

ADVENTIST REVIEW

**JUNE 2022: WAR AND ADVENTISM + ONWARD,
CHRISTIAN SOLDIER + WHEN TEARS BECOME
LENSES + FEAR MANAGEMENT + WHAT IS LOVE?**

War? or Peace?





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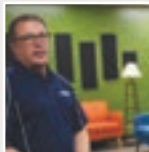
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THE MOST SHARED STORIES ON ADVENTISTREVIEW.ORG LAST MONTH:

1



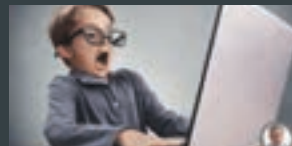
A New Yet Old Way to do Church by Russell Burrill

2



Confessions of an Adventist Mom by Merle Poirier

3



Viral Lies by James Standish

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Update About General Conference Session

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God Speaks Through Introverts Too by Ashley Jankiewicz



You Came to Me: 3ABN Behind Bars

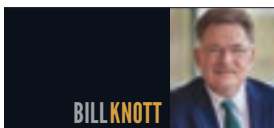
"I was in prison and you came to Me.... Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me." Matthew 25:36, 40



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BILL KNOTT

Where are those who speak for peace, both in the culture and the church?

War No More

Ask me what story from the Adventist past seems most relevant today, and I'll point you to a memoir that emerged from war.

It appeared in a letter published in this magazine on June 29, 1944. Adventist medic Corporal Howard Martin was temporarily stationed near Tunis in North Africa, just after General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps was driven from the city by Allied forces.

"I hitchhiked to church there one Sabbath and was more than repaid for the effort," Martin wrote, "though the service was closing when I found the place. A Swiss family, who had left their country at the outbreak of the war, invited me and four other Adventist soldiers who were there to go home for dinner. . . ."

"During the Axis domination here, our host told us, there were three German brethren and one Italian, all soldiers, who attended church regularly. One had been with them so long and was considered so helpful that they elected him pastor, which work he did till the British occupation. Like us Adventists in the American Army, they were in the Medical Corps and did not carry arms."

And then in words that hinted at a reality greater than perhaps even he knew, Martin added, "It was interesting to learn that on one Sabbath our hosts were out walking with those four brethren, and the next week four American

Seventh-day Adventist soldiers went for a Sabbath walk over the same route."

I've been replaying Corporal Martin's words often as conflict dominate the news with tales and images of numbing cruelty and pain. His lines remind us of a time when to be a Seventh-day Adventist was a greater honor than to serve in the armed forces of your country.

There was a time when a Swiss Adventist family could go walking with German and Italian soldiers one Sabbath afternoon and with American soldiers the next, and only lament that a world war intervened.

There was a time when conversations—even disagreements—could be measured in stories and miles, and not in nanoseconds or hit-and-run postings on a website.

There was a time—and still could be a time—when the faith of Jesus called us back to the two most basic metaphors of the Christian life—the journey and the dialogue—walking and talking together as we travel to the Celestial City.

And that time could be now.

While we are loath to admit it, Adventism as lived for much of the past 160 years has frequently acquired the warlike vocabulary of its era. Surrounded by a world consumed with conflict, the church too easily becomes a distant echo of a culture that has little use for a Prince of Peace. We

speak of "enemies" and "opponents," not noticing His enduring command to love those who disagree with us. We see no irony in attacking fellow believers who follow Jesus differently, as if we might enlarge His kingdom by obliterating part of it. We gather by our watchfires and in our camps, imagining a day when our ideals will chase all others from the field.

Where are those who speak for peace, both in the culture and the church?

Where is the once-distinctive Adventist witness to nonviolence, in word as much as deed? Will He who prayed for unity among us return to validate our warlike rhetoric and actions?

A movement that seeks to call the world to Jesus must ask if it is living out the faith of Jesus—His love, His kindness, His peace-making—with clarity and resolve. Can we commit ourselves to dialogue with Adventists whose views offend us, and covenant to walk some miles with them? The language of address—so often used to objectify and vilify—must yet become first person plural: "we," "us," and "ours" must yet replace the dangerous rhetoric of "they" and "them."

An old Black gospel lyric still sings the vow that we must make: "Ain't gonna study war no more."

Bill Knott

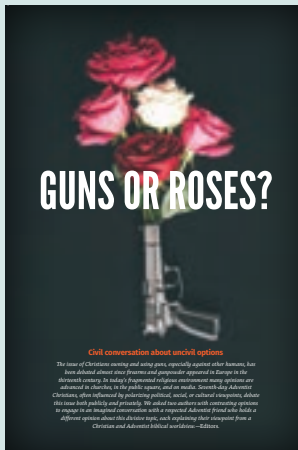
GUNS OR ROSES?

In the pro and con articles about owning a gun, I thought Frank Hasel's con article was much stronger. The pro article by Joseph Olstad ignores the fact that guns in homes are often misused. I recall a story a few years back about an older Adventist pastor whose granddaughter was staying with him. Very late one night he awoke to hear someone quietly entering the back porch door, took his gun, and shot (and killed) the intruder, who turned out to be his granddaughter coming home late. Just this morning I read a headline: "Toddler Finds Gun, Shoots Brother." And with depression so prevalent around the world these days, there is the danger of someone with suicidal thoughts who has access to a gun using it at a low moment. I also thought Olstad's "theology of protection" was a little strained when applied to gun ownership. I also appreciated Shawn Brace's article, "We Know in Part," about how Christian maturity is shown when we realize how limited our knowledge is and how foolish it is to think we already know everything!

Carrol Grady

Snohomish, Washington

I read with interest "Guns or Roses?" April 2022; both points of view can be accepted. As for me, I tend to disagree with relying on the Christian men in blue to have



to use a gun to protect me from the violence of those who would harm us, for in the process, couldn't they lose their lives? They also should love their enemies. I have three Christian

friends who are police officers, and they are now choosing to leave the state they live in for fear of being injured through defunding. I have heard their stories. I would imagine they too would model this love, the love of Jesus to not hurt or kill another human, with the courage to learn from Him to be the agents of peace.

Robert Rouillard

Lakewood, Washington

MY FAVORITE EDITION

What a wonderful *Adventist Review* (April 2022)! I was moved to tears, joy, and deep thought. Over the years of being a subscriber, this edition will be my favorite! I was so moved by the article "Finding Disruption, Finding Church." It reminded me of when I was a teenager who attended my parents' Seventh-day Christian church. It was a God-fearing church with loving members, good sermons, etc. While I enjoyed it, I left church each Sabbath feeling that I was not growing spiritually. I don't know why, because, as I said, it was a lovely Christian environment. I was so disturbed by this feeling that I left the church at 19 years old and went

2022 GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

Official notice is hereby given that the postponed sixty-first session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held June 6-11, 2022, in the America's Center in St. Louis, Missouri, United States. The first meeting will begin at 8:00 am, June 6, 2022. All duly accredited delegates are urged to be present at that time. This Session will also be accessible for delegates remotely by electronic means.

Ted N C Wilson, General Conference President

Erton C Köhler, General Conference Secretary

to a less-liberal church. The Seventh-day Adventist Church concerned me, but God said “just come . . .” This is what God wanted me to do. That was 65 years ago. I grew one step at a time, and our loving God was patient and is still always by my side helping me to continue growing and molding me into the person He wants me to be. For 65 years I have been blessed and joyful and thank Him for helping me to be discerning of His voice and direction. Thank you for your excellent publication.

Marilyn Marshall

Catching up on *Review* reading, I ran across Paul Dybdahl's article from November. I'm a 78-year-old with an impaired immune system and depleted energy from fighting cancer, and there is much I cannot do: no teaching Sabbath School, no active participation in the worship service, no in-person sharing, and only rarely attending church. It is easy to feel useless and worthless. Thank you, Paul, for your encouraging words and focusing on those words of Jesus to the woman with limited options: “She has done what she could” (Mark 14:8).

Bruce McClay, M.A., M.L.S.

Battle Ground, Washington

FROM FACEBOOK

CONFESSIONS OF AN ADVENTIST MOM

Parents need to pray not only for their children but for those who will have an impact on their lives. I wish I had realized that when my children were little.

Debbie Burns

CHILDREN LEARN HOW TO SERVE FROM THE HEART IN MONGOLIA

Thank you for the wonderful news from Mongolia, though a picture of a Mongolian mother with her child would have been more powerful.

King-Yi Eugene Hsu

THE CHRISTIAN'S CALL TO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Let's pray that church members can see/know when that happens.

Linda Parks Chapin

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH INTROVERTS TOO

Thank you so much for this article.

YOUR TURN

We welcome your letters, noting, as always, that inclusion of a letter in this section does not imply that the ideas expressed are endorsed by either the editors of the *Adventist Review* or the General Conference. Short, specific, timely letters have the best chance at being published (please include your complete address and phone number—even with e-mail messages). Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: letters@adventistreview.org.

I also judge myself for not wanting to go onto the podium to speak for any reason or to offer a public prayer, and do feel as if I'm being judged for this, as if I'm lacking in faith. However, I'm always willing to help with anything else that needs to be done.

Alicia Cardona

FIRE HITS ADVENTIST REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN CENTRAL PHILIPPINES

Thankful for the protection. Praying for all who were affected by the loss.

Sandra Holt

AFTER EVANGELISM, CHURCHES AND RADIO STATIONS ARE RISING IN THE PHILIPPINES

May God bless your ministry!

Teresa Schultz

EVANGELISTIC SERIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA RESULTS IN MORE THAN 21,000 BAPTISMS

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Coreana Foster Kuras



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ANCHOR, ZAMBIA

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RIVERSIDE FARM, ZAMBIA

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“The church’s financial report is a testimony to the power of God, and of the faithfulness of His many Christian stewards around the world.” –Ray Wahlen, p. 12

NEWS



For the first time, the General Conference Session will include a Virtual Exhibition and new initiatives focused on supporting people with disabilities.

PHOTO: GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

HYBRID GC SESSION WILL FEATURE NOVEL EVENTS, INITIATIVES

EVENT WILL INCLUDE AN EXTENSIVE VIRTUAL EXHIBITION, FOCUS ON INCLUSION.

BY MARYELLEN HACKO, FOR ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is hosting its sixty-first General Conference Session in St. Louis, Missouri, June 6-11. Postponed since 2020 because of the global COVID-19 crisis, this year’s event will look different from previous sessions. Instead of hosting ancillary meetings and featuring an in-person exhibit hall, the event will be hosted for one week on a virtual platform to make attendance possible for Adventists across all divisions and time zones, organizers said.

Although largely online, the event will still be held in the 66,000-seat

Dome at America’s Center in St. Louis, where thousands of Adventists are expected to attend the Saturday (Sabbath) meetings. Nearly 2,700 voting delegates will represent more than 21 million church members from 200 countries. The theme for this year’s session is “Jesus Is Coming! Get Involved!” The theme reflects the hope that Adventists profess in the soon coming of Jesus and the urgency for Total Member Involvement (TMI).

As well as being livestreamed to church members, the session will have a virtual exhibition featuring

Adventist ministries and initiatives from divisions around the world. This will resemble the Adventist Virtual Global Camp Meeting held May 19-23, 2021, which was an interactive and immersive digital experience.

With a virtual environment specially designed to look like an exhibit hall, the platform will showcase Adventist institutions, customized booths for ministries, a prayer room, a networking lounge, live presentations, games, a marketplace, and animated elements and digital avatars, to be explored

and enjoyed by virtual attendees around the world.

SESSIONS AND EXHIBITS

“We’ve never had a virtual exhibition hall at GC Session before,” General Conference (GC) Virtual Events and Adventist Collective consultant Sharon Aka explained. “In the VE hall you’ll be able to walk into the virtual auditorium where GC business sessions will be streamed live.”

GC business sessions will run in the morning, afternoon, and evening (U.S. central daylight time), during which time there will be no scheduled events in the exhibition hall.

“The exhibition hall will be open 24/7, of course, but there will be presentations and webinars in the booths only in between sessions, during meals, and throughout the night,” Aka explained. “During Sabbath hours the virtual exhibition experience will be available for attendees. Sales of goods will not be available during Sabbath hours.”

Currently more than 150 booths are scheduled for the virtual exhibition experience. Each one may have anywhere from two to 10 presentations, most lasting about 15-20 minutes. “We’re looking at potentially 500 to 750 presentations during the event over the course of six days,” Aka said. “So there’ll be no shortage of content for people to enjoy!”

In addition to booths from various Adventist ministries, a poster hall will present academic research

and innovation. “No Adventist event has ever done anything like this at a global gathering,” Aka said. “We’ll have health-care entities, education entities, and other great ministries who are doing significant research and innovation hosting posters on different topics. This will be a great opportunity to share the important aspects of research with Adventists around the world.”

ACCESSIBILITY FOCUS

This year the Virtual Exhibition team has a strong focus on making the virtual event as accessible as possible to those with special needs or disabilities. Specifically, the event-hosting platform will feature tools to help attendees maximize their online experience and cater to their individual needs.

This is just part of a renewed push to cater to the needs of every member and visitor. Operating under the theme “Think Differently. Think Possibilities,” the team at Adventist Possibility Ministries (APM) wants to make the 2022 General Conference Session more accessible to special-needs communities than ever before, leaders said.

Thanks to the session’s largely digital format, APM has organized Kahoot games, networking events, and a digital booth with resources for local churches. It has facilitated new accessibility features in the online platform to make navigation as easy as possible for all guests.

This year elements of the virtual platform have been upgraded to

cater for visitors with visual and hearing impairments or cognitive disabilities. This is happening because VFairs—the company specializing in virtual exhibitions that make the event possible—has increased its focus on accessibility. Specifically, its platform now features event navigation (all on-screen menus are now labeled clearly with functionality, and there are no pop-ups or unexpected flashes or sounds to disrupt visitors) and color contrast (all virtual events can be customized to accommodate changes in color contrast so that all text can be read easily). It also includes adjustable text character size (assistive technology that allows on-screen fonts to be enlarged or reduced in size), page narrations (a headphone icon to click on that helps those with visual impairments to access information via the on-screen text narration to gain a fully immersive experience), and captioned webinars (closed-captioning options to make online events more convenient and accessible to all).

“For far too long we’ve thought of disabilities rather than possibilities,” Larry Evans, assistant to the General Conference president for APM, said. “We are out to change the way we think not only about ‘them,’ but ourselves and others. The 1.2 billion people that Adventist Possibility Ministries represents is about 15 percent of the world’s population. We represent one of the largest people groups in the world.”



GOD'S BLESSING AND CAREFUL STEWARDSHIP KEY TO POSITIVE FINANCIAL OUTCOME

AT THE 2022 SPRING MEETING, ADVENTIST OFFICERS SHARE REPORTS, CHALLENGES.

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

As a worldwide movement, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not immune to the prevailing economic realities around the world, Adventist Church treasurer Paul H. Douglas said in remarks at the church's 2022 Spring Meeting. But God's blessing and careful stewardship have contributed to a positive financial outcome in 2021 and a moderately upbeat outlook for 2022.

Douglas's comments were part of the April 12 Treasurer's Report at the spring business meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee (GC EXCOM), the highest decision-making body of the denomination between quinquennial world sessions. The meetings brought together hundreds of church leaders, lay members, and invitees for fully online sessions.

WHAT KEY FINANCIAL FIGURES REVEAL

Financial results show that in 2021 the expenses of the Adventist

Church were US\$29.3 million less than revenues and gains, Douglas reported. "We praise the Lord [for it]," he said, explaining that key drivers behind this result included a large amount of unrestricted distributions from the estates of members, positive increases in tithes and offerings, and savings in office operating expenses.

Douglas noted that Adventist Church leaders have agreed to set aside funds received from unrestricted distributions to support mission initiatives of local congregations around the world rather than be included in the church's operating budget.

He also reported on working capital and liquid assets. Church leaders have chosen a new way of calculating these two indicators, as the organization focuses on how to be able to respond to an emergency, so its mission activities are not disrupted.

The new calculation, Douglas explained, shows not only the amount of money available but also the length of time those resources would last should the stream of income be cut off. "The new policy recommends a minimum of six months for working capital and a minimum of three months that should be in liquid assets. For the General Conference, we believe our minimums should be set at 12 months and nine months, respectively," he emphasized.

Under this new policy, Douglas reported, the General Conference has moved from 12.8 months at the end of 2020 to 15.2 months at the end of 2021 above the minimum available working capital. Likewise, liquid assets reserves have increased from 9.2 to 12.0 months, he said.

EXPENSES, SAVINGS, AND TITHES, INCREASE

Undertreasurer Ray Wahlen shared the Operating Expense Cap Report of the General Conference (the Adventist Church headquarters) for 2021. In 2021, he reported, the General Conference operated at only 73.31 percent of the cap mandated for office operating expenses by this committee, 8 percent lower than the related expense budget. "This is the lowest level [as a percentage of the cap] since the inception of this measure more than

20 years ago,” Wahlen said. “We praise the Lord for this result.”

Wahlen then detailed some of the factors that contributed to this positive result. Besides a deliberate plan to keep expenses in check and some savings as a result of pandemic-related limitations, he mentioned that a major factor was an increase of the global tithe to more than US\$2.6 billion. It was close to US\$500 million more than what financial officers had projected.

Overall, Douglas explained, tithes increased not only compared to 2020 but also to 2019, considered the last “normal” year.

Data on the world mission offerings, on the other hand, show that “the rebound is mixed,” he said. “We still have some divisions and attached fields showing positive increases in offerings compared to 2020 and 2019. However, the number of data points for these positive increases is slightly less than those related to tithe. . . . There were positive increases related to 2020 but still lagging behind the level of offerings that were received in 2019,” Douglas reported.

CHALLENGES AND RISKS AHEAD

The rebounds in many world church fields, Douglas said, are facing a new threat as the current geopolitical conflict in Eastern Europe has economic implications around the world. “Given the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist

Church is a world organization and we share resources between the various levels of the church, we are susceptible to the behaviors of currencies,” especially as regards the U.S. dollar, he explained. “In fact, approximately 80 percent of non-United States dollar-based tithes and offerings to the GC are affected by the behaviors of six major currencies” (the Brazilian real, Mexican peso, the euro, Korean won, Australian dollar, and Philippine peso).

Douglas explained that when local currencies become stronger versus the U.S. dollar, the result is a higher amount of tithe and offerings to the GC, and when those currencies are weaker, the result is a lower amount. In 2021 the six major currencies for the church budget were weaker against the U.S. dollar, he reported. But “so far in 2022, we see where the Brazilian real, Mexican peso, and Australian dollar are tending stronger, while the euro, Korean won, and Philippine peso are continuing to weaken,” he said.

The Adventist Church is not immune to the prevailing economic realities and the turbulence these realities create as we engage in the Great Commission to reach the world for Jesus, Douglas emphasized. Among the challenges ahead, he said, are balancing growth and stability and moving toward higher levels of self-support. He also singled out understanding paradigm shifts

brought about by crisis events, new technologies, and changes in generational thinking.

NOTHING TO FEAR

At discussion time several GC EXCOM members shared their thoughts.

“I don’t usually comment on financial matters, but today I cannot stay mute. It is unbelievable how God is blessing His church,” Women’s Ministries director Heather-Dawn Small said. “I am completely in awe of what God has done in His church.”

Vivianne Quarrie, a GC EXCOM member from Jamaica in the Inter-American Division, agreed. “We have been blessed,” she said. “I just want to thank God for what He has been doing not only financially but also in our evangelistic efforts in Jamaica.”

Overall, Wahlen emphasized, the church’s financial report “is a testimony to the power of God.” It is also a testimony of “the faithfulness of His many Christian stewards around the world.”

Douglas agreed.

“We have nothing to fear for our finances and we have nothing to fear for our future,” he reminded GC EXCOM members. And “since we have nothing to fear, let us then focus on the mission to which we have been commissioned . . . [because] He who has begun a good work in us will carry it on to its completion.”

