

NEWS

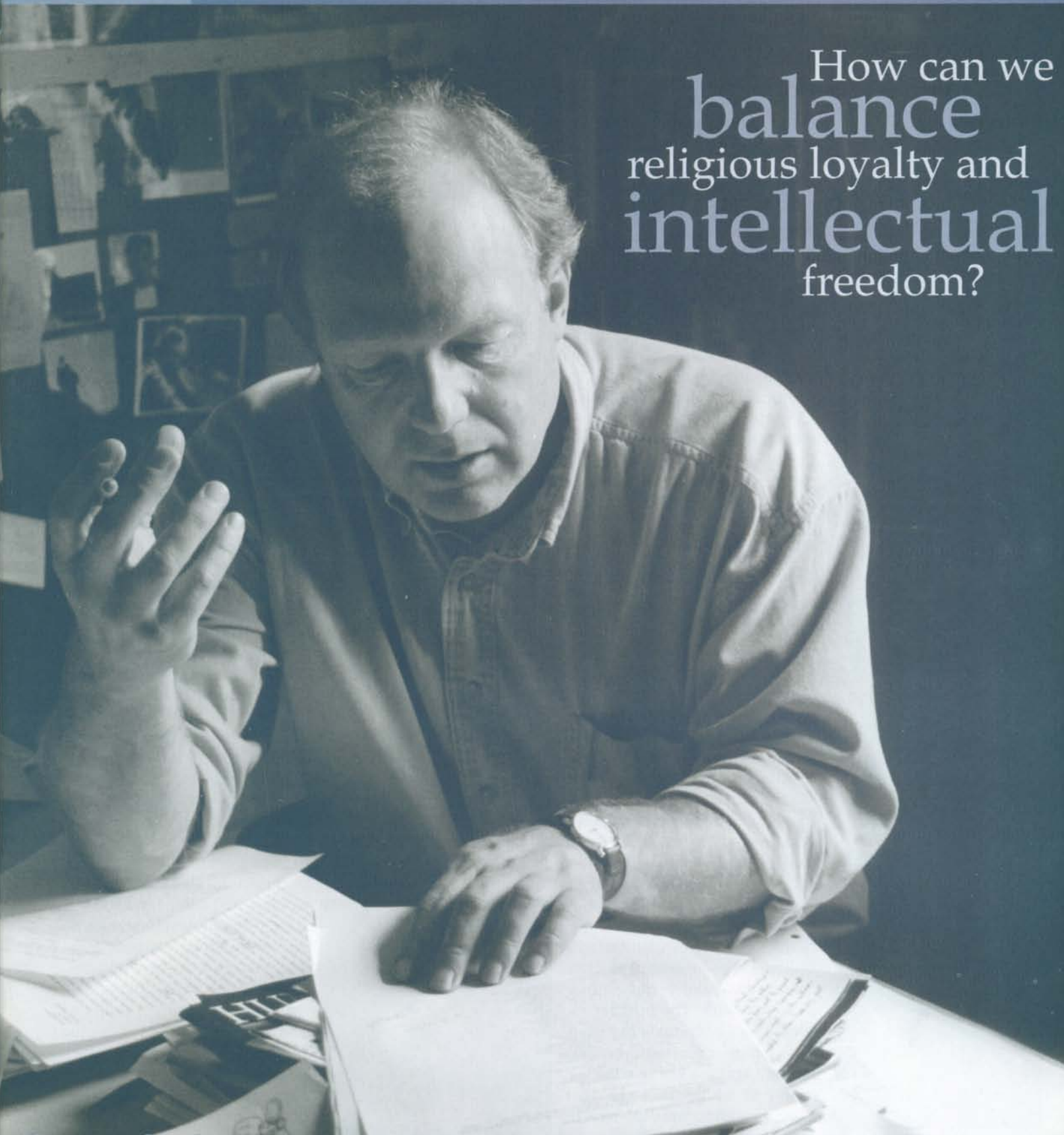
ANALYSIS

OPINION

adventist today

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How can we
balance
religious loyalty and
intellectual
freedom?



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notes

from the editor

What I want in a University

John McLarty

We have three children: a fourth grader, an eighth grader and a junior in academy, and since this is about my kids, I won't even feign objectivity. Right now, it's the junior I'm concerned about. She's read more books this year than I have. (And more last year, too.) Light stuff, yes. But also Tolstoy, Mitchener and Gardner. By the time she finishes grad school, she will probably have read more books than I have in my entire life. Given her reading and intellect I'm going to need some help in making sense of Jesus to her.

In the university my girl attends, I want a challenging, even daunting intellectual culture suffused with a sense of wonder, a mature loyalty to the Adventist church and a profound respect for the heritage of Christianity.

I put intellectual culture first on purpose. For students who value books and learning, the persuasive power of scholarship is nearly overpowering. If these students are going to

"There is in the believing community a special place for thinkers, doubters and artists."

participate in church, religious life must be legitimized by people whom they perceive as their intellectual superiors, i.e., teachers. For the brightest students, excellence in academics is a fundamental prerequisite for credibility in speaking of faith. For these kids, going to an Adventist school with mediocre academics can actually be a threat to faith. They may graduate with the idea that belief is for people who are not at the top of the intellectual pecking order.

