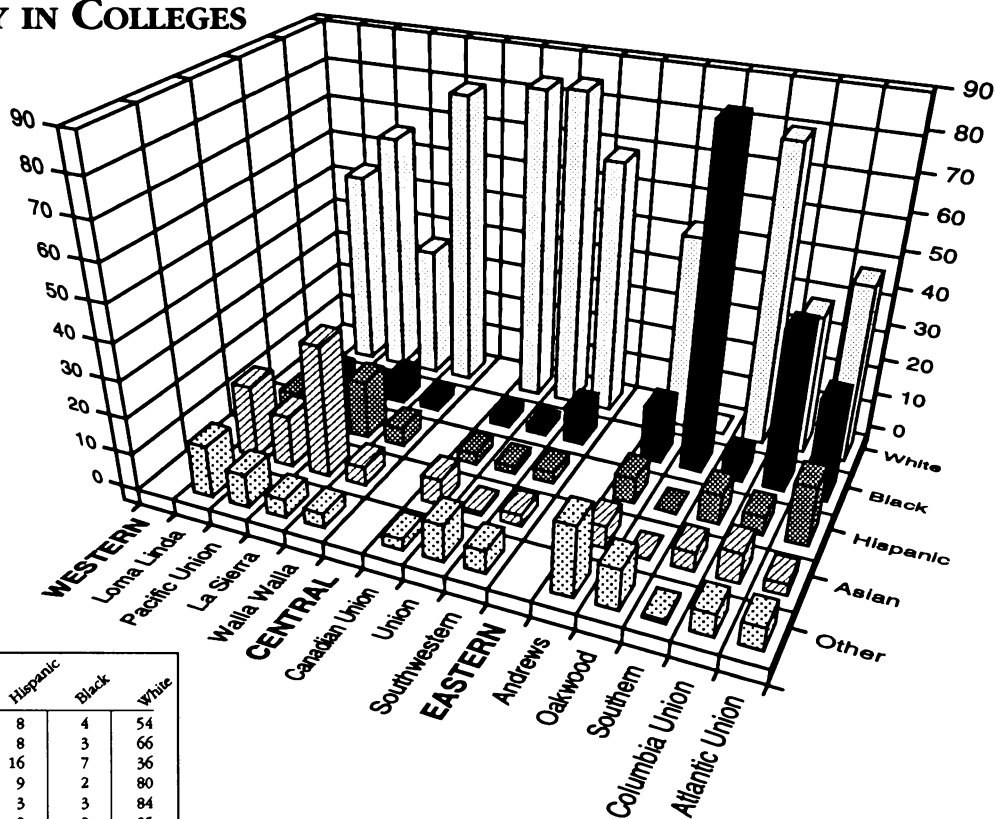
Because theology is a human enterprise, its task is never complete and the efforts of theologians are subject to the shortcomings that afflict all human endeavors. Theologians are no more free from self-interest than other men and women, and their work is just as susceptible to bias as any other human undertaking. The appropriate response to these liabilities is not to despair of the task or to disparage those engaged in it, but to join in the quest for truth. Theologians are not

a special class of people in the church, nor are they engaged in an activity that is somehow foreign to the church's activity. Theology is a task for the church as a whole.

Our basic motive for doing theology is love for the church. Our love for the church is much like our love for our parents. We love our parents, not because they are perfect, not because they have never made mistakes, not because we agree with all their decisions, not because our opinions always coincide. We love the church as we love our parents, because we share its basic values and deepest commitments.

We love our church because we owe it our existence, because it is the avenue through which God's richest blessings have come to us.

ETHNICITY IN COLLEGES



	Other	Asian	Hispanic	Black	White
LLU	14	20	8	4	54
PUC	9	14	8	3	66
LSU	5	36	16	7	36
WWC	4	5	9	2	80
CaUC	3	7	3	3	84
UC	10	1	2	2	85
SWAC	6	3	12	10	69
AU	19	6	7	15	53
OC	11	0	0	89	0
SC	1	5	8	6	80
CUC	6	8	5	43	38
AUC	6	3	16	27	48
TOTAL	9	11	8	17	55

Total percentages for North America are approximate, since figures are for the 1992-1993 school year (from "America's Best Colleges," *U.S. News & World Report*, 1994), except for Canadian Union College and Loma Linda University, whose figures are for 1993-1994. Vol. 23, No. 5 (April 1994).

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