EXCOM members voted 160-0 to record the receipt of the Treasurer’s Report as presented. ▀



A dentist volunteer serves one of the more than 4,200 patients who visited the Pathway to Health clinic in Indianapolis April 17-21. PHOTO: MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

FREE MEDICAL CARE: “UNITED WE SERVE”

**THOUSANDS RECEIVE FREE MEDICAL CARE
AT PATHWAY TO HEALTH INDIANAPOLIS.**

BY SAMUEL GIRVEN, FOR LAKE UNION HERALD, AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

After a two-year wait, Pathway to Health, a humanitarian ministry of the North American Division that provides free clinics, held a free mega-clinic in Indianapolis, Indiana, at the Lucas Oil Stadium April 17-21.

The clinic served more than 4,200 people in the metropolitan Indianapolis area. The goal of the event was to show God’s love by serving as many people as possible with free medical, dental, vision, and lifestyle care.

Dental services ranging from dental cleanings to partial dentures were offered, as well as vision services such as optometry and eyeglasses. In addition, medical services, including primary care, cardiology, dermatology, radiology, and podiatry, were offered. No iden-

tification, documentation, or remuneration were required for these services.

Organizers implemented the clinic event by working together in harmony with the theme, “United We Serve.” “We know that we could never have done this on our own,” Vic Van Schaik, president of the Indiana Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, said. “By uniting together with the Lake Region Conference and the Lake Union Conference and other ministries, we were able to do something that only God could have brought about.”

At a volunteer appreciation dinner where various partners were thanked for their involvement, Pathway to Health president and CEO Ivan Golubic said, “We live in a

divided world, but here we’re united. You don’t vote the same or speak the same language, but we all came together to serve the people of Indianapolis.”

Adventist World Radio president Duane McKey echoed those sentiments, saying, “As we unite, we come together, and we tell people God loves them.”

Virginia Caine, health director for the Marion County Department of Health, told the volunteers and organizers, who were gathered in a space surrounded by Indy 500 race car memorabilia, that it was a wonderful sight to see thousands of volunteers help people who need it most. “Thanks for having the compassion to take time out of your busy lives,” she said. “What an incredible resource. You’ve raised the bar for others. The city loves you. We will always be there for you.”

The mega-clinic’s arrival had been delayed by the COVID-19 outbreak. Volunteers were required to wear face masks and other

“Being yoked together by Christ in service of others does something amazing for those who commit to work together; there is a sense of unity, of family, when Christ is at the head.”

protective equipment, and, depending on when they arrived, to be tested for COVID-19 up to two times. “This is of course a very controversial issue, but we have to answer to a number of entities,” Julie Bryson, Pathway to Health medical director, said. “We had to work on really good safety protocol.”

“I WANT TO GO TO YOUR CHURCH”

Mark Eaton, Indiana Conference secretary and treasurer, was volunteering at the clinic and had an encounter he won't soon forget.

“We were standing in the lifestyle section, and I was talking to a Hispanic woman,” Eaton said. “She didn't speak any English. I know a little bit of Spanish, so I showed her the locations of the Health Information Centers and some of the dates and asked her if she wanted to go.” The woman, who appeared interested in the centers, replied, “Yes, not one time.” Eaton, a bit unsure of the woman's response, replied, “Some of these are only one time.” The woman persisted. “No, no, many times. I want to go there many times. Any church that helps people like this, I want to go there many times.”

Eaton was astonished by her response. He called Noel Ojeda, Indiana Hispanic Ministries coordinator, and had him speak with the woman. “She was adamant—she said, ‘I want to go many times! I want to join!’” Eaton said. After she spoke with Ojeda, the woman informed Eaton of her choice. “She

told me, ‘I want to join your church.’ The Holy Spirit really impressed her.”

It is stories such as these that North American Division president Alex Bryant said make Pathway to Health the closest to the ministry of Jesus. “It provides a ministry to the people who are in need, and who almost don't know where else to go,” Bryant said in an interview for the Lake Union Herald's livestream broadcast. “When Jesus was here, He attracted this kind of people who don't have means, yet they have great need. Your Best Pathway to Health comes into a community and provides free medical services to the people who are the least of these among us. And I believe that that, more than anything else, really represents what Jesus would be doing down here.”

HOW IT CAME TOGETHER

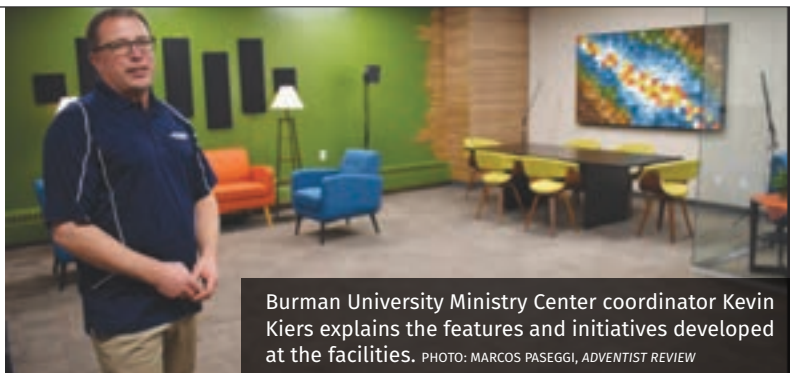
Mark Black served as layout director for Pathway to Health and said it's astounding for him to see how God shows up during these outreach efforts.

“In my career I have been involved with the opening of many licensed-care facilities. There is more than a month of training before any patients are admitted,” he explained. “With Pathway events, 2,000 to 4,000 volunteers come together, set up and open a medical, dental, and vision triage and treatment center within a couple of days, and immediately bring in thousands of patients!”

Black gives all the credit to God. “The reality is, it really cannot be done! Humanly speaking, this is not possible. But that is how God works!”

Eight semi trailers were loaded from a warehouse in Arkansas, stored at Indiana Academy, and then brought to Indianapolis ahead of the event. “God provided a volunteer that motored them to the Lucas Oil Stadium on the first day the dock was available,” Black said. Negotiations with vendors for equipment and supplies took place in advance. Department leaders ordered supplies and shipped them to a local warehouse. Later many departments found that entities were willing to donate supplies and lend equipment for the mega-clinic. Each piece of equipment had to be tracked and returned at the end of the event. “Again and again I could see God's leading in providing the right volunteers and resources at the right time,” Black said. “Being yoked together by Christ in service of others does something amazing for those who commit to work together; there is a sense of unity, of family, when Christ is at the head.”

Van Schaik is enthusiastic about the efforts. “Because all these people have come, and they had such a positive impression of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” he said, “I believe that God is already working on their hearts so that we can lead them to the next part of the journey.”



Burman University Ministry Center coordinator Kevin Kiers explains the features and initiatives developed at the facilities. PHOTO: MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

MINISTRY CENTER IN CANADA WILL ENERGIZE STUDENTS, CHURCHES FOR MISSION

BURMAN MINISTRY CENTER SEEKS TO TRAIN AND SUPPORT ADVENTIST LEADERS.

BY MARCOS PASEGGI, ADVENTIST REVIEW

A conversation between leaders at Burman University (BU) prompted a drive that resulted in the construction of the new Burman Ministry Center (BMC), which officially opened on March 6. Located on the campus of the Seventh-day Adventist school in Lacombe, Alberta, Canada, it seeks to train and support Adventist leaders and young people across Canada and beyond, people behind the initiative said.

"The question was asked, 'What do Seventh-day Adventist Canadians need today, and how can we help?'" Mark Johnson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, said. "We need two things: first, a deeper and more personal faith in God, and second, a better understanding on how to lead people to Christ."

That is precisely what BMC is trying to accomplish, church leaders said.

AN IDEA AND A PLAN

In April 2021 a conversation between BU president Loren Agrey, Religious Studies chair Steve Reasor, and Outdoor Leadership chair Kevin Kiers resulted in what is today BMC. From that initial conversation, many more conversations among ministry leaders from every

level of the church took place.

The opening of the center was "a landmark event for Adventist ministry and mission in Canada," Kiers said. He explained that even though the center is located on the BU campus, much effort is being spent on serving all areas of Canada. "Careful thought has been made to include ministry-minded Seventh-day Adventists from across the country to help others," he said.

The center's motto is "Shine to Serve," which provides a basis for the ministry, Kiers said. "Everything we do, produce, and share is service-oriented," he emphasized.

WHAT THE CENTER DOES

Kiers explained that BMC includes state-of-the-art video, audio, and podcast recording studios. Funded by private donors and with the support of the Adventist Church organization, BMC offers a high-quality venue for various ministry initiatives.

BMC invites church members from across Canada to record at the facilities and share their talents with Canadian Adventist churches. "Four content creators have been hired to move things along quickly, and more will be hired later this year," he reported.

The new center accepts church members individually or in groups to book appointments and get help to record songs, sermons, and podcasts to share on the center's website, or through Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. "This is where you can truly 'let your light shine,'" Kiers said.

STUDENT MISSIONARIES AND INTERNSHIPS

In cooperation with the NAD Office of Volunteer Ministries, BMC is now a processing center for any student in Canada, 18 years and older, to serve worldwide as a student missionary. "Students can take a year off from school to volunteer somewhere on the planet," Kiers said. "Students are needed to serve as teachers, pastors, evangelists, accountants, grounds and maintenance workers, translators, and so much more."

Beginning in summer 2022, BMC will be sending 10 religious studies students to serve as interns to the church conferences in Canada, Kiers reported. "These interns will serve for three months with a mentor pastor in an assigned church. The goal is to support local churches while at the same time helping our future pastors be more prepared for when they start serving in pastoral ministry," he said.

Kiers asked for prayers for the new ministry and the church. "Pray that our churches shine bright in this dark world, [and] pray that our faith grows strong while we serve our communities," he said. 🙏



Interpreters and deaf persons greet Gabriel Paulino, president of the Southeast Dominican Conference in Dominican Republic, during the dedication of the first congregation for the deaf on April 2. PHOTO: SOUTHEAST DOMINICAN CONFERENCE

FIRST CONGREGATION FOR THE DEAF IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

MEMBERS CELEBRATE FIRST BAPTISM, OFFER SIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING.

BY SOUTHEAST DOMINICAN CONFERENCE AND INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION NEWS

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, through its Possibility Ministries in the Dominican Republic, recently dedicated the first congregation specifically for the hearing-impaired in that country. The ceremony drew church leaders, member volunteers, and more than 35 hearing-impaired people to celebrate and to witness the first in the group to get baptized, on April 2.

“The message of God is for every person, and as a church we have the responsibility to deliver this message of salvation using all of the means available so they all can understand and accept it in their lives,” Lidia Pérez, Possibility Ministries director for the church in the Dominican Republic, said. The congregation’s organization is the result of the hard work of a group of young people and adult members of the church who have been in favor of working for the hearing-impaired in the community, she said. “There have been sign language training classes and the organization of a Master Guide youth group, among other initiatives and ministries,” Pérez said.

FILLING A GREAT NEED

During the keynote message of the ceremony, Gabriel Paulino, president of the Adventist Church in the Southeast Dominican Conference, praised the work of the committed church members for their dedication. “It is a high honor to dedicate this church group,” Paulino said. “This fills a great need in our population,” he said as he reassured the group of the church’s full support to this new ministry.

Seeing Raquel, 17, getting baptized means a wonderful blessing and accomplishment, Héctor Lizardo, a district pastor who ministers in the newly formed hearing-impaired group, said.

“I feel so happy to get baptized today,” Raquel said minutes before she was baptized. “I understand everything said in church.”

The church sees an average of 15 to 20 hearing-impaired individuals every Sabbath morning for church service.

The project has meant more than just inclusion for deaf people, Lizardo said. “They have found a support group that has become like a

family,” he said. “We have worked on letting them feel understood, loved, and accepted, and most of them have shared how being part of this congregation has brought meaning to their lives.”

GETTING MEMBERS INVOLVED

The group is being viewed as a pilot program to establish more deaf congregations across the island, Lizardo said. “Our dream is to have at least one congregation in each of the conference regions as part of having an exclusive church for the deaf but also to include this group as part of our church culture and eventually have every church be accessible and catering to the hearing-impaired and others with special needs.”

The congregation includes 10 member volunteers—mostly young people ages 13 to 25—who coordinate, lead the programs, and connect with the hearing-impaired group every week. “We are preparing to receive children and adults and also to invite those who are blind-deaf-mute,” Lizardo said. The plan is to open Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs soon, he said.

“Everything accomplished so far has been because of Jesus’ call to preach the message to every person, tribe, tongue, and people,” Lizardo said. “We want to continue to shed light in this ministry and enlist as many church members as possible to be involved in reaching people with special needs in our communities.”



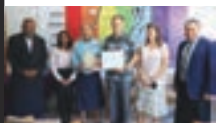
NEW ARMOR OF GOD APP AIMS TO ENGAGE CHILDREN WITH GAMES

AND ACTIVITIES. The General Conference (GC) Children's Ministries Department recently launched a new app called *Armor of God*. Developed as a resource to be deployed by parents, Sabbath School teachers, and children's ministry leaders, the app helps children learn and live out the principles taught in Ephesians 6. GC Children's Ministries director Linda Koh described the purpose of the app: to "anchor children's faith in God as they face anxiety, fear, and temptations in their life."



ADVENTIST CHURCH IN ALBANIA CELEBRATES 30 YEARS.

Sabbath, April 23, was a big day of celebration as hundreds gathered in Tirana to praise God for the denomination's regional anniversary. Leaders from the Albanian Mission and the Adriatic Union Conference were present, and many international guests joined by video conference as well. Delmar Reis, Albanian Mission president and organizer of the event, shared a glimpse into the future of the Albanian church: "We are here not only to celebrate the past but also to look into the future!"



10,000 TOES CAMPAIGN RECOGNIZED BY WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION.

The 10,000 Toes Campaign, an initiative of health ministries of the South Pacific Division, has received the 2022 Healthy Island Award in the Best Practice Category from the World Health Organization for its work in Fiji. The award recognizes the work that 10,000 Toes is doing in helping to address the epidemic of lifestyle diseases, particularly diabetes, in the Pacific region.



CHILDREN LEARN HOW TO SERVE FROM THE HEART.

On Global Children's Day, the Mongolia Mission organized a special program for children. They learned how to help, give, and share God's love with other children from the community in an initiative called "Serving From the Heart." Participating children learned how to make cookies, cards, and bags to give away. They also wrote out Bible verses, decorating each one of them according to their meaning. They colored books with their church's address and phone number and went out and shared them with children in the neighborhood.



RUNNING FOR ADVENTIST EDUCATION AND CHILD HUNGER IN COLORADO.

On Sunday, April 10, the first Elevate Kids Fun Run for the community took place, with proceeds going to both Intermountain Adventist Academy and Kids Aid, a nonprofit program that feeds hungry children. The event, which included 2.5K, 5K, and 10K routes, had 255 registrants, dozens of volunteers from the local church and community, and many sponsors.



EVANGELISTIC SERIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA RESULTS IN BAPTISMS.

More than 21,000 new believers joined the Adventist Church during a two-week evangelistic series that covered the Dominican Republic, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, March 25-April 9. Crowds gathered in large churches, auditoriums, sports fields, and outdoor stadiums, while some watched online. "Don't Give Up, There Is Still Hope" was the resounding message preached throughout the seven countries by the keynote speaker, Inter-American personal ministries director Melchor Ferreyra, who reminded viewers and listeners every evening that through difficult times God is near.



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and the
land
had rest
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war

Peace? Where? How?



ADELINA ALEXE

Joshua, God's holy warrior captain, lost his mentor Moses. But God had a task for him. Would he be equal to it? God assured him that he would:

With his people he should "get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses" (Joshua 1:2, 3, NIV). And sure enough, as God promised, He was with Joshua: "Joshua took the entire land, just as the Lord had directed Moses, and he gave it as an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal divisions. Then the land had rest from war" (Joshua 11:23, NIV).

Many Christians today live in hope of a land of rest, indeed, of eternal rest, where we shall rule with God forever (Dan. 2:44; 7:27), in the realm of eternity where the Bible says He lives (Isa. 57:15). Eternity is a concept that stirs both wonder and apprehension. It conveys the alluring mirage of never-ending life while also raising a host of paradoxes and anxieties, such as the fear of boredom, or questions about the linearity of time, or issues on how relational dynamics would carry through.

ATHENS AND HUMAN LOGIC

Eternity was especially puzzling for the ancient Greeks, who wrestled with what they perceived as an issue of eternal regress—the idea that things can't regress infinite y and therefore there must be a static beginning to everything. Following finite human logic, they arrived at the concept of the Unmoved Mover—a being who moved (or activated) everything else while he himself remained static. Such a being could not partake of temporality (sequence), existing instead in a timeless and spaceless realm where change was impossible because it was incompatible with their static view of divine perfection.¹

Unfortunately, this understanding of eternity was integrated into Christianity early on and has persisted throughout the centuries. In this perspective, God was conceived mostly along the

lines of an Unmoved Mover: transcendent, remote, impersonal, and without emotions.

By contrast, the personal God of the Bible interacts with His creation within our spatial-temporal dimension. Not only is He unlike the Greek deity, but eternity, His habitation, is spoken of in the Scriptures in temporal language. The Bible presents eternity, including God's eternity, whether past or future, as a continuum of temporality without end (Gen. 21:33; 1 Chron. 16:36; 29:10; Ps. 41:13; 103:17; 106:48; Job 36:26; Micah 5:2; Heb. 1:12).²

Residues of Greek thinking still make many Christians uncomfortable with the idea of eternal past because it does not make sense to us within the parameters of finite human thought. But our hope for the Second Advent holds a key for understanding the past and overcoming the reductionist thinking, unbiblical view of God as timeless.

ADVENTISTS AND BIBLICAL REVELATION

Seventh-day Adventists are called Adventist because of our greatest expectation of a future eternity with God in a universe free of sin. In the earth made new we shall be reestablished as landlords in our new home: a land of peace that we will enjoy for an infinite amount of time: the Lord of that kingdom "will reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15, NIV); and we, His citizen-children, will share that forever (Rev. 22:5). Our faith in this promise of an eternal future leads to an equivalent understanding of the past that allows the biblical concept of eternity to inform our image of God: the Bible's God is temporal, yet without beginning and without end.³ Just as our faith accepts a future eternity (time without end, in our case derived from God), it accepts divine past eternity (time without beginning, dispensing with the unbiblical Unmoved Mover). This eternal God has extended His unending life to us (John 3:16) through the miraculous sacrifice of His Son. Because we believe Him, there will be no end to our sinless existence going forward, after Christ returns to take us to Himself so

He valued our presence in His life more than an uninterrupted eternal life deprived of us.

that where He is we may be also (John 14:1-3).

Revelation 21:1-5, with its declaration on the absolute banishment of sin's effects—suffering, pain, even sadness and crying, shows how pivotal Christ's coming is to earth's history, the re-creation of our planet, and the reestablishment of the universe as a place of wholeness—peace—free of war, strife, and death. Included in the events of His second coming, Christ will annihilate sin and its originator forever in what the Bible calls “the second death” (Rev. 21:8, NIV), irrevocably freeing the entire realm of God's domain from sin's destructive presence.