If a school cares about the spiritual life of our brightest, then their first job is to provide superior academics. Hiring devout but unlearned or unskillful teachers would actually undermine students' faith. The primary function of a school is to provide a connection between the student and the knowledge, tools and art of scholarship. It is by providing the very best in

academics that a school "earns the right" to speak of faith.

On the other hand, if a university succeeds in winning the confidence and respect of its students through the learning of its teachers, it then carries an extraordinary responsibility for the faith development of those students. Because of the enormous influence of its professors, an Adventist university should require, boldly and unapologetically, that teaching staff respect the faith that students bring with them to the university and honor the doctrinal heritage of the Adventist church. Professors who cavil at the stupidity of church doctrine or the naivete of believers with an uncomplicated faith are unfit to serve as faculty.

Few Adventists can engage in higher education without experiencing at least some modification of the cognitive structure of their faith. It would be inappropriate for an Adventist university to expect uniformity of belief among its faculty. And professors should not be expected to hide all of their unorthodoxies. Part of a university education is learning to ask hard questions and to live without answers. The questioning needs to be grade-appropriate. A senior can handle more ambiguity and controversy than a freshman. But a university is not a catechism class with one set of questions and a matching set of answers.

Teachers in an Adventist university should freely confess that their uncertainties are not more honest or truthful than the doctrine of the church. But neither should they be forced to pretend that the church's answers are beyond question.

When my daughter goes to college, I hope she will meet teachers who share her questions, who understand the difficulty of knowing and who still unashamedly affirm their place in the Adventist church. I want a university that will impress my daughter with its learning and model for her the truth that there is in the believing community a special place for thinkers, doubters and artists. ■



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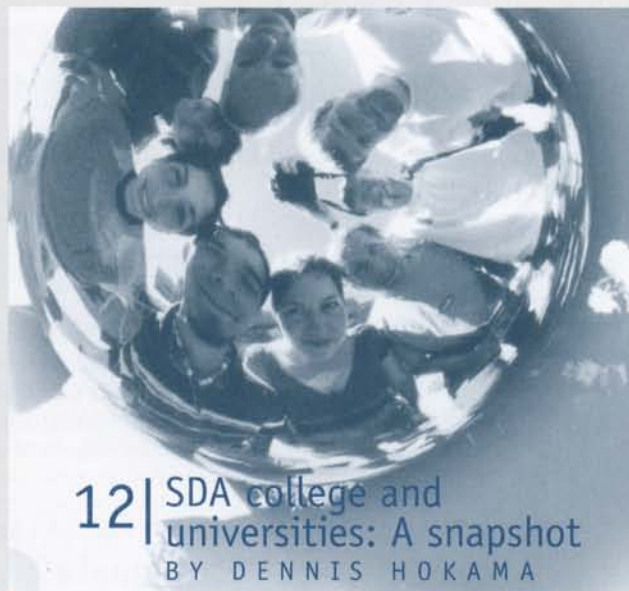
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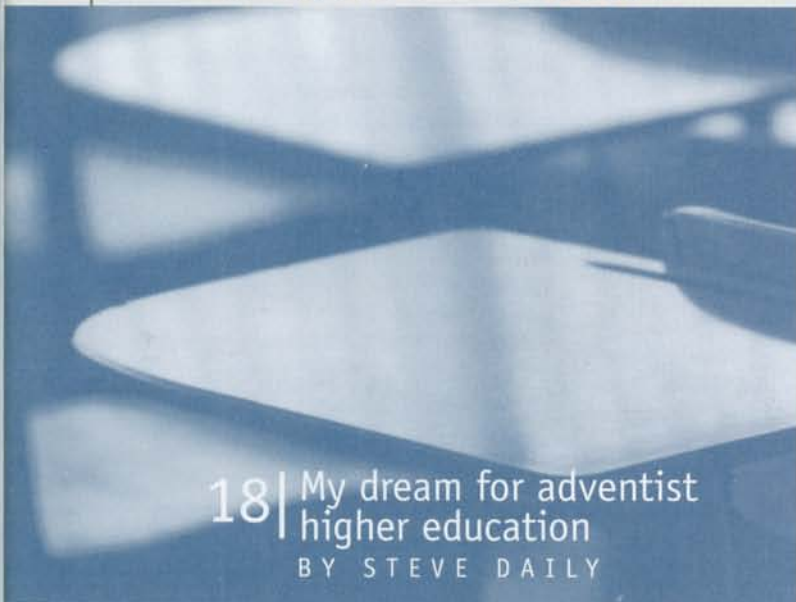
God wants us to learn to be like him and to love each
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On the cover

Photographer | Tyson Kopfer

Pictured is Dan Lamberton,
professor of English

at Walla Walla College.

Other photos by Tyson Kopfer
appear on pages 3 and 12.