Christ's second coming is meaningful only in context of His first, when His sacrificial death provided the means of reconciliation between humans and God (Rom. 5:10). Christ's sacrifice earned God the right to redeem us from Satan's domain.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST: REVELATION AND MYSTERY

That the death of God's Son was the means of bringing peace to the universe is possibly the most perplexing paradox of Christianity. Peacemaking is usually about diplomacy, with violence being the ultimate resort. And it turns out that this was the very method God pursued when war broke out in His universe: Lucifer actualized sin when he questioned God's character and ability to rule the cosmos and when he sought to establish himself as one who would be a better ruler than God (see Isa. 14:12-14). God pleaded with the adversary⁴ to change his ways, but pride prevented him from repenting. The universe found itself entangled in a war over God's character, a war of insiders. Satan sought to build an empire from within, to create an alternative rulership that would take over God's sovereignty and dominate the created realm. His strategy, instilling doubt in the minds of God's intelligent creatures, proved highly successful: “Did God really say . . . ?” (Gen. 3:1, NIV). It was a coup

struck in the world of the mind. A physically coercive attempt to take over would have been senseless. Lucifer had already witnessed enough of God's all-powerful nature. But how does one repair doubt?

God's answer was the patience of time: time that would expose both His character and Satan's own. Time would disclose the result of Satan's ideas—suffering, alienation, shame, strife, and gradual, fatal demise. And time would show the unfathomable depth and determination of God's persistent love and care for His children and all His creation: the more the consequences Satan's thinking showed itself, the more the beauty of divine character became apparent (Rom. 5:20). The ultimate form of God's revelation was God incarnate, “God . . . in the likeness of sinful flesh”; and the ultimate revelation of God incarnate is the cross, where Christ's heart broke under the weight of the sins of all humans, the ultimate “sin offering” that “condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3, NIV).

The cross demonstrated God's love for us in two key aspects: (1) Jesus took our punishment upon Himself; in doing so (2) He protected with His own life the value system in God's universe. This value system involves authentic love, power, justice, freedom, goodness, beauty, etc.—all the interdependent virtues that permeate our existence as a reflection of their unity and centrality in God Himself, their source. Sadly, the actualization of sin replaced these virtues with a counterfeit values system that eroded our internal and external peace. But in the life and death of Jesus we see once again the unbreakable and unimprovable relation of these values to one another, showing us the authentic love native to God's existence. In offering us a better grasp on God's true character, the sacrifice of Jesus brings us to a clearer understanding of the kind of universe God rules through an authentic framework of morality—the only one that can engender and perpetuate peace.

Again, Christ's death was necessary to protect the values of God's moral government. God could not merely overlook sin when or wherever it occurred, or summarily eliminate Satan and his followers because He possesses the power to do it. To forgive sin without punishing the sinner would imply that God's moral law may be trespassed with impunity. Instead, sin's punishment is death. Sin separates from God (Isa. 59:1, 2). And because God is the only source of life in and for the universe,

death is the inescapable consequence of sin. When insinuated doubt exploded into open defiance of God, and violence resulted, the rebel and his defeated hosts were expelled from heaven (Rev. 12:9). Violence—and eventual death—was the necessary response in order to reestablish peace. Gethsemane’s prayer, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me” (Matt. 26:39, NIV), shows the horror of the option Christ chose for the sake of ending cosmic violence. That prayer also shows the means by which harmony is restored and functions in God’s universe: “Yet not as I will, but as you will” (verse 39, NIV). Christ’s submission to His Father’s will restores cosmic alignment because by His act all who believe are delivered from their perversity and restored to heavenly harmony. At Calvary the Lamb of God took away all the world’s sins, undid all creation’s misalignments, and reconciled us to God (John 1:29, 36; 2 Cor. 5:20). It cost His life. But Calvary shows God accepting that interruption within His flow of existence, taking the violence upon Himself, because He valued our presence in His life more than an uninterrupted eternal life deprived of us.

Death, for all its power, is a distortion. All of God’s creation, animate and inanimate, suffers blight and loss: flowers fade; birds fall out of the sky; mothers and children die in childbirth; viruses run, in pandemic rage, across the globe; war wreaks destruction of human life and of the planet itself. Originally, our trust was to sustain a caring role in a symbiotic relationship with our environment: we were “to work it and take care of it” (Gen. 2:15, NIV). But by our sin, we and everything on earth exist in frustration rather than peace (Rom. 8:22).

JOSHUA AND JESUS: REST AND PEACE RESTORED

God called Abram, later renamed Abraham, and promised to bless the whole world through him: “All peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Gen. 12:3, NIV). God’s program involved Abraham’s descendants occupying the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:4, 5). It would take a while, using God’s winning strategy: patient time. God said, “For four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own . . . enslaved and mistreated” (verse 13, NIV). When the time came, Joshua, under the authority of the “Commander of the army of the Lord” (Joshua 5:14), brought God’s army into the Land of Promise. By human

conquest and divine miracle, the land was liberated from idolatrous occupation. Israel settled into their Promised Land, divided between the 12 tribes. Bloodshed ceased, violence gave way to peace in Canaan: “The land had rest from war” (Joshua 14:15).

But then Israel ruined their own peace: “all the elders of Israel” dictated to God’s appointed spiritual leader, Samuel, “Appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have” (1 Sam. 8:4, 5, NIV). Distressed, he turned to God. God said, “It is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me” (verse 7, NIV). They didn’t get from Joshua the rest God meant for them (Heb. 4:8). A millennium after Joshua God sent news about another Joshua.⁵ A virgin will bear a son, “and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21, NIV). And so it was. He came to save us, bringing us peace by bearing our punishment (Isa. 53:5), so we may have peace with God through Him (Rom. 5:1).

Revelation 21 and 22 conclude the Bible story of our interrupted eternity: purifying fire will burn our present world to nothing in the grand finale of the cosmic war between good and evil. The , on re-created earth, God will reign over all by values that make eternity desirable. Those values will become first nature to us as we continue to be transformed into God’s image. We will learn to live and reign together in peace, in a place of unfathomable beauty. But as beautiful as our new home will be, the most precious aspect is that we will be able to enjoy it in peace. God’s cosmic land will soon have rest from war. Forever. ▀

¹In their view, change either brought about something worse or implied imperfection prior to the change, both unacceptable views of the divinity.

²See Norman Gulley, *Systematic Theology: God as Trinity* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 2011), Vol. II, pp. 174-176.

³God’s temporality, while biblical and central to His nature, is but one of many aspects of His deity. There may well be multiple other dimensions of existence not yet revealed to us or utterly incomprehensible at this point. For the centrality of temporality to divine nature, see Gulley, pp. 166-272; John C. Peckham, *Theodicy of Love: Cosmic Conflict and the Problem of Evil* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018); and John C. Peckham, *Divine Attributes: Knowing the Covenantal God of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2021).

⁴The Hebrew term *satan*, transliterated directly into English as the name of God’s adversary, does literally mean “adversary.”

⁵Jesus is the Greek rendering of the name Joshua, “Yahweh saves.”

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TRUE OR FALSE?: WAR IS HELL

What do Adventists believe about war today? And in previous times?

Thomas Hardy's poem "The Man He Killed" confronts humans' most basic justification for killing other human beings in war: "I shot him dead because—because he was my foe, just so: my foe of course he was; that's clear enough; although . . ."1 You kill because the other is the enemy.

WAR IS IRONIC

The quiet simplicity of Hardy's lines exposes the author's profound awareness of the imminent, collective, logical disaster humanity faces with regard to war. Hardy knows the emotional, psychological and/or other peril of probing beyond for some category that justifies killing "the man he killed." The logician needs to responsibly label, accurately identify, properly define this person as the enemy. For the poet has no problem seeing himself and this "enemy" sitting down together for fun. He'd be ready to lend this "enemy" half-a-crown² without hesitation, or if the man merely suggested that he needed it. Hardy shows that war is ironic. And worse.

WAR IS HELL

"War is hell," others say, for the physical and moral abuse it inflict on all and sundry. That three-word sentence has been many things: a saying attributed to an American warrior, the name of a movie, the title of more than one song . . . Also, a truth confirmed myriad times over, in the experience of those who have fought and won, as of those who may never have been in the fighting yet have lost everything.

And what do Adventists say about it? Well, it depends:

More than 150 years ago, at the birth-pangs of a denomination, the third annual General Conference Session resolved that, allegiance to Caesar notwithstanding, "we are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed as being inconsistent with the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind."³ Two years later, this: "The bearing of arms, or engaging



in war, is a direct violation of the teachings of our Saviour and the spirit and letter of the law of God. Yet we deem it our duty to yield respect to civil rulers, and obedience to all such laws as do not conflict with the word of God. In the carrying out of this principle we render tribute, customs, reverence, etc.” And the following year, this: “War was never justifiable except under the immediate direction of God, who of right holds the lives of all creatures in his hand; and that no such circumstance now appearing, we cannot believe it to be right for the servants of Christ to take up arms to destroy the lives of their fellow men.”

Paul Anderson, a contributor to this issue, and long-serving U.S. Navy and North American Division chaplain, wrote this: “War . . . is antithetical to the character and will of God” (see his “War and Adventism” in this issue). Anderson also says this: “Adventism embraces the beatitude of peace making. But the imperative of peace must be multi-faceted, multi-disciplinary, and balanced, so that righteousness and guilt are not attributed inappropriately.” And an earlier draft of his article spoke of his undergraduate research into American military service as a path out of poverty for African Americans. Years later Colin Powell would become chair of the American military forces Joint Chiefs of Staff. But college undergrad Anderson, already saw that military service can move you out of your zip code.

And while some ask whether food security and economic considerations should feature in gospel proclamation, we note a comment from Jan Paulsen,

immediate past General Conference president (*Adventist World*, March 2008), on the multiple attractions of a military career, including patriotism, education, professional opportunities that may seem nowhere else available. Hopeful youth may choose service “as a much-needed stepping-stone to something else”; a “necessary evil,” perhaps that they take “in order to fulfill their potential.”

And Paulsen does confront his reader with the ultimate question. For whatever your motivation, whether economics or education, patriotism or career pursuit, upward social mobility and leaving your zip code, voluntary enlistment denies you the opportunity to stand for what our pioneers stood for, the commandments of God—Thou shalt not kill—and the faith of Jesus—Love your enemies. The military is a difficult place to apply those convictions.

Contributors to this issue that looks at Adventist Christianity and war are highly credible voices. Their perspectives vary, but their anchorage is strong and not peculiar. Referencing Anderson testifies: “There were many faith-filled believers with whom I served and for whom I ministered.”

Our editorial prayer is that the faith of many grow stronger both because we undertook, and because of how we undertook, this issue.

¹ <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44329/the-man-he-killed>

² A British coin that used to be worth 2½ shillings.

³ These three quotes are from General Conference Session minutes, May 17, 1865; May 14, 1867; and May 14, 1868.

Lael Caesar is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review*.



Is it a sin to serve?

PAUL ANDERSON

War, whether internecine or international, is antithetical to the character and will of God. War ripped the atmosphere of heaven. It disrupted the ethos of eternity.

WAR IS EVIL

God's garden gift, the Edenic enclave, became marred by sin. Humanity's second generation was indelibly scarred by a murder instigated by insolence and defiance. Ensuing generations have been marred by the sins of avarice, greed, and contempt that always undergird warfare.

The nature of divinity is to love, create, and harmonize human diversity into an equitable symphony of brotherhood. War, on the other hand, is the divisive, destructive, and cacophonous amplification of the jangling discords of the fallen nature of humanity.

War is the ultimate expression of failed politics. Because war is antithetical to the character and will of God and because war is the fruit of failed civility and diplomacy, believers have navigated ethical conundrums about how to align their faith and their earthly allegiances.

War should be seen as the epitome of evil. How then do believers and righteous people relate to the prospect of war, whether at their country's initiative or when violated by others? What is the Christian's right response to conscription and deployment into combat?

Adventists have historically held that if called/forced to serve in the military of their countries, Adventists should opt, if possible, for non-combatant roles.

THE CHURCH HAS VARIED

During the American Civil War Ellen White "was shown that God's people ... cannot engage in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith."¹

An 1865 church statement regarding military service concluded as follows: "We are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed as being inconsistent with the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind."² Pursuant to this position, church members who served were disfellowshipped.³

Remarkably, though, Adventism's first known professional chaplain was Civil War veteran Lycurgus McCoy, recommended to Dr. Kellogg by Ellen White as chaplain for the Battle Creek sanitarium.⁴

Inevitably, Adventist young people will be included either volitionally, or as conscripts.

The 1865 posture persisted globally until, in World War I, a perspective of patriotism took hold. Perhaps for pragmatic, survival reasons, the church in Germany and Russia shifted to support of combatancy. The perspective persists in non-neutral nations of the European theater.

After the Korean War, in 1954, the church in General Conference session voted—with a patently American perspective, a reaffirmation of our earlier resistance to war, and our commitment to noncombatant service, if conscripted.⁵

This official position, contextually applied, saw European and Asian members maintaining a more patriotic perspective, given their recent history of mandatory service for males. Survival in a politically volatile world was the ethos of the era. A 1972 revision explained that the individual member remained “free to assess the situation for himself.”⁶ Arms bearing was a matter of individual conscience.

THE BIBLE REPORTS WAR HEROES

Adventism embraces the beatitude of peace-making. But the imperative of peace must be multifaceted, multidisciplinary, and balanced, so that righteousness and guilt are not attributed inappropriately. Enlightened individuals are to make cogent, contextual application of the Bible, Ellen White commentary, and other objective factors. Ellen White’s exposition on Abraham’s military engagement (Gen. 14:13ff.) represents his fights as “men trained in the fear of God, in the service of their master, and in the practice of arms.” She notes that in victory, “the worshiper of Jehovah had not only rendered a great service to the country, but had proved himself a man of valor. It was seen that righteousness is not cowardice and that Abraham’s religion made him courageous in maintaining the right and defending the oppressed. His heroic act gave him a widespread

influence among the surrounding tribes.”⁷

Abraham demonstrates how a committed believer living in dynamic relationship with God can be a military warrior. Abraham loved peace; Abraham was mission-focused; but Abraham also had a standing army, 318 men valorous in combat because they were prepared physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Sometimes good, peace-prefering people have to forcefully stand for right.

Indeed, the moniker of “infidel” (1 Tim. 5:8, KJV) may find appropriate ethical application to those who, in times of exigent peril, stand idly by as evil rampages around them. Parental obligation to provide for the family includes food, clothing, housing, identity and security. And the Spirit sternly admonishes that those who fail to provide, “especially for their own household” (verse 8, NIV), are worse than the unbeliever.

In Judges 4 the story of military triumph for God conspicuously involves two women: prophet Deborah and host Jael. First Deborah, under divine authority, summons the warrior Barak to lead God’s hosts to victory (Judges 4:6, 7). When he responds, she has to tell him that because of his cowardice, “the Lord will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman” (verse 9, NIV).

Deborah, God’s oracle for that era, in clarion and specific tones pronounced the battle call of God’s judgment: she tells Barak, “The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you” (verse 6, NIV). At the end a song of supernatural inspiration follows Jael’s assassination of the despotic general Sisera. “Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, most blessed of tent-dwelling women” (Judges 5:24, NIV).

God’s hero warriors may be male, female, or foreign: Syrian general Naaman becomes converted based upon a miraculous cure from leprosy. Before leaving Israel, the location, and Elisha, the agent of his healing, Naaman confesses a spiritual conundrum to the prophet. His portfolio includes

accompanying the king as he worships. Recognizing the futility of idol worship, he asks Elisha for guidance and/or absolution. The prophet simply says, “Go in peace” (2 Kings 5:19)—no comment on either his military status or his idolatrous participation. Ellen White posits that the light of God’s grace shines even—maybe especially—upon people who, flwed religion notwithstanding, are sincere in their trust and reliance upon God: “Centuries after Naaman returned to his Syrian home, healed in body and converted in spirit, his wonderful faith was referred to and commended by the Savior as an object lesson for all who claim to serve God. . . . God passed over the many lepers in Israel because their unbelief closed the door of good to them. A heathen nobleman who had been true to his convictions of right, and who felt his need of help, was in the sight of God more worthy of His blessing than were the afflicted in Israel who had slighted and despised their God-given privileges. God works for those who appreciate His favors and respond to the light given them from heaven.”⁸ Naaman’s job did not detract from the divine approbation of his character and service. In God’s eyes, and Christ’s voice, we hear no condemnation for military service and those who judiciously bear arms. At least there is none here.

In my own military service, neither my years as a combatant nor those as a noncombatant chaplain compromised my faith or witness. In fact, the converse is true. There were many faith-filled believers with whom I served and for whom I ministered.

ACM

Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (ACM) is the departmental arm of the church, in every division and at the General Conference, that serves as advocate, supporter, and first responder for Adventists serving in the military. Bibles, other spiritual literature, availability to counsel, and occasionally supportive interventions in matters of religious liberty, is our stock in trade. ACM supports members at local bases where there is no Adventist chaplain, by endorsing lay leaders from local churches. These lay leaders can facilitate Adventist-specific worship services on bases and during field operations or deployments.

Currently there are about 120 Adventist chaplains serving in the U.S. military. The Department of Defense estimates that there are about 5,000 Adven-

tists serving on active duty. All of them are valuable to the church. Most are serving admirably.

In 2021 one of ours was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in the Army Chaplain Corps. Recently the Army selected an Adventist sergeant major to lead the cadre of chaplains’ assistants and promoted another Adventist to the rank of colonel. They are faithfully serving Adventist pilots, doctors, nurses, lawyers, mechanics, special operators, and administrators. In Malawi, Zambia, Australia, Israel, and many other countries, including Ukraine and Russia, Adventist members serve and lead. Military service may not be for all. But those who are called and anointed for it deserve the church’s solace and support.

As we move into the future, firmly focused on biblical eschatology, we can expect wars, rumors of wars, and military conflict. Inevitably, Adventist young people will be included either volitionally or as conscripts. In Ukraine males between 16 and 60 have been conscripted for national defense. Adventists were also likely conscripted into the Russian army.

Our church, globally, in light of our beliefs, should act and invest proactively to establish centers of influence near major military installations and academic campuses. We can and should establish spiritual citadels where the bright hue of balanced Christian Adventism can shine. We need representative places where our army of youth, rightly trained, can continue to be properly encouraged and directed while they study and serve God and country according to the dictates of their well-informed consciences.

¹Ellen G. White, “The Rebellion,” *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 1, p. 361.

²Douglas Morgan, “The Beginnings of a Peace Church: Eschatology, Ethics, and Expedience in Seventh-day Adventist Responses to the Civil War,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 45, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 36.

³Ron Graybill, “The Perplexing War: Why Adventists Avoided Military Service in the Civil War,” *Insight*, Oct. 10, 1978, pp. 4-8.

⁴A. B. Olsen, Lycurgus McCoy obituary, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Aug. 6, 1925.

⁵Minutes of the General Conference Session, 1954.

⁶<https://sabbathsermons.com/2010/07/23/the-adventist-church-and-war/>, accessed Nov. 17, 2021.

⁷Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890, 1908), p. 135.

⁸Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1917), p. 252.

Paul Anderson recently retired from service as director of chaplaincy of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Columbia, Maryland.



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BAADER-MEINHOF AND THE PROVIDENCES OF GOD

In the late 1970s I had lived at Kibbutz Gadot, in Israel. A young German, a Gentile, lived there as well. His anomalous presence created an unspoken tension. I remember one kibbutznik woman asking, “What is he doing here?” Surely some form of atonement for his nation’s Nazi crimes or, perhaps, even his own family’s? I never asked.

Some workers had nicknamed him “Baader-Meinhof,” after a radical Communist group, the Red Army, who, through bombing, bank robbery, and kidnapping, terrorized Germany in the 1960s and 1970s. The two leaders, Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof, had committed suicide in jail, and the movement fell apart. Some theorize that, guilty about the past, and Germany’s by-then “economic miracle,” these children of the Nazi generation responded in different ways: some committed terrorism; others worked on kibbutzim in Israel.

The German on the kibbutz also had tattoos all over his arms and hands. Back then tattoos were not like today, as common as COVID-19. They were deemed radical, and for that reason, along with his being a German and of the same age as the terrorists, he got the “Baader-Meinhof” appellation.

I didn’t like Baader-Meinhof. It had nothing to do with his being German (if anything, I could respect him for what he was doing). It was just a personality clash. I didn’t like him, and, from what I could sense, he didn’t like me. For the most part, we had nothing to do with each other.

Flash ahead a year. I had left Israel, hitchhiked through Europe, and then returned. Wanting another kibbutz to live on, I first had to get to a main office, in Tel Aviv, and get assigned.

On a bus in the city, and lost, whom do I see but, yes, Baader-Meinhof. He knew where I had to go, and he stayed with me, past his stop, in order to make sure I got off at the right place. Not only did he get off with me—he all but walked me to the office itself. We shook hands, and I never saw him again.

What blazes in my memory is just how unabashedly glad he was to have seen, and then to have helped, me. He oozed gladness at being able to have assisted. Even now, more than 40 years later, I remember it very endearingly.

But there’s more. Only because of his help did I end up meeting someone right away—and under bizarre circumstances that most people find hard to believe—who played a crucial role in my coming to Christ. Had Baader-Meinhof not stopped to help, you might not be reading these words, because I might not have written them.

I gave up long ago trying to figure out how God does what He does, or at times why. But how astonishing that, in His providence, He would use someone, perhaps the child of a Nazi, to help get me just where I needed to be in order to have an experience that helped lead me to Jesus.

Go figure. ▀



**I DIDN'T LIKE HIM
AND, FROM WHAT
I COULD SENSE,
HE DIDN'T LIKE ME.**

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

*We can't afford to forget:
we're all soldiers.*

SHANNON CRAWFORD

There I was, at a military entrance processing center (MEPS), signing on a dotted line, stating that I, Shannon Lamar Crawford, would serve in the United States military for eight years. Despite the uncertainty of the future, I held on to the fact that the “Lord shall be [my] confidence and should keep [my] foot from being taken” (Prov. 3:26, KJV). After all, I was doing this because I believed that God had encouraged me to join the military.

GOD AND GUIDANCE?

I accepted Christ as my Savior when I was 15 years old. It was a very personal and mind-blowing experience. I credit that to my father, who constantly emphasized to me the importance of studying my Bible, and my mother, who encouraged me to study and learn more about my Adventist faith. One day as I was reading *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen White, my eyes were opened: there’s a big spiritual war going on in this world, and we are caught in the midst; every world event happens against the background of this great battle; every decision we make places us on God’s or Satan’s side; Satan is a formidable foe.

Every facet of the Adventist message began to make sense: we’re all part of the remnant church of Bible prophecy; God has given us a message to preach; more important, I need a Savior; I need Jesus.

I remember falling to my knees, and with a heart of surrender I gave myself over to Jesus. I wanted to be on His side in this great struggle. I wanted to be in His army.

Joining the U.S. Army was a tad too far. Yet here I was, May 12, 2011, enlisting in the United States Army Reserve, fully trusting that wherever I went, the presence of the Lord would go with me. Why? Because I was following His will, not mine.

If I could not stand for God now, how would I when it mattered the most?

People ask all the time: “How do you know God wanted you to join the military? How could you be so sure?” I know because of how God’s providence has cared for me. I graduated from basic training in December of 2011. Months later, June 2012, my father passed from a stroke. And where’s the providence in that? My father had been providing for me on his own since I was 12 years old. During that time, because I was always directed to focus on academics, I did not have any employment or any savings. Joining the military provided me not only with an income but a solid foundation in learning how to be a responsible adult. If I had not joined the military a year earlier, I would not have been able to take care of myself, handle his affairs, and be able to continue handling the finances of our home after my father had died. It pays to pay attention to the Lord’s guidance. He sees the end before the beginning, and knows exactly what we need before we do.

SERVICE AND FAITH

One of the conflicts for a Christian in the armed services is, of course, being faced with war. Our training centered on war. Our doctrine centered on war. We trained to shoot. We trained to fight. We trained to win. War seemed to be the mindset of all of my fellow recruits. I remember one trainee saying, “I can’t wait to graduate so I can kill.” That was very disturbing to me. Christ says in John 10:10 that He came that humanity may have life and have it more abundantly. I struggled with the idea of where my Army career would take me. *What if I were placed in a war zone? What if I had to take someone’s life?* Because to me, I wouldn’t just be taking someone’s life: I could very well be taking someone’s final chance at salvation. That would be unbearable.

My faith is what sustained me during basic combat training. Every day was grueling. Every physical, mental, and emotional faculty was being taxed to the limit. God was the secret source of my strength. Whenever the days got hard or the

stress of the day became unbearable, I would turn to the Lord for His help. Every morning and evening I would kneel beside my bunk and pray to the Lord for His guidance and strength and to give thanks for His protection. And every night before I went to bed, I would open my small Bible, one of the few possessions I was able to have, and make sure that I fed on the Words of Life. I was determined not to let my environment determine my level of spirituality. Other recruits quickly took notice of the fealty I had to my faith. Many would ask questions regarding my commitment to the God of the Bible, and I would provide answers as best as I could. Little did I know that this would be the aspect of my character that would continue throughout my Army career.

I believe that as Christians we are to be an example whenever and wherever we are. I realized that not only am I representing myself in this Army environment, but I am representing God as well. Therefore, when it was time for duty, I was always ready. I didn’t seek to shirk responsibility, but held myself accountable to everyone. In times of discouragement I sought to be the encouraging voice, motivating my colleagues to keep pressing forward. If others sought to engage me in something that was in conflict with my faith, I would politely decline. These would gradually awaken people’s curiosity and lead them to ask questions about my reasonings for living life the way I did. This would eventually lead to discussions about my faith.

Now, to be clear, I never began these conversations. That was contrary to Army policy. People, however, would simply look at my life, my speech, my work ethic, and ask, “Are you a Christian?” When I’d answer “Yes,” the conversation would move from there. I realize that Christ’s method truly does work. Christ was a person of relationships. He mingled with people. I found that people were willing to hear your perspective when you had a relationship with them. One of these interactions actually bore fruit.

I was recommended to prepare for next-level

Army leadership, and enrolled in the appropriate training camp. I was there to study war, but every night before bed I would pull out my Bible and read. I made many friends during that time. One day as we were out training, someone I'll call Brad asked if he could talk to me about something that night.

That night we sat outside our barracks, and Brad told me about his life, his wrong decisions, the mistakes he'd made: something was missing from his life. When he noticed me reading the Bible, he knew that that was what he needed. He needed a relationship with God. But he did not know how. I told him about the God who loves us, and died on the cross to save us. We had a long conversation that night. Brad decided to give his life to Jesus. I gave him a little green spare Bible that I had so that he could continue to read and learn about God on his own. We kept in contact on and off, and he would always thank me for helping him that night. He actually sent me a gift to show his appreciation—a huge ornate family Bible. When I reached out to him about it, he said that he just wanted to thank me for the gift that I had given Him. He found such reassurance in knowing that Jesus was watching over him and would be with Him always. Last I talked with him, he told me that he still had that green Bible with him.

CONSCIENCE AND COMPROMISE

Sadly, I did have moments of compromise while in the military. To be fully committed to my religious beliefs meant going against the grain. Training days always occurred on the Sabbath. I tried to take a stand for the Sabbath from the beginning. I was told that if I missed days of training, I would not meet the requirements for graduation, would be held back, and not be able to go home. I rationalized with myself that the requirement was compatible with my faith because I was serving my country. But as I continued to grow in faith, I became more uncomfortable about not taking a stand for Christ. With six months remaining on my Army contract, I reached a point where my conscience could be silent no longer. I thought long and hard. All I had to do was wait it out another six months. But the thought gave me no relief as I thought about God's faithfulness to me throughout my entire time in service. If I could not stand for God now, how would I when it mattered the most?

I prayed for strength and courage. I had attempted to stand before and had failed, but this time my heart was committed. I requested a one-on-one meeting with my officer, and I laid out before him my religious convictions. He listened intently. He knew that I was a man of faith, and even though he wasn't, he respected me and my views. He decided that even though I would still have to report to duty, on Saturdays I could do Sabbath-compatible work. I decided to work with our unit chaplain. That way I could fulfill my service while honoring my God. We took the matter to our new unit commander, who had no objections. He had seen my devotion to my faith, and was willing to allow me to work with our unit chaplain on Saturdays. This gave me the opportunity to minister to other soldiers' needs and to pray for them and with them.

CONVICTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Being a Christian in the military is hard. Serving in the military as an Adventist Christian, I believe, is even harder. But I wouldn't trade the experience for anything. The values I learned from the military aren't too different from the values of my faith. In the military I learned about loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. These values are held as the standard for any soldier. It is the same for the Christian. Christ asks for our loyalty to Him and to His Word. Christ has given us a duty to spread His gospel of salvation throughout the world. He teaches us to respect and love each other even when we disagree. Following His life of selfless service, we find ways to help others more than ourselves. His grace enables us to live lives of honor, honesty, and integrity, and always keep our word. It takes courage to be a good soldier. It takes courage to live for God. It takes courage to stand for God. It takes courage to tell others about God, but the dividends are eternal.

My country needs me. God also needs me in His army, displaying His values and wielding the spiritual weapons He has given for "pulling down strongholds" of the enemy (2 Cor. 10:4).

His war against deeply and highly established spiritual forces (Eph. 6:12) needs the best soldiers He can have. I'm enlisted. Are you?

Shannon Crawford is associate pastor of the New Covenant Adventist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. He served eight years in the military.

WHEN TEARS BECOME LENSES

God plants within our hearts the urge to seek Him, as Mary did.

JOHN MCVAY

It is a new day. The light of the morning sun has pierced through the darkness of the night. It is also a new week. However one might feel about the treacheries and woes of the week past, it is past. It is time to pick up the pieces and move on. Surely this new week promises better things.

But it is not just a fresh day or a new week; it is a new age. A new era has dawned. In a few scattered pieces of abandoned weaponry one might read it. In the fractured remnants of a Roman seal one might deduce it. And in the absence of His body and the presence of His graveclothes, one might perceive it. But the pain of the past week is so profound, it is a tortured pilgrimage to join the joy of this new epoch.

There had been others at the tomb. They came because she called them. And they left. Of them John's story records, "The disciples returned to their homes" (John 20:10).¹ They had visited the tomb. After all, graveyards are appropriate venues for visits. A visit to the grave of a loved one is fitting. A tear shed, a memory recalled, pain renewed. But we would wonder about one who takes up residence there. Only mad people live among the tombs.

Their eyes take in what evidence their hearts can process . . . and considerably more. They take mental note of the surroundings, trying to make sense of it all. Like the clever detective Hercule Poirot, they come to visit the scene, to sort the evidence, to set their "gray cells" working. But then they go, leaving behind one whose tear ducts are working: "The disciples returned to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb" (verses 10, 11). In a way that no one else does, Mary "endured with Jesus the very bleakest hours of world history."²

PURSUING THE PURSUER

To appreciate this story fully, we must remind ourselves of a facet of Christian theology, one treated by A. W. Tozer in his little



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In the inspiration of that encounter, she becomes the apostle to the apostles, the first preacher of the resurrected Christ.

book *The Pursuit of God*. He titles the first chapter “Following Hard After God”:

“We pursue God because, and only because, He has first put an urge within us that spurs us to the pursuit. ‘No man can come to me,’ said our Lord, ‘except the Father which hath sent me draw him,’ and it is by this . . . drawing that God takes from us every vestige of credit for the act of coming. The impulse to pursue God originates with God, but the outworking of that impulse is our following hard after Him; and all the time we are pursuing . . . we are already in the divine hand. . . .

“In this divine search and human ‘following’ there is no contradiction. All is of God, for . . . God is always previous. In practice, however, . . . [we] must pursue God. On our part there must be positive reciprocation if this secret drawing of God is to yield a real experience of the Divine. In the warm language of . . . the forty-second psalm: ‘As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?’ This is deep calling unto deep, and the longing heart will understand it.

“Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted.”³

God plants within our hearts the urge to seek Him. And the Divine One waits for the response, waiting for us to follow hard after Him, to seek that we might find. Something truly remarkable happens when the seeking God is met by a searching person. When the heart of God intersects with a human heart, a heart that longs for the Creator of its desire, profound things occur. Once we have understood this, we are equipped to grapple with Mary’s story.

The others leave. Mary stays, weeping, by the tomb. Why? Surely because she loves Jesus. This was the last place she had glimpsed her dead Lord. The tomb is empty, but it is His tomb. It is all she has—her only connection to Jesus. She has come to minister

to her Lord in death. And to add loss to tragic loss, she cannot locate His lacerated form. Her love for Jesus is evidenced by her watch at the tomb.

GRAVEYARD ENCOUNTERS

Still weeping, Mary bends down to look into the sepulcher. And she sees “two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet” (John 20:12). These two cannot be mistaken, appearing as they do in heavenly garb and celestial form. Divine sentinels sent from heaven’s courts, they do not so much bear a message as they are one. They are evidence that God is at work here. Grave robbers cannot explain their presence. This is an invasion of God’s power.

They ask Mary, “Why are you weeping?” (verse 13). She does not seem to mistake them as members of the cemetery staff, implicating them in the disappearance of her Lord. She replies, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him” (verse 13). So focused is she on her quest to locate the body of her dead Lord that she virtually ignores two angels.

Perhaps it is a little like sending someone to purchase your favorite ice cream. Let’s say you send for Breyer’s Natural Vanilla, and your shopper returns instead with a generic brand of vanilla ice milk. When you have your taste buds set for your favorite, anything less is a disappointment. Mary is on a quest to find Jesus, and not even angels will do. For Mary it is as though they are not even there, as if they have not appeared at all. Mary’s single-minded love for Jesus is reflected in her disregard for angels.

As Mary talks with the angels, she becomes aware of the presence of another. So she turns from the empty tomb. And through her tears she sees a man. Her perceptions track on her hopes. And just now she has no hope of seeing her risen Lord. Just now her greatest hope is to find someone who knows where Jesus’ corpse is. In the form before her she sees the gardener, one who

may well possess this crucial knowledge.

She hears His questions and makes them fit her perceptions. True, the first query seems a bit personal for a gardener: “Woman, why are you weeping?” But, after all, she is weeping. The next is just the sort of question you might expect from a gardener: “Whom are you looking for?”

“Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, ‘Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away’” (verse 15)

What do you think Mary means by this offer, to “take him away”? Mary is a woman of some influence and means. Luke describes how she helps to underwrite the expenses of Jesus and His disciples (Luke 8:1-3). So Mary is a patron of Jesus. When Mary says to one she believes to be the gardener, “Please, just tell me where He is, and I’ll take Him away,” she may be saying, “I have the resources. I will see that His body is cared for.”

But perhaps Mary means something else by volunteering to “take Him away,” something more spontaneous. John has already told his readers that Nicodemus brought to the burial of Jesus a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about 100 pounds, and that they wrapped these spices within linen cloths (John 10:39, 40). So to the body weight of Jesus you must add the heavy spices and the linen cloths contributed by Nicodemus. Perhaps Mary impulsively promises to remove the body of Jesus herself. If so, either Mary was a very hefty woman or, more likely, her profound love for Jesus leads her to promise something she cannot do.

Mary loves Jesus. She stays by His tomb, weeping; she disregards angels in her quest to minister to His crushed form; she promises to take His body away, something she cannot accomplish. “Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted.”

“Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’ (which means Teacher)” (John 20:16). The resonance of her own name in her ears clears the mist in her eyes. Her tears prove lenses for a clear vision of the risen Christ. She is able to do more than look through the tears; she sees through them and beholds her risen Lord.

WHAT IT MEANS

Many of Jesus’ prior promises in John’s Gospel find concentrated, joyful fulfillment in this touching

moment. Describing Himself as the Good Shepherd, Jesus had said that “the sheep hear his voice” and “he calls his own sheep by name.” And when He has called them by name, they will “follow him because they know his voice” (John 10:3, 4). He had promised, “I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. . . . You will see me” (John 14:18, 19). Jesus had prophesied that His followers would experience the pain of His loss, but that “your pain will turn into joy” (John 16:20).

For Mary, each of these promises becomes marvelously true in her garden-scented encounter with the risen Christ, framed against the portal of an open tomb. And in the inspiration of that encounter, she becomes the apostle to the apostles, the first preacher of the resurrected Christ.

Mary Magdalene seems like such a poor choice for this role. If heaven is interested in the message of Christ’s resurrection having influence and credibility, why Mary? Why in a man’s world choose a woman? Why choose someone with such a past? Why choose someone with a history of mental disorder? Why choose one who had been demon-possessed? Why pick Mary Magdalene? Because “acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted.”

If Mary could seek so earnestly for One whose lips she thought to be sealed and tongue silenced, can I not search as vigorously for One whose voice speaks in Spirit and in Word?

If Mary could be so loyal to an executed criminal upon whom had been heaped all the civil and religious hatred her society could muster, can I not be as loyal to One upon whom has been conferred all the splendor and reverence the universe has to offer?

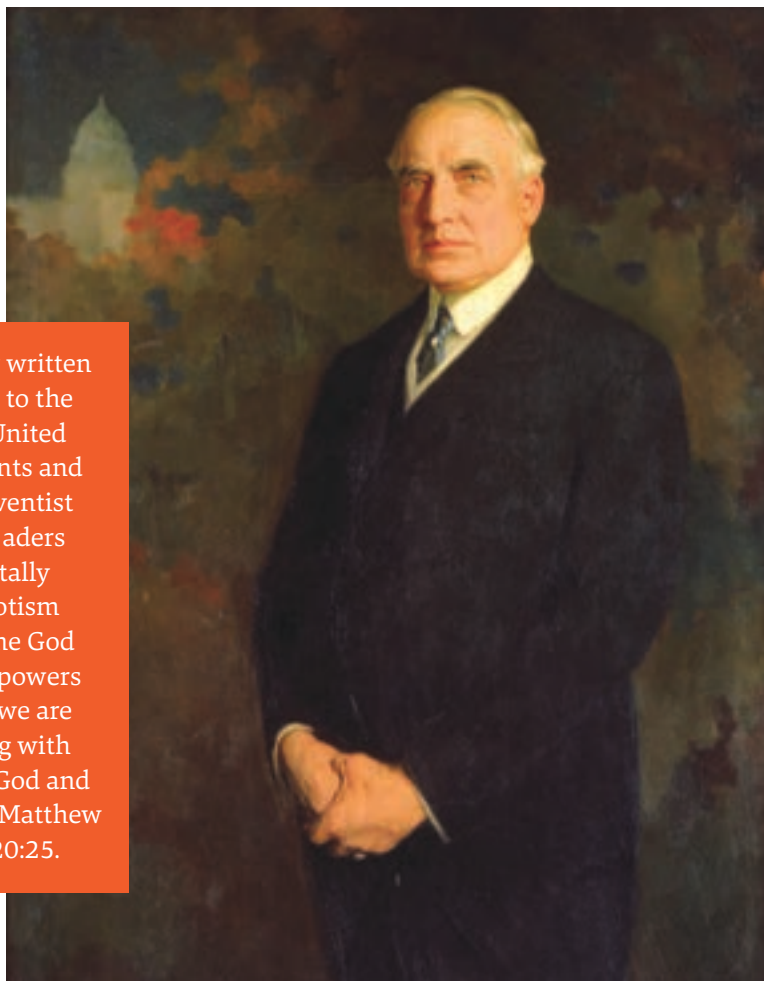
If Mary could be so enamored with a dead Jesus, can I not treasure the living one? ♣

¹ Bible quotations in this article are from the New Revised Standard Version.

² Richard Bauckham and Trevor Hart, *At the Cross: Meditations on People Who Were There* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1999), pp. 90, 91.

³ A. W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1948), pp. 11, 12, 17. I have adapted the quotation slightly.

This article was published in the *Adventist Review* in April 2004. At the time of writing, John McVay was dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He now serves as president of Walla Walla University. This was included as part of our premium online content. To read more articles like this, subscribe at www.adventistreview.org.