Letters

READERS RESPOND

Millennial Madness

"Millennial Madness" was an appropriate label for the set of articles in the November-December 1999 issue of *Adventist Today* on the study of prophecy.

The first article asks the relevant question—"Why Study Prophecy?" I would respectfully suggest that the most appropriate answer is "There is no good reason to study prophecy." The second article by your editor, John McLarty, addresses the "madness" appropriately when he suggests that the study of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation leads one into a "maze where... nothing is what it appears." Larry Christoffel correctly notes that traditional Adventism gets its idea that the "Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy" from a contrived reading of the Book of Revelation. I leave my comment on Robert Roach for the last because he illustrates extremely well the "madness" that accompanies yet another attempt to demonstrate that "we are the last generation."

I would recommend that *Adventist Today*, in the interest of representing a wide spectrum of opinion within Adventism today, deal with this topic about once each century. That is about the right interval since it will give enough time for readers to evaluate how good the most recent set of interpretations stood up in comparison to the actual course of human history.

James Hilton | Loma Linda, California

Homosexuality

I have been a subscriber to *Adventist Today* for many years, a financial supporter, and even the author of one of your articles, on Adventists and entertainment.

However, I object most strongly to your magazine publishing any article favorable to sexually immoral behavior, whether heterosexual or homosexual. While a homosexual orientation is not a sin, homosexual behavior is certainly a sin and a deviation, according, respectively, to the Bible, and the laws of biology and civic morality.

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians we believe that God can help a person overcome any sinful tendency—whether inherited or learned—and strengthen and keep him or her from behaving according to it.

To rationalize away what the Bible

very clearly says is inexcusable.

**Hector Hammerly
Coquitlam, British Columbia,
Canada**

Brinsmead's Journey

Contrary to Ray Cottrell's assessment (AT, May-June '99), Robert Brinsmead's journey through successive doctrinal errors cannot be credited to immaturity. . . .

It is for good reason that most Adventists who leave their church fail to become active, enduring members of other religious communities. Once the full-orbed, Bible-based teachings of historic Adventism are not permitted to quench the soul's thirst, nothing will.

Kevin D. Paulson | Redlands, California
"Earthquake"

I kept thinking that guys like me had no forum, but then your magazine showed up on my desk . . . Great stuff!

How can you get away with writing like this, like normal people, and talking about [what] we all talk about, and still use a "La Sierra University" address? Good for you.

So I have read and reread the Earthquake issue (Jan-Feb '99) and I tell myself, . . . This is good stuff. There are others, many others, with their minds turned on. You have no idea how much this issue (the first one for me) has helped me to change from complaining to reading—praying for answers and wisdom. Keep it up.

Girardo Rodriguez

Church Fathers

Thank you for your diligent work in reporting what's going on in Adventism. We can't rely on the "church fathers" anymore! (And really shouldn't.)

Sven Kirdem | Leander, Texas

In Defense of Brother B

Steven Hadley makes the point in his article "In Defense of Brother B" [AT Mar-Apr '99] that "there continues to be no independent audit for the General Conference itself." That is not true. As a member of the General Conference Committee I receive a copy of and hear a report from the independent auditing firm employed by the General Conference each year. One call to the General Conference treasury department will confirm this fact. So no church entity is audited by the people who hire them.

**Tom Mostert | President,
Pacific Union Conference**

Fat Lady or Beautiful Bride

Eric Bahme shows a more greedy and selfish model of church finance than the one he decries. He sees the "fat" at the GC level. But the GC at least gets some of it to the third world church, which would, in many cases, be decimated without our help. He would put the "fat" at the local level, where he serves, and starve a world organization and the third world church. His narrow, parochial experience is on full display.

Elden Walter | Via the Internet

"What If I Had Been a Friend"

Ami's [article] (Mar-April 1999) was right on the money. The spirit that gives a person enough rope to hang themselves is not a Christian spirit at all. Ami suggests that "It is appropriate to work to safeguard the church from the abuse of power through carefully written constitutions, vigorous political action and the function of an independent press. But I'm convinced the most potent antidote to ill-used power rests in the affection and truth-speaking of genuine friendship." Great article.

Mack Tennyson | Via the Internet

Faithfulness Survey

[I] came across the article on "General Conference Distributes Faithfulness Survey." I don't understand what all the shock is over. This is regularly done in most conferences that I've pastored. Basically an audit procedure of pastors; to see if they pay tithe or not. My wife was treasurer of current church and when it came time for the report to be signed by treasurer, my conference required canceled checks on top of signed statement by myself and "treasurer." That's over the top in my opinion.

Gary Manzella | Via the Internet

Gender and Homosexuality

As a contributor to your issue on homosexuality in the Adventist church (AT July-August 1999) I would like to make one important observation and objection. All but one of the articles were by males, and the one woman writer wrote about her son. This story cannot be told in one gender only. Will there be any attempt to print something by and about gay Adventist women?

Jim Miller | Via the Internet

We practice what

James Walters we preach

Leadership in the Adventist church experienced a challenging year in 1999. December brought revelations of huge salaries and large lump-sum retirement packages for church hospital executives, and the Folkenberg financial scandal dominated the early calendar. Who benefited, who lost? At first it seems that the corporate church is the big loser. How can members support an organization whose leaders appear engrossed by financial gain?