The following letter written in 1921 expresses to the president of the United States the sentiments and convictions of Adventist leadership. The leaders describe how totally committed patriotism may honor both the God of heaven and the powers of earth to which we are subject, in keeping with Jesus' equation on God and country as stated in Matthew 22:21 and Luke 20:25.

ADDRESS TO PRESIDENT HARDING

To His Excellency,
Warren G. Harding,
President of the United States:

The leading official representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United States, assembled in annual conference at Minneapolis, Minn., Oct. 12-26, 1921, beg leave to submit to you the following address:

We desire to express to you our hearty accord with the commendable efforts now being put forth under your leadership in behalf of international peace and tranquility. In these days of world-wide distress and confusion, it is most gratifying to hear the voice of our Chief Magistrate striking a clear note of hope and courage, and to witness the exercise of his high office in behalf of international amity and pacification. Civil government is ordained of God (Rom. 13:1), and those occupying positions of authority in the state are justly entitled to that respect and loyalty which belong to those who

serve as the “ministers of God” for the proper regulation of the social order. This respect and loyalty we sincerely entertain for the head of our great Republic and for those associated with him in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of our Government.

As Seventh-day Adventists, in common with other religious bodies, we strongly favor a limitation of armaments, and if it were possible in the present state of society, we would favor the abolition of all war among the nations of men. We are forced to this view by the very logic of our belief in Him who is the Prince of Peace, and of our experience as subjects of His kingdom.

Throughout their history, Seventh-day Adventists have been consistently and uncompromisingly loyal to the great principles of civil and religious liberty—principles which constitute the very foundation of our Government and the bulwark of our democracy.

Sincerely believing in the words of the Saviour, that they should render “unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s,” they regard as sacred and inviolable their duty to civil government in every function of its exercise wherein such exercise does not conflict with the plain requirements of the law of God and the principles of the gospel of Christ.

The understanding of the teachings of the gospel which Seventh-day Adventists entertain has not permitted them throughout their history as a church in this country to bear arms. They believe that the teachings of Christ are opposed to war, and that their design is to promote peace and good will among all who dwell upon the earth. Seventh-day Adventists, therefore, are noncombatant in faith and practice. Both in the Civil War and in the recent World War, they were recognized by our Government as noncombatants, and were accorded the rights and privileges, exemptions and immunities, which the Government graciously provided for those holding noncombatant views as a matter of conscience. Members of our churches called to service were assigned to non-combatant duty, and in such labor thousands of our young men rendered faithful and loyal service to their country and to their fellow men.

Holding these noncombatant principles, we note with particular interest your successful efforts to secure an international conference for



This letter appeared in the December 8, 1921, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*.

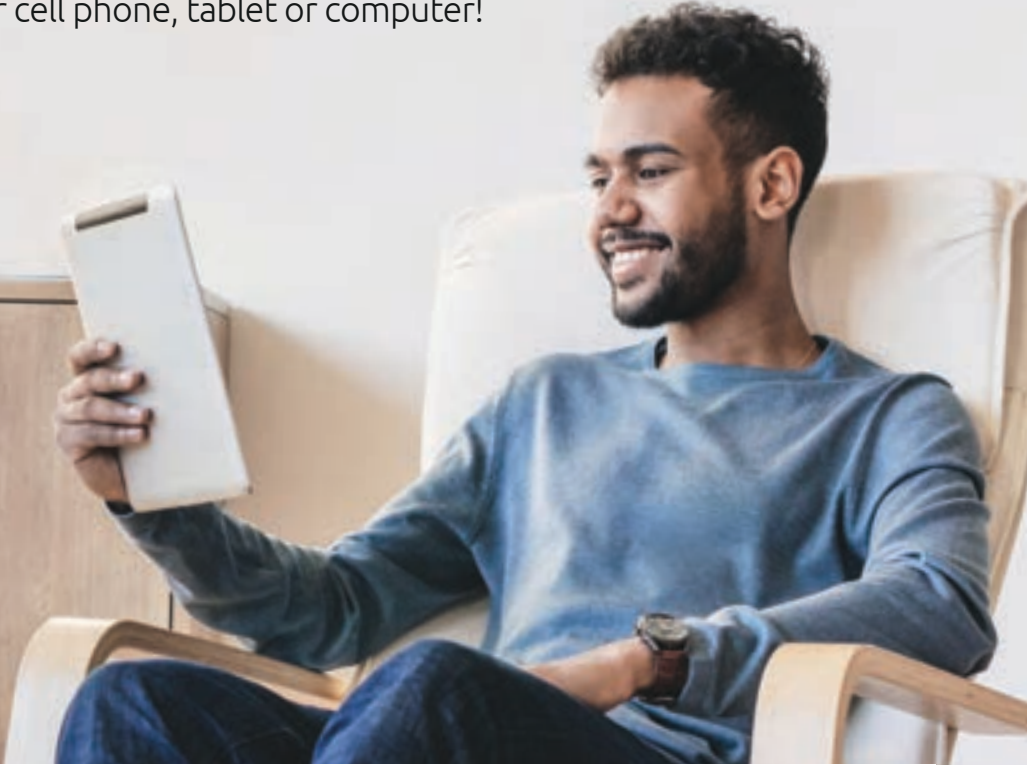
the discussion of the limitation of armaments. We heartily commend the wise statesmanship and humane sentiment which prompt this laudable action. We are well aware that as war springs from the selfishness of men, the perfect ideal of abiding peace can never be realized in this present world. Only as the hearts of individual men and women are changed by Christ’s grace will the nations of earth submit to the principles of right and righteousness. But while we may not hope to realize the full fruition of our strivings, the mitigation of the evils of war in any measure is well worth the effort, and should have the consistent support of every lover of peace.

We are therefore encouraging our people devoutly to pray for your personal guidance, and for the guidance of those assembled in the Conference for the Limitation of Armaments, that the great Ruler of nations may further the cause of international peace, to the end that future war and bloodshed, with all their attendant and consequent horrors, may be averted, and that the vast sums spent for armaments of war may be devoted to the amelioration of human woe and to the advancement of peaceful pursuits.

A. G. DANIELLS, President
W. T. KNOX, Treasurer
J. L. SHAW, Secretary

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THE BINARY THAT TURNED MY WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

Sometimes you hear a concept or see an image that completely turns your world upside down. Such was the case with a graphic I saw back in 2016 that compared two ways of “doing” church.

Most of Christendom does it the first way, which some have called the “attractional” model. In this understanding, church is essentially a program or event we put on in a building, and then we try to attract people to that place for the program or event. Picture in your mind a church building with arrows pointing into the building, with all of church life revolving around the programming that takes place there—and most people serving as spectators while others deliver ministry to them.

The second way, which some refer to as the “missional” model, views church not as a program or a building, but as a people. It’s God’s family, sent out into the world to live out the gospel in everyday life. In that sense, church happens whenever and wherever God’s people are—and their main objective is not to figure out ways to get others to come back to a specific building to attend a specific program, but to enter into life with those people, serving and blessing them as the hands and feet of Jesus. In this model, picture a group of people with arrows pointing out into the world.

This distinction, of course, is a bit simplistic, and some have noted that this attractional/missional binary is sort of a false dichotomy. I certainly get that. But the first time I heard about this binary and saw a specific graphic illustrating it, it was a lightbulb moment for me—one of the most significant crossroads of my life. It completely altered my trajectory—

both personally and professionally.

My wife, children, and I started spending lots of time with people outside the four walls of our church building, sharing life with those who either didn’t know Jesus or didn’t know our particular understanding of Him. We began having our neighbors over for dinner and attending parties with new non-religious friends. In this we were simply following the method of Jesus, who was often accused of being a “glutton and a drunkard” (Matt. 11:19, NIV) because of the company He kept.

We were, in short, taking seriously the claim of Ellen White, who declared that “Christ’s method alone” of mingling with others and winning their confidence would bring “true success” in reaching people.*

The upshot is that the past six years have easily been the best six years of my life. Our church has also caught the vision; and although we haven’t grown by the thousands, there’s a palpable difference within our church family, both in numbers and in spirit. Either way, we feel constrained to enter into others’ lives to bless and serve them, whether or not they ever join our team.

So my invitation to you is to capture the vision—to see the binary. God wants us—all of us—to be salt, sent out into the world to serve and bless it, bringing church to others regardless of whether they ever show up to our building on Sabbath morning. ♣

* Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905), p. 143.

Shawn Brace is a pastor and author in Bangor, Maine, whose most recent book, *The Table I Long For* (Signs Publishing), details his and his church’s recent journey into a mission-centered life. He is also a DPhil student at the University of Oxford, researching nineteenth-century American Christianity.

REIMAGINING
FAITH
SHAWN
BRACE



WE FEEL
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BLESS AND SERVE
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FOLLOWING THE PRINCE OF PEACE IN A TIME OF WAR

How the Adventist pioneers dealt with issues of war, peace, and military service

DOUGLAS MORGAN

The commitment that inspired Joel Klimkewicz, a Seventh-day Adventist incarcerated by the United States Marine Corps for his refusal in the twenty-first century to engage in killing for the sake of principle,¹ has deep roots in the early Adventism of the nineteenth century. Questions of war, peace, and violence became urgent, real-life concerns for Seventh-day Adventists from the moment they first organized as a denomination. When the first conference (Michigan) organized in October 1861, the American Civil War had been flaring for just six months. The first General Conference Session began on May 20, 1863, two weeks after the stunning Confederate victory at Chancellorsville, and about six weeks before the great turning

point marked by Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg.

At the very time they were completing a tumultuous process of sorting out who they were as a movement, the nation's "fire crisis" confronted Adventists with the question of what their radical faith meant for the moral dilemma of war. Resolving that dilemma wasn't easy or simple, any more than it is for Adventists today.

PEACEMAKERS

Three powerful forces tugged at the hearts and minds of the pioneer Adventists, at times twisting them this way and that, as they struggled to find direction concerning the issues the war imposed on them. The first of these forces was their *fervent dedication to following the teachings of Scripture all the way*. This is what their movement was all about—to be a people who upheld “the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” in a time when compromise was all around.

A second influence was *pragmatic concern for the survival of their fledgling movement*. With the organized church just beginning to take life, Adventists did not want to see it become a casualty of wartime intolerance or deprivation, with its mission left unfulfilled.

The third force was their *passionate opposition to slavery*. The first Seventh-day Adventists were not at all neutral or indifferent about the issue at the heart of the war.

Amid the interplay of these sometimes countervailing forces and the momentous events happening around them, Adventists found their way to a

corporate stand for nonviolence and peacemaking. Here is how it happened.

A RADICAL MOVEMENT

The pioneers of Adventism would probably be something of an embarrassment to those of us who feel comfortable in the respectable mainstream of Western society. The radical reform movements centered in New England and upstate New York in the 1830s and 1840s constituted their spiritual and moral breeding ground. More moderate reformers regarded these radicals, who brooked no compromise with such entrenched evils in American society as slavery and the liquor traffic, as dangerous extremists. One powerful spokesperson for abolitionism, William Lloyd Garrison, was reviled across the spectrum of conventional politics in the 1830s, and barely escaped lynching at the hands of a Boston mob.²

Many early Adventists were also influenced by the Christian nonresistance movement that Garrison led. They regarded scripturally grounded pacifism as part of that radical faith that set them apart from the large majority of Americans. Christian nonresistance had been espoused by the Millerite Adventist reformer Joshua V. Himes, as well as William Miller himself (according to Garrison). That commitment was also apparent in the post-1844 group that formed the nucleus of the emerging Seventh-day Adventist Church. It found occasional expression in the early publications of the Sabbathkeeping Adventists during the late 1840s and 1850s.³

To them, the scriptural basis for this stance seemed quite clear. Just as they took literally what the fourth commandment said about the *seventh day* being the “Sabbath of the Lord thy God,” they believed that the sixth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” prohibited the taking of life. They also believed Jesus meant what He said in telling His followers to “love your enemies.” Participation in military combat seemed a clear and simple violation of the sixth commandment and the teachings of Christ.

These early Adventists fully recognized that Scripture also instructs believers to render due honor and subordination to civil authority. This teaching took on particular importance for them in the early 1860s as they set up their fragile new church organization in a society wracked by a great

civil war. As a very small group with dissenting convictions that set them sharply apart from the general society, they could very easily become targets of repression in a time of national crisis. In that setting, it was especially important for the church to show that its radical message did not promote violent rebellion against civil authority.

For the pioneer Seventh-day Adventists who had not spread beyond the North at that point, the relevant civil authorities were those of the Union and those states loyal to it. Adventists were on the lookout for ways to counter suspicions that might be aroused by their pointed preaching about the sins of the Protestant majority culture in America and ultimate divine judgment upon it. They wanted to demonstrate that their message was not one of disloyalty to the Union, and most definitely not one of sympathy for the Confederate rebellion.

Finding ways to accomplish this without watering down the “third angel’s message” was not easy to do, and Adventists’ deep and outspoken opposition to slavery, the third influence we are tracking, further sharpened the dilemma.

LETTING FREEDOM RING

Throughout the 1850s—and in the pages of this magazine—abolitionist protest was a major theme in the Adventist warning message to America. In this era the leading Protestant denominations collectively held an informal, yet very real, dominance in American culture. Though there had been considerable debate and even division in the churches over slavery, most of the major Northern churches avoided strong pronouncements about slavery, earning them heated criticism in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* for their tolerance of a racist system of human bondage.

Early Seventh-day Adventists proclaimed a striking word of judgment about slavery to America’s Protestant “empire,” addressing both the Southern embrace of the institution and Northern complicity with it. “God is punishing this nation for the high crime of slavery,” Ellen White wrote in August 1861. “He has the destiny of the nation in His hands. He will punish the South for the sin of slavery, and the North for so long suffering its overreaching and overbearing influence.”⁴ The church’s first journal, published by her husband, joined in the abolitionist criticism of President



Lincoln for failing to make emancipation of the slaves a goal of the war. Only in late 1862 did the president announce that the war was being fought to free millions of enslaved Americans.⁵

The dilemma for the Adventists of the 1860s was multifaceted: if they resisted military service out of faithfulness to Scripture, they risked accusations of disloyalty, a severe government crackdown on their movement just as it was getting off the ground, and indirectly abetting the slave system they so fiercely opposed. Joining freely in armed combat, though, would make a mockery of their claim to be a remnant faithful to “the commandments of God and faith of Jesus.” Their witness to the fourth commandment as well as the sixth would be compromised. Such a course might reduce conflict with the surrounding society, but at the price of compromising the church’s prophetic message and mission.

How did believers work through this challenge? The fact that no general draft was enacted in the early stages of the war gave them a little breathing room. At the outset of the war, President Lincoln called upon the states to raise volunteer armies to fight the Confederate “insurrection.” The president’s statement created some pressure for Adventists, however, because states and local communities were required to meet quotas for bonuses to pay the volunteers. James White and John P. Kellogg participated on a Battle Creek committee for this purpose.⁶ But no Adventist or

other objector to military combat needed to volunteer.

The much-discussed possibility of a draft still loomed over them, however. James White, the church’s foremost organizer, addressed the issue with a pragmatic line of thought in a *Review* editorial of August 1862 entitled “The Nation.” White reasoned that if Adventists were drafted, they would be well advised to submit, and the government would assume responsibility for any violations of the law of God that the drafted individual would commit.⁷

White’s editorial sparked vigorous, extended debate in the pages of the *Review*, and his position was attacked from all sides. Some believers called for Adventist participation in the Union’s “crusade against traitors”—one even fantasizing about an armed regiment of Sabbathkeepers that would “strike this rebellion a staggering blow.” Others advocated thoroughgoing pacifism. Henry Carver, for example, maintained “that under no circumstances was it justifiable in a follower of the Lamb to use carnal weapons to take the lives of his fellow men.” Adventists in Iowa petitioned the state legislature for recognition as a pacifist church. In fact, it was their eagerness to declare their intention to resist a draft, even while it was not yet certain that it would be enacted, that had prompted James White to editorialize on the issue in the first place.

In responding to criticisms of his editorial,

White clarified two crucial points about his position that his critics tended to overlook: (1) he would never encourage a Sabbathkeeper to *volunteer* for service in the army; (2) if believers were drafted they should do their best to obtain Sabbath privileges and recognition as noncombatants. Only if such efforts failed would moral culpability fall upon the government.⁸

PREPARING FOR THE DRAFT

The , just before the federal draft was instituted in March 1863, a testimony from Ellen White deftly set forth a position that avoided reckless posturing in any direction while also asserting a principled stand on the commandments of God. The prophet rebuked both the ill-considered bravado about resistance to the anticipated draft expressed by the Iowans zealous for a defiant pacifist , as well as the militant impulse to take up arms for the Union's righteous cause. Adventists should not court martyrdom with provocative pronouncements, she cautioned. Yet it remained the case that "God's people . . . cannot engage in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. In the army they cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers."⁹

The guidance from Ellen White drew together and addressed various elements from the conflicting influences that both motivated and unsettled Adventists in this time of crisis. They would take their stand for divine law, which meant a refusal to engage in military combat. Yet they should be prudent, avoiding rash moves that would unnecessarily stir antagonism from the government. And, again for practical reasons, but also because of their moral opposition to slavery, they would take every opportunity to show that they were not disloyal to the Union and were in fact advocates of the highest ideals that their government espoused.

The federal draft law enacted in March 1863 heightened the pressure on Adventists, but still provided a means for avoiding direct confrontation with the authorities, albeit a costly one. The law stipulated that a drafted individual could fulfill his obligation by either purchasing an exemption or providing a substitute. The hefty \$300 commutation fee placed a financial strain on the church as it tried to raise the necessary funds for those who could not afford it.

In July 1864 Congress restricted these options to conscientious objectors who were members of a recognized pacifist church. For Adventists, the decisive moment had come, and the young church's leaders moved swiftly. John N. Andrews was authorized by the General Conference Committee to go to Washington and seek governmental recognition for the noncombatant position held by Seventh-day Adventists. "May it be favorable for those who have enlisted to serve under the Prince of Peace," declared James White in reporting Andrews' mission.¹⁰

Andrews' petition, presented to James B. Fry, the provost marshal general, described Seventh-day Adventists as "a people unanimously loyal and antislavery, who because of their views of the ten commandments and of the teaching of the New Testament cannot engage in bloodshed." General Fry responded favorably to the petition, and issued an exemption that gave Adventists the option of either accepting assignment to hospital duty or care of freedmen or paying the \$300 commutation fee.¹¹

The success of their petition may obscure the fact that by thus bringing their nonconformity into the open, the little-known group took the risk of their cause being rejected. Moreover, even with high-level governmental recognition achieved, individual Adventist draftees still suffered denials, temporary imprisonment, threats of court-martial, and other forms of harassment when attempting to claim their right to alternative duty, owing to lack of understanding among officers about the provost marshal's provision, prejudice against noncombatants, and poor communication. The time had come, however, for the church to take a public stand.

A COMMITMENT TO PEACE

While eventual Union victory had become virtually certain by the early months of 1865, how long the horrific war might drag on was far from clear. Thus, Adventist leaders took further measures to make known to military and state authorities their position and the recognition granted the church by federal authorities.

Uriah Smith and James White filed "duly sworn" affidavits in Calhoun County, Michigan, declaring participation in warfare and bloodshed to be violations of the core beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. Smith's statement refers to the "Church



Covenant” adopted by the Michigan Conference in 1861 as indication that Seventh-day Adventists had always “taken as their articles of faith and practice, ‘The Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus Christ.’” He elaborated that Adventists explain “the commandments of God to mean the ten commandments of the moral law, and the faith of Jesus Christ to be the teachings of Christ in the New Testament.” James White stated that he had been a minister of the “denomination” since 1847 and “that during all of that time, the teachings of that church have been that war is sinful and wrong, and not in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scripture.” Copies of these affidavits were appended to a pamphlet published in 1865 with the title *Compilation or Extracts, From the Publications of Seventh-day Adventists Setting Forth Their Views of the Sinfulness of War, Referred to in the Annexed Affidavits*.

The church also made formal its commitment to pacifism in a resolution voted by the General Conference Session of 1865:

While we thus cheerfully render to Caesar the

things which the Scriptures show to be his, we are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed as being inconsistent with the duties enjoined upon us by our divine Master toward our enemies and toward all mankind.¹²

Further resolutions at the 1867 and 1868 sessions reaffirmed this position.¹³

Our Adventist pioneers were not perfect. Nor do all their views hold the status of absolute dogma for members today. Yet if we take seriously the calling to be a faithful remnant, we would do well to pray for a measure of their wisdom and courage as we grapple with what “the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” mean with regard to war, violence, peacemaking, and love of enemies in our time. ❖

¹ Reports on Klimkewicz may be found at the websites of the Adventist News Network (www.adventist.org) and the Adventist Peace Fellowship (www.adventistpeace.org).

² Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), pp. 188-212.

³ See Ronald D. Graybill, “The Abolitionist-Millerite Connection”; Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, eds., *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 139-150; and Peter Brock, *Freedom From Violence: Sectarian Nonresistance From the Middle Ages to the Great War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), pp. 230-258.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 1, p. 264.

⁵ Read James White's views in a series of three articles collectively entitled “Ellen G. White—Racist or Champion of Equality?” in the *Review and Herald*, Apr. 9, 16, and 23, 1970.

⁶ D. A. Robinson, A. L. White, and W. C. White, “The Spirit of Prophecy and Military Service,” manuscript (Silver Spring, Md.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1936), pp. 6, 7.

⁷ Brock provides a thorough analysis of the Civil War-era debate in the *Review and Herald* over military services in *Freedom From Violence*, pp. 230ff.

⁸ “To Correspondents,” *Review and Herald*, Sept. 9, 1862, p. 118; “The War Question,” *Review and Herald*, Oct. 14, 1862, p. 159; “Letter to Bro. Carver,” *Review and Herald*, Oct. 21, 1862, p. 167.

⁹ E. G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 361.

¹⁰ “Eastern Tour,” *Review and Herald*, Sept. 6, 1864, p. 116.

¹¹ J. N. Andrews, “Seventh-day Adventists Recognized as Noncombatants,” *Review and Herald*, Sept. 13, 1864, pp. 124, 125.

¹² “Report of the Third Annual Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 17, 1865, pp. 196, 197.

¹³ “Business Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 28, 1867, p. 284.

This article originally appeared in the June 14, 2007, *Adventist Review*. At that time Douglas Morgan was professor of history and political studies at Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University) in Takoma Park, Maryland. He now serves as an assistant editor of the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* and teaches church history courses for the School of Distance Education, Andrews University.



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JESUS, THE PEACEMAKER?



*Beyond summits
and consultations*

The recent months have shaken us out of complacent routines, shallow security, and mindless consumerism. After two years of a global pandemic, we are now confronted with war in Europe 77 years after the end of World War II. What has happened to peace? The hope for peace has driven many political initiatives and consultations. We seem to believe that if people are talking to each other, they will be less prone to hurting each other—both physically and emotionally.

Yet today, and also historically, all the consultations and conversations and conferences and crisis summits have not resulted in resolving our constant conflicts and struggles. Peace appears to be as elusive as ever.

A SHALOM WORLDVIEW

Shalom, the Hebrew word for “peace” and “well-being,” is often used to describe something that goes far beyond the absence of conflict. Bible scholar Willard Swartley reminds us that the term has also a moral dimension, “standing against oppression, deceit, fraud, and injurious actions.”¹ *Shalom* is the opposite of deceit (Ps. 34:14; 37:37; Jer. 9:8), denotes innocence from moral wrongdoing (Gen. 44:17; 1 Kings 5:12), and is often paired with justice (Isa. 59:8; Zech. 8:16-19) and righteousness (Ps. 72:7; Isa. 60:17). People in biblical times greeted each other with “*Shalom*,” wishing health and well-being to a neighbor or stranger. *Shalom* was a way of life and closely associated with the Creator.

PEACE AND PAX ROMANA

Peace was also an ever-present aspiration in the world of the first century A.D. The well-known Latin phrase *pax Romana* (“Roman peace”) is used to describe Roman political rule in the Mediterranean world beginning with the reign of Caesar Augustus and lasting for the next two and half centuries.² Augustus’ ideal of the *pax Romana* focused on security, stability, material prosperity, and administrative efficiency. A strong central Roman power would guarantee its citizens and all the conquered people living in the Roman Empire peace and security and all the material blessings associated with that. That, at least, was the idea behind *pax Romana*.

Reality looked distinctly different. The Roman author Tacitus (c. A.D. 56-120) recognized that many non-Roman people groups experienced the *pax Romana* as brute force and spoke instead of *vis*

Romana (“Roman power” [Tacitus, *Annals* 3.60]). Overwhelming military power focused on Rome as the Empire’s center and was designed to guarantee a fear-induced peace, governed by Rome-appointed prefects or client kings—such as Herod Antipas, who ruled with Rome’s permission over Galilee and Perea (cf. Matt. 14:1-12). Peace was the result of the application of power and control. Good prefects and client kings offered their subjects a more acceptable experience of the *pax Romana*, while abusive governors often enjoyed unchecked control and benefited themselves more than their subjects.

“THE TIME HAS COME . . .”

Jesus actively engaged this world and mindset when He began to preach in Galilee. “‘The time has come,’ he said. ‘The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!’” (Mark 1:15, NIV). His kingdom language sounds like a declaration of war challenging the ruler of this world, Satan, and his political and religious henchmen found in all cultures and places. It was Jesus’ opening salvo in an ever more furious battle for the hearts of human beings that we often call the great controversy.

Many followers of Jesus—including His disciples—anticipated that Jesus would finally break the hated *pax Romana* and that Israel, God’s chosen people, would, once again, be a powerful and respected nation on the world stage whose temple services would draw the nations.

Jesus’ mission, however, didn’t aim to undo the *pax Romana*—or any human *pax* designed to solve the world’s problems. His message about the kingdom of God focused on physical, mental, and emotional healing. Destruction was not His currency. *Shalom* was.

When Isaiah’s long-anticipated “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6), poised on a mountain, shared with His followers the principles of His kingdom (Matt. 5-7), many began to wonder about these teachings. They understood about loving their neighbor, but loving their enemies (cf. Matt. 5:43-48)? Radical love, as demonstrated by Jesus’ coming and illustrated by His healings and caring concern and embrace of the downtrodden, the outsider, the powerless, or those mourning, just felt *too* radical.

NOT THAT PEACE

Jesus’ promise of *shalom* had nothing to do with empire peace or political control. In fact, as we listen

to His message in the Gospels, we may wonder what He really meant. In Matthew 10:34 Jesus exclaims, “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword” (NIV). Luke’s parallel retelling offers a helpful direction as to how we should understand this challenging statement, for Luke speaks of “division” instead of a “sword.” Jesus’ message inherently brings conflict and tension—and can even divide families, societies’ most basic nucleus. His kingdom message challenges us to make a decision: do we give the Prince of Peace full control of our lives, or do we retain the power to veto His priorities and His values when they come into conflict with ours? God’s *shalom* was associated with God’s kingdom working its way from our hearts to our heads and hands—and then transforming families and communities. This message ultimately determines where we stand in God’s final judgment: either on His side—together with other members of God’s family—or on the side of God’s opponent, proffering his global version of the *pax Romana* working through manipulation, extortion, and power politics.

MY PEACE I GIVE YOU

Jesus knew about the human need to find *shalom* in a world dominated by unrest, fear, pain, discontent, conflict, and war. John records some of Jesus’ most tender promises to His disciples, given just days before His crucifixion. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:27, NIV). While some have interpreted this mainly as a farewell greeting, it “is the peace which garrisons our hearts and minds against the invasion of anxiety (Phil. 4:7), and rules or arbitrates in the hearts of God’s people to maintain harmony amongst them (Col. 3:15).”³


Jesus reminds His followers that His peace has a different quality and texture from the kind of peace most people dreamed about. We can hear an echo of the Aaronic priestly blessing (Num. 6:26) to Israel. The God who lets His face shine upon His people will not leave His followers peaceless. He is always ready, willing, and able to help our hearts to find the rest and peace we need.

Jesus’ promise did not only address the fears and uncertainties of His disciples. The promise of His peace has continued to encourage and comfort countless people living in the post-resurrection

reality over the past two millennia. Divine peace is wrought by the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whose presence Jesus promised in the same chapter (cf. John 14:16-18, 26). The peace that God’s Spirit works in our hearts is Jesus’ peace, transcending all human understanding (cf. Phil. 4:7) and imagination.

God’s peace—and God’s love (John 14:21; 15:9, 10; 17:26)—are hallmarks of God’s church on this earth. Jesus knew that both peace and love will attract others seeking to find forgiveness, grace, and deeper connections. The story of the early Christian church shows us that Jesus’ peace is not always the equivalent of tranquility and safety. Amid severe persecution, devastating storms, or even internal conflict God’s people are assured of the kind of peace that results only from knowing Jesus and having accepted His grace. Throughout history thousands of Christian martyrs testified to the existence of this peace in the midst of pain and intimidation and death. Their testimony became the seed that grew in others also yearning for something bigger than *pax Romana*, a “final solution,” or the terror of persecution by powers bent on the destruction of God’s people.

I resonate with the way Ellen White connects our rest in Jesus to the peace that passes all understanding: “Let us turn aside from the dusty, heated thoroughfares of life to rest in the shadow of Christ’s love, and learn from Him the lesson of quiet trust. Not a pause for a moment in His presence, but personal contact with Christ, to sit down in companionship with Him—this is our need. Many, even in their seasons of devotion, fail of receiving the blessing of real communion with God. They are in too great haste. . . . Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. He will be to you as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. He will give you rest that the world can neither give nor take away. Come unto Me, He says, and your heart will be filled with the peace that passes all understanding.”⁴

Jesus, our Peacemaker? We can be sure of that! 

¹ Willard M. Swartley, “Peace,” in *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, ed. Joel B. Green et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), p. 583.

² The following is based on James E. Bowley, “Pax Romana,” in *Dictionary of New Testament Background: A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), pp. 771-775.

³ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p. 506.

⁴ Ellen G. White, “The Abiding Rest,” *Signs of the Times*, July 6, 1904.

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FEAR MANAGEMENT

Our challenge is unavoidable. We're living in a time when conditions are unstable and unpredictable. If we don't manage our fears, they'll manage us. Fear mismanagement can lead to stress, trauma, poor health, toxic relations, and regretful decisions.

What is society feeling fearful about? The 2021 American Fear Index reveals the top 10 fears:¹

1. Loved ones dying
2. Loved ones becoming seriously ill
3. Mass shootings
4. Not having enough money for retirement
5. Terrorism;
6. Government corruption
7. Becoming terminally ill
8. Hate crimes
9. High medical bills
10. Widespread civil, political, and racial unrest

Everyone can relate to one or more of these items, plus many more.

DIMENSIONS OF FEAR

The Bible references "fear not" in various iterations some 365 times.² Admittedly, it's easier to say "Fear not" than to actually not fear. The efore, it's essential that believers understand the sequela of fear and how to harness it.

Fear indicates a threat of potential harm, whether real or perceived. It can be physical, psychological, or spiritual.

While fear is often considered a negative emotion, it can, if managed properly, serve an important function in keeping us situationally aware, spiritually minded, and socially conscious. Practically speaking, in dangerous situations fear can cause us to be appropriately cautious or to take wise safeguards.

Our response to fear is our choice. We can choose to resist our fears and resolutely select a mindset of faith, hope, and possibility.

FEAR-MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Paul gave Timothy, his protégé, a powerful fear-managing tool: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). From this we derive five practices that will strengthen your fear management.

1. Christ Companionship:

Enter a genuine relationship with Christ as Lord. Jesus gives us the gift of salvation and the promise of protection and guiding providence.

2. Can-do Choice: Choose to exercise our God-given power to say no to fear.

3. Composed Confession:

Fear creates the opportunity to trust and speak about our dependence on God regardless of circumstances.

4. Conquering Counsel: Fortification of the mind with spiritual wisdom and diligent follow-through increases as we pray, study, and receive seasoned counsel.

5. Conquering Confidence: The *sine qua non* of divine power and authority is the conviction to be stalwart regardless of the outcome. This is both a gift from God and the result of experience (see Job 13:15).

Undoubtedly, some fear challenges may require external spiritual or professional assistance. But don't be thrown off by the apparent simplicity of these principles. Th ough the combination of the human with the divine, these fear-management practices will successfully equip us if we utilize them. ♣

¹ <https://www.safehome.org/home-safety/american-fear-study>

² <https://heycreativesister.com/365-fear-not-bible-verses/>

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TRANSFORM-
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DELBERT W.
BAKER



THE PRESENCE OF
FEAR CREATES THE
OPPORTUNITY TO
TRUST AND SPEAK
ABOUT OUR
DEPENDENCE ON
GOD REGARDLESS
OF CIRCUMSTANCES.



WHAT IS LOVE?

*The answer
Google might
give you just
scratches the
surface.*

MICHELLE ODINMA

From authors to poets, musicians to lyricists, everyone has their take on what love is. Although the question dates back to antiquity, it remains a still-asked question because genuine, pure love is rare to see and hard to find. Like so many, I've scoured the Internet, via Google, to find answers.

"When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too." Rebecca, age 8

"Love is when your puppy licks your face after you've left him alone all day." Maryanne, age 4

Along with these young philosophers, some of the greatest poets and leaders of our time have chimed in. The late Maya Angelou said, "Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope." Martin Luther King, Jr., adds, "Love is the greatest force in the universe. It is the heartbeat of the moral cosmos. He who loves is a participant in the being of God." Each definition reveals another dimension of love's depth and reality.

THE BIBLE'S TAKE ON LOVE

The Bible sums up love as a personal being—God Himself: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:7, 8). God is love. To be something means to embody that idea or element in its totality. And when the Bible says God is love, it means that what God speaks, thinks, or feels is the revelation of love. And the Bible does not stop its explanation there.

In Corinthians Paul addresses several issues that were taking place within the church. Believers were having a difficult time getting along, and they seemed to have forgotten their calling as Christians. There were divisions in the church, elitist cliques, and individuals practicing immoral behavior. Mass confusion was the norm, with some praying and ministering in different languages at the same time. Nothing about their practices indicated they were renewed people and followers of Christ.

In his epistle Paul emphasizes that God's body

does not work in opposition to itself. God's body, like our physical body, acts as one unit. It moves in harmony, working together. Paul continues to illustrate this idea through poetic form, showing what it looks like to operate as the body of Christ, and what their ultimate desire should be as believers.

Love is patient and kind: love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never ends.

This is what the body of Christ looks like when it works in complete harmony—the very embodiment of God Himself. This is love. God is patient and kind. God does not envy or boast. God is not arrogant or rude; He does not insist on His way. He is not irritable or resentful. He does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but He rejoices with the truth. God bears all things, God believes all things, God hopes all things, and God endures all things. God is eternal.

LOVE, GOD, AND HUMANITY

In essence, whenever love is manifest in our being, we are being exactly who God created us to be. I would like to think the real reason people Google the question "What is love?" is that they have not seen it. The truth is that God's people have not always embodied this message. However, I would argue that there have been glimpses of such a love.

Martin Luther King, Jr. showed, in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, one of the clearest manifestations of what God's love in real time looks like. "True pacifism," or "nonviolent resistance," King wrote, is "a courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love." King was both "morally and practically" committed to nonviolence. He believed that "the Christian doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of nonviolence was one of the most potent weapons available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom."

Today many American Christians are exhausted at the continuous effort to bring attention to events buried and forgotten in American history. The journey of African Americans fighting for equality in the United States continues to shed light on the difficult shadow of hatred and oppression entrenched in the

Love is an eternal entity that creates change. Love is God. It is this type of love that dispels the hate in the human heart.

nation; thus Christians should not tire of hearing about the civil rights movement. It was a movement rooted in the principles of Christ. Regardless of your nationality, the civil rights movement embodied precisely what we claim to hold true as Christians.

It is no wonder that these principles sound a lot like the life of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 12:2 says, “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.” Jesus had a deep faith in the future. So deep that Romans 5:8 says, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” In other words, Christ did not die when humanity was at its best; He died when we were at our worst. He saw far off into the future the promise and reality of renewed and transformed children of God. Love is supernatural. Love is power. Love is life-giving. It is redemptive. It is honest. It is true. Love begets love because love is divine. Love is an eternal entity that creates change. Love is God. It is this type of love that dispels the hate in the human heart.

LOVING PEOPLE TO THE GOD OF LOVE

Daryl Davis, an African American blues musician, convinced 200 people to leave the Ku Klux Klan and other White supremacist groups through an unconventional strategy. Interviewers went to his home in Washington, D.C., where they found a closet filled with an assorted collection of colored robes and matching hoods. They were uniforms abandoned by those who had experienced a change of heart and found a new perspective on life. It seemed that these cloaks of hate now served as a different type of memorial. Davis says that “anger must be channeled into positive actions like peaceful protest and political advocacy.” The method that he uses to fight hate? Friendship. Davis understands the idea of what it means to reclaim that which is of value.


Ex-racist and White nationalist Derek Black was a promoter of alt-right ideology. He credits himself for infiltrating modern-day politics, with alt-right ideology. He says his work manifested itself in the 2016 United States election. Black was raised a prodigy of White nationalism. His parents

removed him from public elementary school to isolate him from Haitian and Hispanic classmates. His homeschool training in racist rhetoric led him to be a standout public figure for White nationalism early on.

However, attending a multicultural college was a drastically different experience for Black. He attempted to keep a low profile on campus about his true identity as a public self-proclaimed racist. But he was found out. Derek’s associate, Matthew Stevenson, an Orthodox Jew, did some research on Black. Instead of excluding him, he decided to include him in his social circle. He figured, “He probably never met a Jewish person before.” Even though he was socially ostracized, Matthew invited Derek to a Shabbat dinner at his place. Few people showed up to Matthew’s dinner initially, but Derek kept coming back. He seemed different in person than what was described online.

With time, the Shabbat group returned to its regular attendance of Hispanics, Blacks, atheists, and Christians. Although all parties were initially suspicious, the Orthodox Jew, Matthew, and the White supremacist, Derek, developed a friendship. This was the catalyst that led Derek Black to reevaluate the principles he had been raised on. He liked his Jewish, Black, and Hispanic friends. These kindling friendships helped him to see the humanity in all people. These friendships eventually led Derek to renounce his White nationalist ideology.

This is the culture of Christ that the world has been dying to see. These glimpses of truth, of love in action, have not yet been activated and practiced at full capacity. Anyone who desires change for themselves and others must love, for love is transformational.

“Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that,” said Martin Luther King. To love is supernatural, for by loving, you allow streams of divine power to dispel darkness. Love is God. 

Michelle Odinna is associate minister of Community Life and Service at the Church of the Advent Hope in the city of New York.

HIS Impact On Me

75 Year of Stories Like These



For a deeply broken teenage girl to grow up in a cycle of poverty and abuse, and still be able to build a stable family of her own, says a lot. To be able to love again—to have hope and a future—when everything around you seems to suggest the opposite, this is the tale of story-book dreams. For Jovannah Poor Bear-Adams, she would tell you: “Breaking the cycle isn’t a clean cut. It is a process.”

Charlotte Beyal became a judicial magistrate in Flagstaff, AZ. Charlotte also became a pillar of representation for the Native American community in this non-Native city.