But don't mourn too quickly for Adventism. Given our need to believe in church leadership and given our denomination's crisis control, the corporate church will thrive. The question is whether our church will learn from these episodes. The

membership at large won't force change. Most of the Adventist world probably doesn't even know — or care about — the Folkenberg scandal, much less the Shady Grove story.

But in every organization, including our church, a very small percentage of the membership heavily influences the big decisions — if it doesn't really make them. In Adventism that small percentage includes the church hierarchy, but also academics and a growing number of educated, often affluent professionals. Will this group of thought leaders in Adventism see the leadership problems of 1999 as sufficient cause to rethink aspects of our structure? That's the issue — not the human foibles that surfaced this year. A needed structural inventory should include four considerations:

1. Leadership's fiduciary responsibility was squandered.

Trust and confidence are soft, fuzzy ideas, compared to law and policy — but no less important. Even if former GC President Folkenberg did nothing

illegal in utilizing his office for private gain, he betrayed the trust that 10 million members placed in him to use his office's prestige for the church's good. Even if former union conference president-turned hospital executive Ron Wisbey was within policy in receiving a precedent-setting salary, he and his top employees weakened the church's confidence that its top leaders, particularly clergy, receive modest wages. Perhaps the age of traditionally modest wages for Adventist employees is a by-gone. If so, the church should be in on discussion of the transition and its implementation, and then a *Washington Post* story on high salaries wouldn't cause such a jolt. But without a more free press and open disclosure of salient information, revelations of large salaries — regardless of how justified — strain confidence and trust in leadership.

2. The "publicity" test is needed.

An Adventist hospital board's vote on salaries and retirement benefits is usually not publicized. However, what is voted behind closed doors should be transparently reasonable and acceptable to interested parties, should such information be made public. When an action is ethically questionable, the test of publicity is appropriate: Could the board chair briefly explain the voted salaries to the Adventist church on 3ABN, with probable concurrence? If not, the action is likely self-serving — not in service to the larger good that the board is supposedly upholding. Although the publicity test comes from philosophers, it corresponds to the Golden Rule. In this case the hospital board members would want others to vote for actions that serve the larger good of health ministry if roles were reversed.

3. Single-minded leaders are passé.

A couple of generations ago, when denominational leaders such as Robert Pierson or Earl Cleveland spoke of a "sacrificial wage" there was no question about their sincerity and

their single-minded devotion to "the cause," as we put it then. Today, post-Folkenberg, and the \$400,000 salary package of Wisbey, only the naive assume that church leaders are as single-minded as they evidently were for the first 100 years of our church.

Admittedly, single-minded leadership brought its own temptations — the exploitation of self and others for the good of "the Lord's work." For a maturing church that is here for the duration, it is proper that clergy and laity alike have a life beyond church work, and that means attending to such mundane matters as fair wages and retirement benefits. Yes, single-minded clerical and lay people are still around but are the exception.

4. Human nature is fallen—including our own.

Historically, we have criticized the Roman Catholic Church for its corporate sin, and now we have the opportunity to humbly acknowledge the human nature of our own church and take corrective steps. Earlier Adventist preachers often preached about the "Laodicean" condition of our church — indicating the lukewarm condition of the laity. Now it is evident that the leadership is equally if not more human. The issue is not who is the most human, but whether we have a structure that takes human nature into account. Perhaps it was because of our anticipation of the imminent Second Coming that we discounted the need for policies on conflict of interest, open disclosure, and checks and balances. But now as we devise evangelistic strategies for the new century, we must build on a thoughtful, ethical church polity that takes seriously our own moral frailty.

All told, our leadership difficulties of 1999 can make Adventism a net winner — if our painful lesson triggers reformation of church business policies. An appropriate first step would be publicity of remuneration of top church leaders. ■

James Walters, Ph.D., is the publisher and co-founder of *Adventist Today*.



Turmoil in Shady Grove

Dennis Hokama

Investigation triggers greater controversy than Shady Grove's accreditation

A surprise inspection of Shady Grove Adventist Hospital on October 22, 1999 by the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHCO) resulted in JCAHCO's November 15 decision to initiate a process leading to a revocation of Shady Grove's accreditation.

JCAHCO's verdict was a shocking reversal of the "accreditation with commendation" rating it awarded Shady Grove just 18 months earlier.

Shady Grove is

now in the process of appealing that decision. The outcome of that appeal is not expected before February 3. In the aftermath of that story, allegations concerning excessively high salaries of hospital executives unleashed a second wave of criticism even more vitriolic than the first. The story appeared in the *Washington Post* on November 16, 1999, page A01, written by Avram Goldstein. The *Post* and Goldstein have kept the story alive with provocative follow up pieces.