“On the bench, Beyal explains city law to Native Americans so they can relate it to their own culture and serves as a role model to the children of her community. She smiled as she remembered a woman coming into court shortly after she was appointed and telling her daughter: ‘See, if she can do it, you can do it.’” –Arizona Daily Sun, 1999

For both Jovannah and Charlotte their success and influence speak to the power of God through the help of others. Thanks to Divine intervention through the faithful support of Holbrook Indian School, Jovannah and Charlotte can celebrate life with purpose and impact. Yet their stories are only a sample of others like them and many to come.

For 75 years, Holbrook Indian School (HIS) has had stories like this. On March 6, 2022, Jovannah joined other alumni and past staff in celebration of the school’s 75 years of service.

To watch the story of how God has used one little school in the Arizona desert to transform lives for 75 years, visit HolbrookIndianSchool.org. With your support, you can enable more stories to be told in the grand celebration in the kingdom to come.



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IN TUNE WITH MUSIC

Does music affect health?

Q: Can music improve my health?

A: Without a doubt, some music helps people feel happy. Population surveys show that music is used primarily for entertainment, personal enjoyment, background “space” filler, and religious purposes. So “health,” in the commonly used sense, is not what people generally give as their motivation for listening to or playing music, even though both these activities can have amazingly profound effects on our well-being, whether we are ill or otherwise healthy. In the Bible, David used music to calm Saul; Hippocrates played music to treat patients with mental illnesses way back in 400 B.C.; and Pythagoras, the Greek philosopher, prescribed it to treat bodily and mental ailments. Modern science now finds the same benefits and even more.

Music is a special gift to humankind. It affects not only our mood but also our learning and thinking functions. Neuroscientists believe that music activates many of the brain regions and brain chemicals and can produce physical rewiring in brain structures known to modulate heart function. It affects the beat-to-beat variations in heartbeats (HRV), which has been shown to be a powerful predictor of heart-related illness and death. It can help ease pain and relieve stress by reducing the level of stress-related hormones in the body. Research shows that people with chronic bronchitis and emphysema breathe easier while listening to music and have a modest but noticeably increased endurance and tolerance of high-intensity exercise. But all music and all people are not the same.

Some kinds of music can be stress-producing. Heart and respiratory rates are higher in response to exciting music than in the case of tranquilizing music. In 2015 Finnish researchers found that music can bolster both positive and negative emotions. Some types of music produce sadness

or support anger and aggression. The rhythm and other characteristics of the music—along with the culture, age, gender, musical taste, and emotional state—can all influence how we may respond to music. In one study, music perceived as arousing, aggressive, and unpleasant disrupted performance on a memory task and led to a lower level of reported altruistic behavior in 10- to 12-year-old children. In another study, groups of people were subjected to various compositions by Mozart,

The rhythm and other characteristics of music can all influence how we may respond to music.

Strauss, or the pop group ABBA for 25 minutes each per day for three days. Music by Mozart and Strauss lowered blood pressure and heart rate, while music by ABBA did not. The slower tempos, tranquil melodies, gradual chord progressions, and soothing rhythms of classical music reduce mild to moderate insomnia. There’s even evidence that people who listen to calming classical music for 20 minutes per day may increase the activity of genes associated with memory, along with an increase in dopamine secretion and nerve interconnections.

During the COVID pandemic, single music sessions were shown to improve blood oxygen levels and reduce anxiety—imagine that!

Music is an amazing contributor to total health and well-being. A happy brain is a healthy brain. Thank God for this gift! 🎵

Peter N. Landless, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference. **Zeno L. Charles-Marcel**, a board-certified internist, is an associate director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference.



GOODSALT.COM / © RHPA RHPA

PEACE: WHAT IT MEANS. HOW IT COMES.

*Christ's goal,
realized through you*

The plan of redemption was formed to bring unity and peace to men. The world was at war with the law of Jehovah; sinners were at enmity with their Maker; Jesus came to make overtures of peace. At the appointed time angels were commissioned to announce His birth, and give expression to their joy in the salvation of the one lost sheep, the fallen world. . . .

HIS LEGACY

Shortly before His crucifixion, Christ bequeathed to His disciples a legacy of peace. "Peace I

leave with you," He said; "my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." This peace is not the peace that comes through conformity with the world. It is an internal rather than an external peace. Without will be wars and fightings, through the opposition of avowed enemies, and the coldness and suspicion of those who claim to be friends. The peace of Christ is not to banish division, but it is to remain amid strife and division.

Though He bore the title of Prince of Peace, Christ said of Himself, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword." By these words He did not mean that His coming was to produce discord and contention among His followers. He desired to show the effect His teaching would have on different minds. . . . And He warned His followers: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. . . . Ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death."

This prophecy has been fulfilled in a marked manner. Every indignity, reproach, and cruelty that Satan can instigate human hearts to devise has been visited upon the followers of Jesus. And it will be fulfilled in a yet more marked manner; for the carnal mind is still at enmity with the

law of God, and will not be subject to its commands. We have been highly favored in living under a government where we can worship God according to the dictates of our conscience. But human nature is no more in harmony with the principles of Christ today than it has been in ages past. The world is still in opposition to Jesus. . . .

CULTIVATING PEACE

We are required to be Christlike toward those who are our enemies; but we must not, in order to have peace, cover up the faults of those we see in error. The world's Redeemer never purchased peace by covering iniquity. . . . He was the friend of sinners, and He would not remain silent while they were pursuing a course that would ruin their souls—the souls that He had purchased with His own blood. He was a stern reprover of all vice. . . . Living in a world marred and seared with the curse brought upon it by disobedience, He could not be at peace with it if He left it unwarned, uninstructed, unrebuked. This would be to purchase peace at the neglect of duty. His peace was the consciousness of having done the will of His Father, rather than a condition of things that existed as the result of not having done His duty.

Those who love Jesus and the souls for whom He had died will follow after the things which make for peace. But they must take care lest in their efforts to prevent discord, they surrender truth; lest in warding off division, they sacrifice principle. True brotherhood can never be maintained by compromising principle. . . . That peace and harmony which are secured by mutual concessions to avoid all differences of opinion are not worthy of the name. . . .

The apostle Paul exhorts us, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Care should be taken by Christians to give no offense, that the truth may not be evil spoken of. But the text suggests that no amount of diligence and care will preserve this harmony in all cases. Dissensions will arise even between church members, because they are not Christlike in character. . . . The church as a body is to do all in its power to promote union and prevent schisms. If unsound doctrine is introduced, the safety of the flock of Christ will be endangered; and it is the duty of those in authority, who are jealous for the truth as it is in Jesus, to make a firm, decided protest.

We are required to be Christlike toward those who are our enemies; but we must not, in order to have peace, cover up the faults of those we see in error.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

To those who have been injured without cause these words of Scripture apply, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Their failure to live at peace with all men is not due to the course they themselves have pursued, but to the envy, jealousy, and evil surmising of those who have been in the wrong. A division is caused. How shall it be healed? Shall the man that has been sinned against, misjudged, and maligned be called to give an account? . . . Shall he acknowledge himself in the wrong for the sake of making peace? No. If he has tried to do his duty, and has been patient under abuse, he is not to humble himself to acknowledge that he is guilty. . . . Concessions that are not true from the one who has been wrongfully treated gratify the feelings of the carnal heart. The wrongdoers interpret their position as zeal for God, when in truth it is zeal to do the work of the adversary of souls. . . .

There is a work for us to do. We must begin here to cultivate the meekness of Christ. The arena is stern battles for us to fight against our traits of character that leads us to decisions that make it hard and unfavorable for others. We are not commended by God for a zeal that savors of pharisaism; for this is not of Christ. We are not to go to an extreme in false charity, neither are we to follow a course of unbending severity in cases where kindness and mercy and love would have a telling power. . . . True conversion is needed. Heart work is essential. The nature must be renewed after the divine image, until the work of grace is completed in the soul. ■

Seventh-day Adventists believe that **Ellen G. White** (1827-1915) exercised the gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry. This excerpt is taken from the *Review and Herald*, June 16, 1900.



ZENANA MISSIONS

A forgotten women's ministry

GORDON E. CHRISTO

An article in an early Adventist publication addressing the importance of zenana missions in India quoted a native Christian who had postulated, "If you want to win India, win the women of India, and all India will be Christian."¹

Zenanas were the most private rooms in a home where girls upon marriage (normally the age of 12) were secluded, never to be seen again by any male except for family. In that cloistered world the mother wielded considerable influence over her children and to some extent even over her husband. To reach these otherwise inaccessible women and girls, Christian missionaries established zenana schools and hospitals and recruited women Bible workers to reach into the zenanas.

HASKELL AND HIS VISION

In 1890 Stephen Haskell, with Percy Magan as assistant, embarked on a reconnaissance trip around the world that included several countries in Asia. They hoped to discover the most effective ways in which the Advent message might be spread.

After the two travelers encountered a woman in Calcutta engaged in zenana school work, they suggested to the mission board back home that Adventist women could be trained for zenana work in her school.² When Haskell returned, he described in more detail the operation of these schools. Native teachers under the supervision of European women taught girls below the age of 12. Haskell saw this as an open door.³ He addressed the delegates to the General Conference Session in 1891, advocating witness to women in these zenanas. This, he thought, would be a good way to begin the work in India.⁴

GEORGIA BURRUS— PUTTING THE VISION INTO PRACTICE

In California, Georgia Burrus heard Haskell speak and responded to his appeal regarding the needs of these shut-in women.⁵ Following Haskell's advice, she took up nursing at the St. Helena hospital and joined a class at Battle Creek Academy that prepared workers for foreign mission service.⁶ Georgia spent her first year in Calcutta studying the Bengali language. When D. A. Robinson and

Zenana work involved numerous challenges. Setting foot inside the front door was the first.

family arrived with Martha May Taylor at the end of that year, she was ready. As Georgia prepared to begin her full-time work, she sent an article to the *Youth's Instructor* affirming her mission to go into homes to teach these women, and also to teach their children in mission schools.⁷

Fortuitously, help arrived in the person of Kheroda, a widow who had been converted by a female European missionary who'd been allowed into their zenana by her mother-in-law to teach the women how to sew. The missionary also managed to sow the seed of the gospel in Kheroda's heart. Eventually the young widow fled her zenana and joined the missionaries. She had just completed a teacher's training course when she approached the Adventists, seeking employment.⁸ Soon she became the first convert to Adventism in India.

Georgia, Martha, and Kheroda started the school, and Georgia, with her limited knowledge of Bengali, began visiting zenanas in the neighborhood. In the zenana of the Biswas home, 11-year-old Nanibala showed remarkable interest in the story of Jesus.⁹ When she refused to worship the family idols, her father banned Georgia from visiting the girl. With the help of a sympathetic aunt, however, Nanibala scaled the walls of the zenana while the family was asleep and fled to the mission bungalow.¹⁰

OTHERS WHO SERVED

Georgia married and moved on, but others arrived to continue the ministry. Della Burroway in Calcutta converted Mrs. De Rosario, who'd formerly done zenana work for the Church Missionary Society (CMS) mission.¹¹ Sister Minnie Singh labored among the zenanas in Dehra Dun.¹² In Najibabad Mrs. Singh assisted Sister O'Connor,¹³ as did Miss Shryock¹⁴ and Miss Kurtz.¹⁵ Sister

Camphor taught five hours daily in several zenanas in Lucknow.¹⁶ Miss Scholz combined zenana and Bible work in Ranchi.¹⁷

VERA CHILTON, MEETING CHALLENGES

Zenana work involved numerous challenges. Setting foot inside the front door was the first. One had to offer skills that were needed or desired. Zenana workers taught health, reading, writing, and dictation, but they missed no opportunity to share the love of Jesus and the message of salvation. Women who accepted Jesus as their Savior could not give the slightest hint to any other member of the family. She might be taken out of reach of the missionary or persecuted and threatened. A converted woman had to be content living with her secret. She could not hope for an opportunity to be baptized. No pastor could be permitted even to see, let alone touch, a woman of a zenana. No worker faced these challenges more often than Miss Vera Chilton.¹⁸

Vera, a worker for the CMS mission, had joined the Adventists in 1910, thereafter devoting the next four decades to zenana ministry in Lucknow, serving even after retirement.

In 1921 Vera wrote several stories for the *Missions Quarterly*.¹⁹ In 1924 the Review and Herald Publishing Association published her book, *The Sigh of the Orient*—stories of women in the zenanas and their plight. Most women believed in Jesus, but dared not take the final step.²⁰ Some had asked about baptism but could not have it openly.²¹

One woman who accepted Christ had observed the Sabbath quietly for about four years. Her changed life convinced her husband to also accept Christ, which made it possible for her to be baptized. Still, to avoid trouble from the community, arrangements were made for her to be baptized in her home. M. M. Mattison, mission president for the region, received special permission from the husband to enter the home—but just to offer the benediction, and with the condition that he not see the woman.²² Who baptized her is a good question. Meanwhile, a group gathered by the river, where her husband was baptized openly. Some years later, however, A. H. Williams, president of the Northwest Union, reported that the husband had passed away and the widow was taken away by relatives.²³

Another woman, Muni Begam, took but a few months to influence her husband, who soon asked for baptism for himself. In this case he permitted

Pastor Mattison to baptize his wife, too. Vera Chilton's veranda was screened to conceal a baptistry constructed from a large wooden box lined with a borrowed tarpaulin. Pastor Mattison joined the group of assembled women just long enough to baptize the woman. Her husband was baptized at the usual site in the Gomti River.²⁴

One Muslim woman who accepted Jesus was spirited away beyond Vera's reach. But her changed life touched her husband, who brought her back and soon asked for baptism for both of them.²⁵

Vera pushed the brethren for a "refuge home" for women who might have to leave their husbands to practice their faith. The delay in arranging for such a refuge caused several women to pass the opportunity to confess Christ openly.²⁶

Sometime later union president A. H. Williams gave hints of a zenana refuge. He wrote, "We purposely refrain from being explicit in our references to it, but this we can state for your encouragement that there are today six (seven temporarily) who are receiving spiritual help and instruction in this way," while many others were striving to live Christlike lives in the seclusion of zenanas.²⁷

Vera Chilton touched the lives of countless women, and scores accepted Jesus as their Savior. Many lost interest in this ministry, though, because it did not produce "cold statistics."²⁸ William Spicer agreed that the results of zenana work did not appear in our statistical records to a great extent, but he added that "the Lord must keep that record."²⁹

NEEDS REMAIN

Returning to India in 1945 after 25 years of absence, J. E. Fulton, the first president of the Southern Asia Division, recalled the long and patient years of service given by Vera Chilton and other women who engaged in zenana work.³⁰ B. A. Howard, president of the Uttar Pradesh Mission in newly independent India, reiterated the continued need for women Bible workers to carry on zenana work.³¹

India, however, changed quickly. Today girls of all religious and social backgrounds are going to schools and colleges and are finding jobs in an ever-expanding variety of careers. The zenana way of life is no longer the norm. Many women, though, can still be reached much more readily by another woman. In this context, ministry by women for women is still very relevant. ❖

¹"The Women of India," Sabbath School and Young People's Department, Field Lesson No. IX, *Echoes From the Field*, Aug. 1, 1906, p. 3.

²"Letters From Rutan and Calcutta," Foreign Mission Board minutes, July 20, 1890.

³S. N. Haskell, "India. No. 9—Zenana Schools," *Signs of the Times* 380 (Apr. 17, 1893): 12.

⁴S. N. Haskell, "Foreign Missions" (March 17 speech), *General Conference Daily Bulletin (Review and Herald Extra)*, Mar. 22, 1891, p. 198.

⁵Mrs. Georgia Burgess, "Why I Went to India," *Bible Training School*, June 1916, p. 5.

⁶See Gordon Christo, "Burgess, Georgia Burrus," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=AHXD&highlight=Georgia>.

⁷Georgia A. Burrus, "Women of India," *Youth's Instructor*, Dec. 26, 1895, p. 1.

⁸Gordon Christo, "Bose, Kheroda," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/search-results?term=Kheroda>.

⁹Mrs. L. J. Burgess, "The Blessed Pioneer," *Eastern Tidings*, May 8, 1941, p. 3.

¹⁰Gordon E. Christo, "Biswas, Nanibala," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/search-results?term=Nanibala>.

¹¹Della Burroway, "Service for the Master," *Eastern Tidings*, September 1905, p. 3; see also Della Burroway, "Karmatar," *Eastern Tidings*, April 1906, p. 7.

¹²"Hindustani Items," *Eastern Tidings*, January 1910, p. 4.

¹³"Najibabad," *Eastern Tidings*, May 1910, p. 3; "Notes," *Eastern Tidings*, February 1914, p. 5.

¹⁴S. A. Wellman, "Our North India Stations," *Eastern Tidings*, May 1913, p. 9.

¹⁵S. A. Wellman, "North India Mission," *Eastern Tidings*, January 1915, p. 16.

¹⁶"Notes," *Eastern Tidings*, April 1913, p. 9.

¹⁷G. G. Lowry, "Ranchi Maternity Home," *Eastern Tidings*, Jan. 1, 1928, p. 6.

¹⁸"The Shadow of Death and Gospel Light—No 1," *Missions Quarterly*, First Quarter 1921, p. 16; see also Michael W. Campbell and Koberson Langhu, "Chilton, Charlotte 'Vera' (1873-1965)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=BIIW&highlight=Vera|Chilton>.

¹⁹Vera Chilton, "The Shadow of Death and Gospel Light—Nos. 1-3," *Missions Quarterly*, First Quarter 1921, pp. 16-26.

²⁰"Notes," *Eastern Tidings*, April 1913, p. 9.

²¹Mrs. J. L. Shaw, "Busy Days in India and Burma," *Eastern Tidings*, February 1913, p. 4.

²²"Zenana Work—Lucknow," *India Union Tidings*, May 1, 1919, p. 2.

²³A. H. Williams, "Northwest India Union Mission Report," *Eastern Tidings*, Jan. 1, 1930, p. 17.

²⁴Walter S. Mead, "A Baptism in 'Purdah,'" *Youth's Instructor*, Dec. 5, 1922, p. 6.

²⁵M. E. Kern, "Behind the Purdah," *Youth's Instructor*, Aug. 11, 1931, pp. 4, 12.

²⁶S. A. Wellman, "North India Mission," *India Union Tidings*, Jan. 1, 1917, p. 16.

²⁷A. H. Williams, "Northwest India Union Mission Report," *Eastern Tidings*, Jan. 1, 1930, p. 17.

²⁸Vera Chilton, "Reaching the Women of India," *Ministry*, Sept. 1, 1939, pp. 8, 9.

²⁹W. A. Spicer, "Some Facts About Early Work in India," *Eastern Tidings*, May 8, 1941, p. 4.

³⁰J. E. Fulton, "After Twenty-five Years," *Eastern Tidings*, Sept. 1, 1945, p. 7.

³¹B. A. Howard, "North United Provinces," *Eastern Tidings*, Nov. 15, 1947, p. 6.

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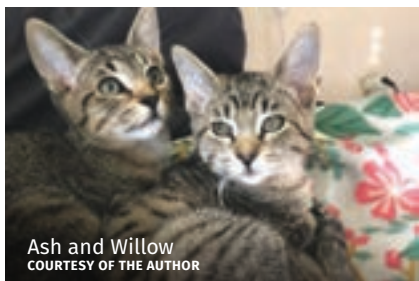


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A TALE OF TWO KITTENS

What my new pets taught me about God

My family recently adopted two adorable kittens. We named them Ash and Willow—after the trees—and my kids, of course, were immediately obsessed with them, following them around the house, picking them up, and trying to snuggle and pet them.

Often when we move to hold them, the cats scurry out of reach. If we're successful in our attempts to contain them, they squirm and writhe until they get free of our arms and hurry away again. It isn't because we intend to smother the kittens—we simply feel so much love for our new pets that we almost can't help ourselves.