JCAHCO's surprise visit was triggered by an October 17 *Washington Post* article that cited numerous complaints by patients and doctors concerning health care problems at Shady Grove. JCAHCO is the private agency that inspects and rates 80 percent of the nation's 6,200 hospitals and has the responsibility under federal law of ensuring that hospitals meet the minimum requirement for participating in Medicare.

The statistical probability of a

hospital receiving a passing grade from a JCAHCO inspection in the past year was 99.33 percent, as only 60 of more than 9,000 inspections resulted in a failing grade.

Shady Grove and Adventist HealthCare

Shady Grove, located in Rockville, Maryland, where it is considered to be one of Montgomery County's key health care facilities, is part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's national hospital system. The regional branch of that system is called Adventist HealthCare, a nonprofit corporation that operates Shady Grove, Washington Adventist Hospital, Hackettstown Community Hospital in New Jersey, seven nursing centers across Maryland, a large home health care agency and a number of other health care services. Shady Grove has 263 beds, 1,300 staff doctors, and an emergency room that serves 60,000 patients a year. If JCAHCO's judgment is upheld on appeal, the loss of accreditation will bring increasing scrutiny from state officials, cause a loss of prestige and public confidence, and possible loss of Medicare and Medicaid funding from the U.S. Health Care Financing Administration.

Shady Grove spokesman Robert Jepson was quick to question the validity of the latest JCAHCO report card in light of their previous high rating, and said they would appeal the decision.

"We simply do not accept that this is a reflection of the type of care we provide. I find it very interesting that in July of 1998, there were three surveyors who spent three days at the hospital, combing through every aspect of care, and they gave us a

score of 99 out of 100. Then in October of this year, two accreditors come out for one day for eight hours, and we get this. It's hard to understand."

Prior to November 15, Shady Grove held the highest of seven ratings JCAHCO awards, "accreditation with commendation," and now has dropped to the second lowest, "preliminary nonaccreditation," which, if upheld on appeal, will lead to the lowest rating, or "nonaccreditation."

On November 16, the day after JCAHCO gave Shady Grove its failing grade, the State of Maryland weighed in with some citations of its own against Shady Grove. This was reported by the same writer in the November 17 *Washington Post*. Carol Benner, the state's chief hospital inspector, said her office had received more than 100 complaints about the hospital, a Maryland record for a single facility, and upon investigating them, she found many of the allegations valid. She cited disqualification from Medicare as a possibility.

According to the *Post* story, their report included errors in medication prescribed, a failure to note mistakes, and incidents noted in hospital records. The most serious case cited was the death of a 79-year-old intensive care patient, Anna Belle Beier, who was apparently forgotten in a hallway without supervision for 25 minutes, where she died of cardiac arrest. In another example, an 81-year-old woman had an operation on the wrong hip. The most common complaint involved patients who injured themselves trying to walk to the bathroom without assistance because nobody came in re-



sponse to the nurse-call button.

"What greatly concerns us is the hospital's failure to have a quality assurance mechanism in place to adequately evaluate the problems and keep them from happening again," Benner said. In a review of the minutes of hospital board of directors meetings going back a full year, the state found no "substantive discussion of quality issues or any oversight of the quality of care."

Benner then proceeded to notify federal officials that Shady Grove failed to meet the conditions for receiving Medicare and Medicaid payments, and recommended that the state take over regulation of the hospital from JCAHCO until Shady Grove's deficiencies have been corrected. If Shady Grove failed to win its appeal, then it would be in danger of losing its contracts with dozens of private health care plans, including Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs). But the timing of the negative publicity came at a particularly inconvenient time, since it disrupted the hospital's plans to issue millions of dollars worth of municipal bonds to raise capital for future projects, according to a December 8 follow up piece by Goldstein.

Terry W. White, appointed just the previous week as interim president of Shady Grove, took issue with the state report's conclusions, but gave assurances that whatever deficiencies existed were in the process of being fixed. "To the extent that there were quality shortcomings, we are aggressively working to address those," he said. With respect to the circumstances leading to Beier's death, White did allow that "it was not handled in optimal fashion. It was a letdown in care for the patient that this organization has agonized over a great deal," he said.

Allegations Concerning Excessive Salaries Launches Second Wave of Criticism

Why had there been such an apparently sudden deterioration in patient care at Shady Grove? The answer was implicit in the headline of a December 1 *Washington Post* follow up story, "Shady Grove Gave

out Big Raises." The previous day, the *Post* had been given access to Shady Grove's IRS filings as a tax exempt organization. Goldstein's interpretation of those records led him to conclude that in the three years before staff cuts at Shady Grove and increasing complaints from doctors, nurses and patients concerning the quality of care at Shady Grove, the hospital's executives "gave themselves large raises and severance payouts."

"The largest amount went to Bryan Breckenridge, the retiring President of Adventist Healthcare Inc. (AHC) who received the largest payoff: a \$4.74 million lump sum settlement. His top aide, chief financial officer Edmund R. Peters, soon followed with a \$3.1 million settlement."

AHC officials were quoted as justifying the amounts in recognition of the pair's length of service, coupled with the hospital board's intent to "catch up" to prevailing wages paid by other health care organizations in the region. Kenneth B. DeStafano, AHC's general counsel, said, "The board made a reasonable business decision that retirement plans for a number of the executives ...were not adequately funded in comparison to what they would have otherwise have received" in a nonreligious organization. "The decision was made to do a catch-up, if you will."

This statement, coming from AHC's own general counsel, created the impression that the board, upon convening to consider these retirement packages, suddenly decided it was "good business" to heap extra money upon Breckenridge and Peters in order to help them "catch up" to their colleagues in other institutions. It is an impression Ronald M. Wisbey, interim president

and CEO of AHC, and Robert Jepson, vigorously denounced as "false" when AT spoke to them by phone on January 5.

Wisbey, the *Post* story went on to say, "saw his compensation leap from \$161,000 in 1996 to \$447,000 the next year, and \$364,000 in '98." AHC officials are reported as saying half of Wisbey's compensation was reimbursed by two other Adventist hospitals in Ohio that also employ Wisbey as board chairman.

Cory Chambers, AHC executive vice president, reportedly received

Some doctors and nurses at Shady Grove blamed those layoffs for remaining nurses having to be worked too hard, resulting in increased treatment mistakes and oversights that had in turn caused the incidents for which the hospital was now being scrutinized.

\$319,000 in total compensation in '96, followed by \$815,000 in '97, and \$842,000 in '98. But after patient care problems were publicized last month at Shady Grove, the *Post* reports, the AHC board forced Chambers to resign and named Wisbey as his temporary replacement.

Although the AHC system had an operating surplus of \$13.4 million in '96, \$12.5 million in '97, and \$19.5 million in '98, changed circumstances in '99 had resulted in the layoff or reassigning of 78 employees at Shady Grove and Washington Adventist Hospitals. Although poor financial performance is one possible explanation for this belt-tightening move, AHC's natural desire to position themselves for a higher bond rating from Standard and Poors for their intended revenue bond issue might also have been a factor.

Some doctors and nurses at Shady Grove blamed those layoffs for

remaining nurses having to be worked too hard, resulting in increased treatment mistakes and oversights that had in turn caused the incidents for which the hospital was now being scrutinized. On November 30, Ron Marx, a former chief executive officer who was paid \$150,000 per year at Washington Adventist Hospital until forced out in a '93 reorganization, said it was the hospital's growing executive payroll that helped put Shady Grove into the position of having to overwork its nursing staff. AHC spokesperson Robert Jepson, however, disagreed, saying, "I would dispute that executive compensation is tied to problems" at Shady Grove.

In light of the *Post's* disclosures of executive salaries, the *Post* reported, hospital officials announced on November 30 that they planned to take the unprecedented step of immediately sharing details about those salaries with the company's 5,700 employees. "This is something that we hope to work through with our employees," DeStafano said. "This is hopefully going to be a galvanizing event that reinforces our commitment to the employees, to the physicians and to the other constituents of Adventist HealthCare."

AHC's Weak Response

On December 2, AHC's Communication Department issued a response to the *Post's* article of the previous day disclosing executive salaries and asked Kermit Netteburg to help distribute it to church leaders. This document rapidly circulated on the Internet, where it came to AT's attention.

"...On Wednesday, December 1, 1999 the *Washington Post* ran a story with information about compensation levels for top executives within Adventist HealthCare, including information about a retirement package for two executives. Unfortunately, necessary context was not provided and some information was inaccurate.

"Adventist HealthCare executives did not receive raises to the extent

alleged in the article. The compensation changed from year-to-year because an adjustment was made to account for an earlier under-funding of their retirement program. The Board of Directors Executive Compensation Committee, which includes an attorney who is a specialist in executive compensation, carefully considers all executive compensation.

"The compensation recorded for some executives of Adventist HealthCare includes deferred income, meaning that the compensation reported in the *Washington Post* is very overstated. Two Adventist HealthCare executives received a lump sum payment in one year for retirement benefits that normally would have been (paid) out over a 30-year period. This payment of a lump sum in benefits inflates the amount of income received by these individuals dramatically.

"We appreciate the strong support we have received from our church family and continue to ask for your prayers of concern and words of support. There are many challenges ahead, but we have full confidence in God's prevailing hand and have placed our faith in His Wisdom."

On December 22, Goldstein's *Post* article announced "Adventist Nurses Get 5 Percent Pay Raises," and quoted many current and former employees who thought there was a connection between those raises and the disclosures of executive compensation by the *Post*. Included was the customary denial of any connection between the two events by Jepson, who insisted that "it's all based on a constant evaluation of what nursing compensation is in the market."