Eventually we noticed that if the kittens are playing or otherwise entertaining themselves, they're not at all interested in being held or petted. But when they're sleepy, they almost immediately begin purring when we give them attention. In fact, sometimes they even come looking for physical affection, meowing and rubbing against our legs until we pick them up. When we settle into bed or on the couch, they often will join us and will fall asleep snuggling against us. We just need to be patient and wait for them to come to us.

How many times have I been like Willow and Ash when God has come looking to love me? I'm often wrapped up in my own life, blinders firmly in place, unin-

terested in anything Christ has come to offer—so I squirm, I run away, I hide.

But eventually I get tired. This world wears me down, and I just want someone to hold me. To tell me I can relax, close my eyes, and rest. And in those moments when I go looking for God, He doesn't snub me. He doesn't refuse to hold me because earlier I ran from Him or because I got into trouble when I did. No. He stoops, lifts me gently into His arms, and holds me.

After a while I may squirm to escape His hold again; I may feel trapped or restless or curious, and I may forget why I came to Him in the first place. And He'll let me go. God in His infinite wisdom and love lets me jump from His arms and scamper toward those things that distract me so easily, which may or may not be in my best interest, and again He waits.

Second Peter 3:9 tells us that "the Lord is . . . patient" (NRSV). Psalm 103:8 says He is "compassionate, merciful, patient" (GW);* and Isaiah 30:18 adds that He "waits to be gracious" to us (NRSV). In Revelation 3 we get the image of Jesus standing at the door to our hearts, knocking, waiting to be admitted (verse 20).

God will not chase us, force us, coerce us, or beg us to spend our lives with Him. Instead, He invites us. He waits. He's patient. And He's there. It's up to us to choose Him; to allow Him to scoop us up into His arms and snuggle us. 🐾

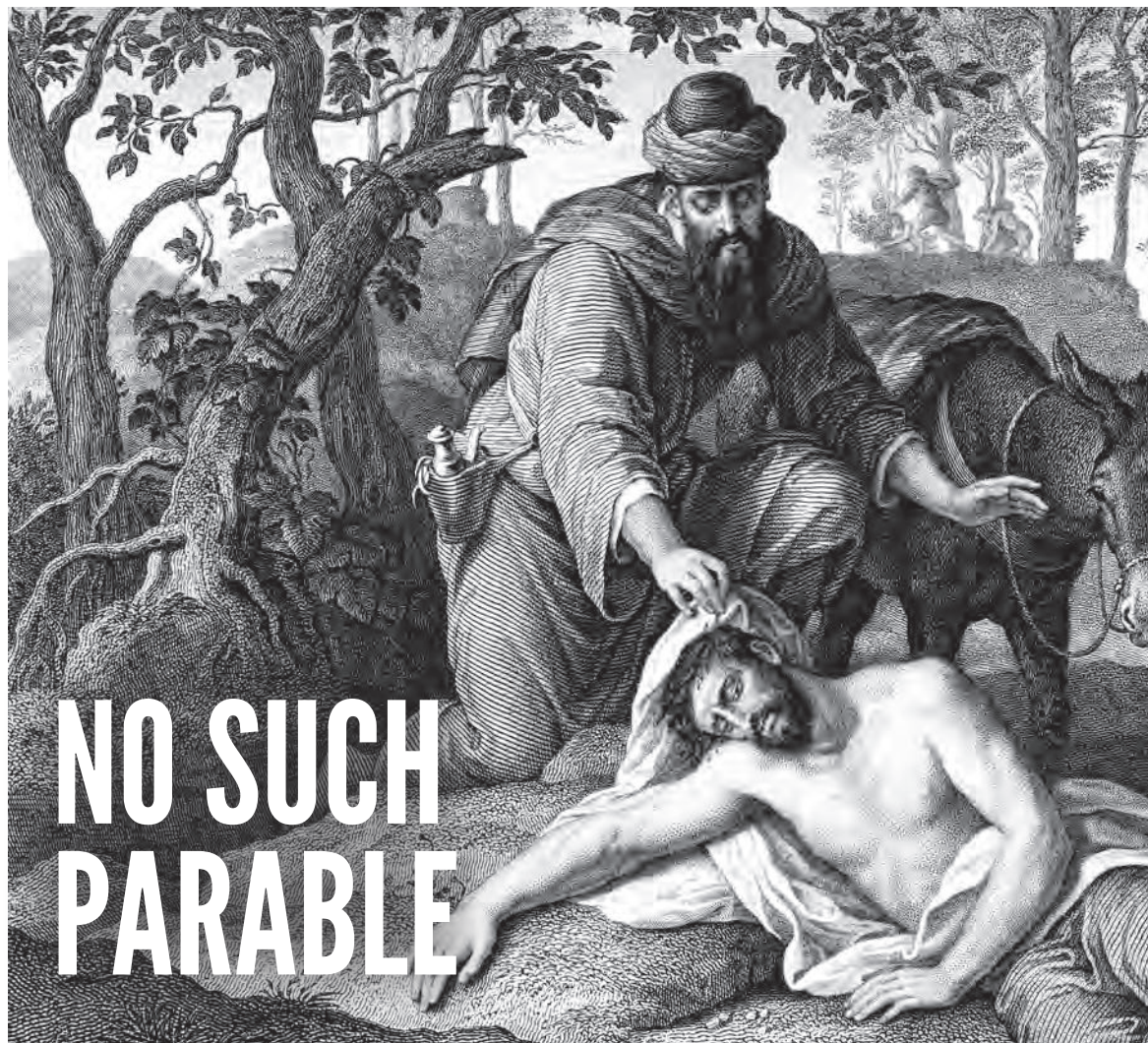
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THE FAITH-FULL LIFE
BECKY ST. CLAIR



I'M OFTEN WRAPPED UP IN MY OWN LIFE, BLINDERS FIRMLY IN PLACE, UNINTERESTED IN ANYTHING CHRIST HAS COME TO OFFER.



NO SUCH PARABLE

Why isn't there a story about "the good priest"?

I have recently been contemplating the parable of the good Samaritan, a true incident with which Jesus answered a lawyer's question "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). Though this well-known story Jesus taught three lessons to His listening audience, lessons readily understood by honest truth seekers, and lessons sorely needed right now, in the presence of popular pride and prejudice, even among many who identify as Christ's followers.

LESSON 1

Those truths Jesus reemphasized are all taught in the Old Testament, the only Bible He had, the one He taught, leaving the people "amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matt. 7:28, 29, NIV). His first lesson is against pride, the haughty attitudes of the priest and Levite that made them superior to other humans. Proverbs 16:5 teaches import-



ant truth: “The Lord detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished” (NIV). In their self-exaltation the religious leaders despised even people of their own nation, regarding them as of lower status.

They despised Jesus, too. His origins were a strike against Him (John 1:46). Also, He did not follow their example of shunning some of His own people. Instead He mingled with them—harlots, publicans, and sinners—“as one who desired their good.”¹ Their leaders’ pride did not allow them to understand His great mission of mercy to all of humanity. They had crafted a righteousness of their own that set aside God’s standards. They taught His holy law, but it was not in their heart to obey its divine prin-

ciples. Jesus taught: “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do” (Matt. 23:2, 3, NIV). Their spiritual leadership was not worth following.

The example of secular leadership was no better. Indeed, the story of King Herod Agrippa I, a decade after Jesus, makes for a major illustration on the disaster that pride is.

Herod Agrippa I was very angry.² The text doesn’t say why, but it does indicate with whom—with the people of Tyre and Sidon, Phoenicians living along the Mediterranean sea coast north from Judea (Acts 12). The people of that region had their own proud heritage of marine skills and trade, fine earthenware, colonializing North Africa, and respected cultural stature.

At the start of the short Bible story (Acts 12:20-23) King Herod is still feeling embarrassed at Peter’s recent escape from prison. Perhaps the king thought that he had found a positive way to release his frustrations. He tried to handle a “furious quarrel”³ with a great speech that would safely inflate his pride while winning the argument with the Phoenicians. This would be better than some act of vicious vengeance against them. So he dressed in his royal robes one day, went to the place of his appointment, sat in the seat of importance, and spoke to the people. Whether it was the beauty of his voice or the quality of his language, his eloquence overwhelmed the crowd, all the more, perhaps, because he had chosen nice tones or sweet speech for them instead of cruel acts against them. The crowd began to shout, “The voice of a god and not of a man!” (Acts 12:22). In a moment the king forgot—if he had ever known—the principle that pride precedes destruction. Flattered by the praise, he absorbed the glory he thought was his own. “Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died” (verse 23, NIV). The Lord does not cooperate with human pride, whether it be with politicians to their public, or preachers in their pulpits: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5, NIV).

LESSON 2

The second lesson taught by our Master in this parable is closely related to the first. His last word to the lawyer in regard to the Samaritan, “Go and do

They were to be protectors of orphans and single women, and give their loving care to foreigners.

likewise,” was a rebuke to the neglect that would let anyone bypass a wounded person, any victim in need of help. Pride may not be a visible marker, but its residence in the mind is revealed in word and action. The special lament of this story is that it involves religious leaders whose own Bible or Torah teaches that vulnerable people must be cared for.

According to the book of Leviticus, their harvest should leave grain for the poor; the disabled deserved their care, not their mockery, nor becoming objects of ridicule; their legal judgments were to be fair to poor and rich (see Lev. 19:9-15); they were to show respect to the elderly (verse 32). Particularly relevant to Jesus’ story about a foreigner, they were to be kind to strangers, remembering that they themselves used to be strangers (verses 33, 34). They were to be protectors of orphans and single women, and give their loving care to foreigners (Deut. 10:18, 19). Ignoring sufferers in their suffering was not part of their training. It should not have been part of their practice.

LESSON 3

Our third lesson is the truth that the condition of the heart matters more than the outward appearance or nationality. This same lesson was taught to Samuel the prophet as he inspected Jesse’s sons, in order to choose Israel’s second king. As he was impressed by Eliab, the Lord told him, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7, NIV).

The true nature of the mind shows up in the actions, whether good or bad, disobedient or obedient. John the Baptist had a warning for his countrymen who thought they were safe because of their ancestry: “Do not think you can say to

yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham” (Matt. 3:9).

Tax collectors and harlots were looked down upon by their own leaders, even though they were their countrymen and women. Samaritans, Romans, and other nations were despised because they were foreign—heathen Gentiles. But Jesus had no prejudice or hatred for anyone. The good Samaritan exemplified the meek service of His own loving example. When he saw the wounded man on the Jericho road, the Samaritan came closer. As a foreign traveler himself, he did not care if the helpless man was a Jew or a Gentile. All that mattered was that he needed help. Risking danger to himself, alone in a place known for bandit attacks, the Samaritan ministered to the wounded man, put him on his own donkey, and brought him to the nearest inn, where he cared for him through the night. The next day, before continuing his journey, he paid the innkeeper to continue caring for the injured man, promising to reimburse him for any further costs. The Samaritan was a true neighbor.

This fact was plain to the lawyer listening to Jesus’ parable. But prejudice held him in its chains. In answer to Christ’s pointed request to identify the neighbor he could not say, “The Samaritan.” Instead, as we say, he beat about the bush with “He who showed mercy on him.”

The Samaritan, so grudgingly acknowledged, has left us a godly example to follow, as Jesus counsels the lawyer: “Go and do likewise.”

I find it interesting that among all of the parables of our Lord, there is none entitled “The Good Priest” or “The Good Levite.” That a widely known and loved parable of Jesus is called “The Good Samaritan” by Christians today is a testament to the truth of this verse in the epistle of James: “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up” (James 4:10, NIV).¹

¹Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 363.

²The term *thumomachōn* occurs only here in the Greek New Testament, providing the only instance in the New Testament where English Bible versions (I reviewed eight of them: ESV, KJV, NASB, NKJV, NET, NIV, NLT, NRSV) say someone was very angry. Evidently this was unique anger: the king had taken exceptional offense at something.

³An appropriate rendering of the Greek term *thumomachōn*.

Patricia J. Smith lives in Pioneer, Louisiana, is a second-generation Seventh-day Adventist, and loves to share God’s love through her writing.



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JESUS AND PEACE

Storms and People Both Need Jesus' Peace

Whatever peace is, it must be highly important or very attractive or totally necessary—to judge by how much Jesus wants us to get it: He comes back from the grave, shows up in a room filled by His followers—cowering together “for fear of the Jewish leaders”—and frightens them dramatically more by getting in without knock or key. He says, “Peace be with you!” They talk for a while, especially about the physical evidences of His crucifixion. Before He leaves, He says the words of blessing again, “Peace be with you!” (see John 20:19-21). A week later He repeats the frightening drama for Thomas’ sake, showing up unannounced and unadmitted. Thomas has spent the week disputing last week’s story simply because he wasn’t there when it happened. Jesus greets everyone again: “Peace to you!” (verse 21). We must really need this peace. And not just us!

JESUS SPEAKS PEACE

to stormy waves: “Peace, be still” (Mark 4:39, KJV).

to a woman, now healed: “Go in peace” (Mark 5:34, multiple versions).

to His disciples: “Be at peace with one another” (Mark 9:50, NRSV)

to His disciples about mission strategy: “When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house’” (Luke 10:5, NIV).

to a gawking crowd: “When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace” (Luke 11:21, NKJV).

grieving over Jerusalem:

“If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace . . .”
(Luke 19:41, NIV).

Jesus is clearly alien. Regular earthlings fight and quarrel with anyone, for everything or nothing at all; even against the claim that we are contentious, because we so naturally are (James 4:1). To win the fight against the truth that we are naturally bellicose, we redefine the word “peace,” as a “nonwarring condition.”¹ The when one definition isn’t enough to win, we also carefully define war.” Getting to true peace, the *shalom* of Klingbeil’s article (see pp. 48-50) takes great effort. But thankfully, blessedly, Jesus is willing to

put in that effort and turn us into lovers of peace, lovers indeed of Himself, Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6), because of whose awesome sacrifice it now is said: He is our peace (Eph. 2:14).

Between His sacrifice and His insistent repetitions, the point comes through: everybody must have this peace. So:

Peter speaks of peace:

It’s “the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all” (Acts 10:36, NIV).

Paul speaks of peace, in blessed introduction and with minimal variation, to every congregation or individual his letters address:

to the Romans—Romans 1:7

to the Corinthians, twice—1 Corinthians 1:3;
2 Corinthians 1:2

to the Galatians—Galatians 1:3

to the Ephesians—Ephesians 1:2

to the Philippians—Philippians 1:2

to the Colossians—Colossians 1:2

to the Thessalonian, twice—1 Thessalonian
1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:

to Timothy, twice—1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2

to Titus—Titus 1:4

to Philemon—Philemon 3



JESUS' PEACE: CONTRADICTED, CONTRASTED, CONTEXTUALIZED

On Jesus' birthday the angels already knew what would happen. They were ecstatic. They came to earth singing about it. But then . . .

Angels' song about peace: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace" (Luke 2:14, NIV).

Jesus states an apparent contradiction: "Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division" (Luke 12:51).

Isaiah lays out the contrast: "I have seen what they do, but I will heal" "and comfort them, helping them to mourn and to confess their sins. Peace, peace to them, both near and far, for I will heal them all. But those who still reject me are like the restless sea, which is never still, but always churns up mire and dirt. There is no peace, says my God, for them!" (Isa. 57:18-21, TLB).²

Jesus puts things in context:

**"I am leaving you with a gift—
peace of mind and heart! And
the peace I give isn't fragile
like the peace the world gives"
(John 14:27, TLB).**

Jesus contextualizes and contrasts again: "In just a little while I will be gone, and you will see me no more; but just a little while after that, and you will see me again! . . . I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world" (John 16:16-33, TLB).

JESUS' PEACE BENEDICTIONS

Old Testament:

**"The Lord bless you and
keep you; the Lord make
his face shine on you
and be gracious to
you; the Lord turn his
face toward you and give
you peace [*shalom*]"
(Num. 6:24-26, NIV).**

New Testament: "Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, . . . equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Heb. 13:20, 21, NIV).¹

¹ "Peace," definition 1, DICTIONARY.COM unabridged, based on the *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*, © Random House, Inc., 2022: <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/peace>.

² Texts credited to TLB are taken from *The Living Bible*, copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Ill. Used by permission.

MAKING MOM FAMOUS AGAIN

As I write this column, we're honoring our mothers for Mother's Day.

Being a mom is no easy task. Being a mom in 2022 is unlike ever before. The demands placed on mothers are continuing to increase, and yet somehow moms continue to show how amazing they are.

We all have at least one thing in common—we had a mom bring us into the world.

Recently, *Motherly* released the findings of the largest statistically significant survey of U.S. mothers.

- The millennial generation (25- to 40-year-olds) is the first generation in history where women are more educated than men.

- 47 percent of moms contribute more than half of their household income.

- 38 percent of moms report feeling completely burned out.

- 55 percent of stay-at-home Moms report feeling completely burned out.

- The number-one reason women changed or left jobs last year: lack of child care.

- 25 percent of moms are raising kids on their own.

Ellen White wrote: "We may safely say that the distinctive duties of woman are more sacred, more holy, than those of man."¹

She again she wrote, "[The Christian mother's] work, if done faithfully to God, will be immortalized" and "the Majesty of heaven will write the name of that faithful mother in the book of immortal fame."²

There are countless moms in Scripture whom we could write pages and pages about. But there are a few that stand out, such as Jochebed and Hannah. The reason

they stand out for me is that both knew that they would be able to raise their boys only for the first few years of their lives, and then they would be raised by wolves in leadership.

Jochebed was a wife, a mother, and a slave. She was poor, and yet raised arguably the greatest leader, other than Jesus, the world has ever known. She raised Moses to love God and honor the Lord of Creation before he entered the palace of Pharaoh and became surrounded by worship of the creation.

We are told that "she sought to implant in [Moses'] heart love and loyalty to God. And faithfully was the work accomplished. Those principles of truth that were the burden of his mother's teaching and the lesson of her life, no after influence could induce Moses to renounce."³

"The mother seldom appreciates her own work and frequently sets so low an estimate upon her labor that she regards it as domestic drudgery.

"Could the veil be withdrawn and father and mother see as God sees the work of the day, and see how His infinite eye compares the work of the one with that of the other, they would be astonished at the heavenly revelation.

"While the father has been dealing with the things which must perish and pass away, the mother has been dealing with developing minds and character, working, not only for time but for eternity."⁴

¹ Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1979), p. 231.

² Ellen G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, Sept. 13, 1877.

³ Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1903), p. 61.

⁴ E. G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, Sept. 13, 1877.

Jared Thurmon is a consultant for Adventist Review Ministries.

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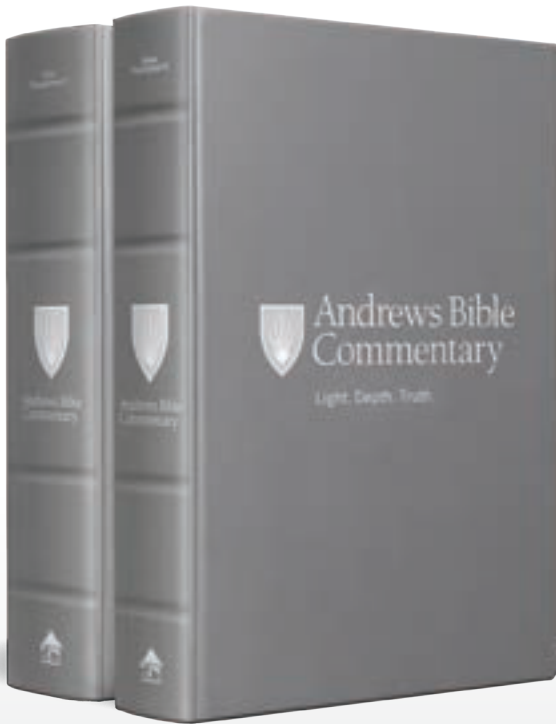


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