Wisbey: Shady Grove Is Implementing the 1989 NAD decision

When Wisbey and Jepson returned AT's call on January 5, several issues were addressed. Ten pages of written material criticizing the *Post* allegations concerning executive salaries were also faxed. The overarching

problem, according to Wisbey, who sounded very exasperated, was that the church as a whole still did not understand, or was unwilling to accept, the logical consequences of a decision made by the North Ameri-

This is hopefully going to be a galvanizing event that reinforces our commitment to the employees, to the physicians and to the other constituents of Adventist HealthCare."

can Division at the 1989 Spring meeting. In that meeting, it was resolved that health care salaries would thereafter no longer be tied to denominational wage scales, but should be allowed to float to a level competitive with regional community wages. All of the wage issues in the AHC system were decided on that basis, and were never affected in any way by the *Post* articles, he said. The fact that they were posting healthy profits in recent years indicates that their decisions were financially responsible. That should be the end of the controversy, he implied, except that members, including many church leaders, refuse to accept and defend the 1989 NAD decision, and do not understand the meaning of going to a market economy. Wisbey is cautiously optimistic that their appeal will be successful. But even that successful resolution, Wisbey says, will not satisfy those who are ambivalent or against the idea of trying to integrate market economics and church work. That feeling of confusion was probably expressed aptly by a board member quoted in the December 22 *Post* article. "What is astounding is you have a church-based operation working with private industry salaries on the CEO-CFO level but functioning with a volunteer board with the church. Which are we, fish or fowl?"

When AT contacted Neal Wilson, former General Conference president, who presided over the 1989 NAD spring meeting, he made the following statement:

"I don't like to be negative, espe-

cially when it involves my good friend Ron Wisbey, but his analysis of the 1989 decision is only partially correct and therefore incomplete and misleading." Wilson went on to state that the 1980 decision concerning health care executive compensation put caps on salaries. He stated the decision stipulated the maximum salary amount for an Adventist health care executive would be equal to the minimum salary of a comparable executive within the community or regional marketplace.

AHC Wages 18 Percent Lower Than Market

With regard to the *Post's* reporting of executive salaries, Wisbey was nearly apoplectic. In his December 1 piece, Goldstein had written, "The salaries, according to the Adventist system's own consultant reports, are well above the amount paid to hospital executives in this region with similar responsibilities." Wisbey faxed AT a copy of a point by point rebuttal prepared by Smith & Downey. On this point, they wrote:

The report of Deloitte & Touche, AHC's internationally renowned compensation consultant, actually reads: "On average, (AHC) base salaries are 18 percent below market. ...Comparing actual (AHC) bonuses, ...(AHC) falls at the low end of the competitive practices ...(AHC) executive salaries have fallen behind competitive levels.

But Goldstein, Wisbey and Jepson say, further distorted the compensation picture with a garbled interpretation of the dollar numbers on IRS Form 990, despite being given the same corrective information AHC provided to AT. Goldstein apparently treated the dollar figures on form 990 as if it were a W-2 form, but adding up 990 numbers produces a nonsensical figure when labeled as compensation for that year, says Wisbey, because form 990 also may include the following, which is not income for that year:

- Cashed out, unused sick and other leave accrued over many years
- Accrued amount of a retirement fund that has been accruing for a number of years, and not available until retirement.
- Personal contributions made to a

retirement fund.

Thus, according to Wisbey, his listed 1997 \$474,000 "compensation" included \$281,685.65 in accrued retirement money, most of which he did not accrue in 1997, and which he cannot touch until he retires. According to Henry Smith III, of Smith & Downey, Wisbey's actual salary for '97, '98, and '99 is \$129,615, \$137,392, and \$157,000, respectively. No mention is made of potential bonuses.

Playing "Catch Up" Didn't Mean Donating Money to Breckenridge and Peters

Contrary to the impression given by DeStafano's statement, says Wisbey, the board had virtually no discretion in determining the size of Breckenridge's or Peter's retirement settlements at the time of their retire-

ment. The board had already committed themselves to a policy of playing "catch up" with respect to "ramping up" retirement benefits at the time the two had signed their employment contracts. The policy of playing "catch up" was the logical extension of the aforementioned 1989 NAD decision.

Form 990 Can't Say Executives "Gave Themselves" Raises or Severance Payouts

Not only was it procedurally impossible for executives to give themselves raises, but IRS Form 990 certainly couldn't tell Goldstein that. Wisbey therefore calls that Goldstein statement "absolutely false." In a December 10 letter addressed to "Adventist Healthcare Employees," Wisbey describes how an independent committee of the board of directors, in consultation with a compensation expert, determine executive salaries. Five factors are considered: comparable positions in the market, experience, performance, scope of responsibility, and size of the organization. Although it is not mentioned in that memo, Wisbey added over the phone that the salary figure they target is the median of the salary range (the salary figure in the survey which has 50 percent of the figures above it and

50 percent below it). The fact that this algorithm was not specified in the letter of December 10 suggests that it may not previously have been spelled out explicitly.

Some informed members moreover question just how independent that compensation committee really is, given the business knowledge, integrity, and critical thinking skills that would be demanded of a volunteer, and the well known tendency of hired "experts" to deliver opinions pleasing to their employers in hopes of getting repeat business.

Furthermore, until Wisbey's procedural changes announced in that

Said one embarrassed board member, "We all feel betrayed. ...They told us we should trust the numbers..."

December 10 letter, the findings of the compensation committee (of unspecified size) were apparently not disclosed to the full 22 member board. The full board was apparently asked to rubber stamp the salary figures, sight unseen. Although Jepson is quoted as disputing this, several board members, including Breckenridge himself, are quoted by Goldstein as confirming that no salary figures were shown to the full board at the time they were asked to approve it. Said one embarrassed board member, "We all feel betrayed. ...They told us we should trust the numbers..."

Fuller Disclosure Solves One Problem, But Creates Another

Nevertheless, the fact that AHC has apparently implemented procedural changes that would require approval of salaries before the full board seems to be a significant improvement in terms of safeguarding the system against future abuses. But fuller disclosure is also likely to have a potentially more expensive consequence. The salary gap between health care workers and denominational employees for instance, may now become more glaring and therefore put more pressure on denominational wage scales. ■

The sin of apathy

Reflections of a protester

Jim Stoicheff

When someone asked Jesus which commandment was the greatest, he responded, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." We have no record of anyone asking him to define the most heinous transgression, but feminist lawyer and civil rights activist Florynce Kennedy did. In essence, she states that the worst sin is doing nothing at all.

According to its web site, "The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only international organization dealing with the global rules of trade between nations. Its main function is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible." Activists complain that when this is an organization's "main function," state sovereignty, the environment, and workers rights are sacrificed.

When the WTO held its conference in Seattle this fall they faced a coalition of environmental and union groups seeking changes in the organization, and more reactionary groups demanding an end to the WTO and free trade. During the "riots" that occurred November 30 and December 1 the media underreported the di-

"We have no record of anyone asking Jesus to define the most heinous transgression, but feminist lawyer and civil rights activist Florynce Kennedy did. In essence, she states that the worst sin is doing nothing at all."

verse makeup of the anti-WTO forces, giving the most attention to those factions seeking to dismantle the WTO entirely.

I participated in one demonstration, with the Jubilee 2000 Coalition, which has been working to get the world's richest nations to forgive the debt of the poor nations. This would permit the poor nations to use their resources for education, health care and infrastructure, rather than for servicing their debt. The goal in Seattle was to create a ten-thousand-person human chain around the building, where the WTO opening ceremony was to be held November 29, and draw public attention to the organization. So far as I could tell, Jubilee 2000 Northwest had no anti-WTO axe to grind.

Some friends and I walked in the pouring rain to the First Methodist Church, where the rally and interfaith service were being held. The church was already filled

with more than 3000 demonstrators, and we were among the thousands who were gathered outside.

When those in front of us stopped we figured we'd reached our goal and were now to join hands. Then the bad news: we were not being permitted to get close enough to the Exhibition Hall to make the human chain around it. This was extremely frustrating, because city authorities were supposed to have approved the march. Jubilee 2000 Northwest was attempting to reach members of an undemocratic organization in one of the few ways possible, and the authorities of our own republic were thwarting us.

We later learned the authorities decided not to let us through because the demonstration included participants who were not part of Jubilee 2000.

The next day, when protesters were not allowed close enough to WTO conference sites, they lay down in intersections to prevent delegates from reaching their meetings. Police used pepper spray, tear gas, and rubber bullets on the demonstrators, but those who sought to prevent conference events from occurring were successful for a day. A small group broke windows, and a Starbucks and Radio Shack were looted. At the end of the day damage to businesses was estimated in

the millions of dollars, and Mayor Paul Schell ordered a downtown curfew.

The next day a "no-protest zone" protected conference sites, but the protests con-

tinued elsewhere. The police took a harder stance, arresting about 500 people. These would remain in jail with delayed access to counsel through the rest of the conference. The night of November 30, on Capitol Hill, television cameras caught an officer kicking a man in the groin, apparently without justification. (The officer was later suspended for two days and taken off SWAT duties). A reporter was pepper-sprayed while attempting to help someone who had fallen. The events of this night, which seemed to residents to have been unprovoked, angered many and led to hours-long hearings in the following days.

If the biggest sin is apathy, what were Adventists doing during this time? Well, let's just say they weren't in the streets protesting. I asked a few Seattle Adventist friends why they didn't participate and was given a variety of reasons: no time, lack of awareness of the demonstrations, lack of belief in the efficacy or wisdom

of public protest, dislike of crowds, dislike of tear gas, disagreement with the methods of [some] protesters, and lack of knowledge of the issues.

Some of these are good reasons. But this isn't to say the Adventist church and its individual members are excused from participating in justice events. Excuses ostensibly rooted in lack of time or knowledge are really excuses for lack of interest.

Adventists should pay more heed to the social justice prophets, like Habakkuk. He wrote about the proud and greedy who practiced oppression and extortion (see Habakkuk 2).

It is precisely this extortion that Jubilee 2000 Northwest and some factions of the WTO protesters wished to address.

The environmental concern that brought protesters dressed as sea turtles should also be of special interest to a church that places so much emphasis on the creation accounts in Genesis, where God is described as having given man dominion over nature.

While the downtown protests may not have had a clear message Adventists could feel comfortable presenting, the Jubilee 2000 demonstration did. This movement continues, and others with Biblical principles are also hungry for participants. Many SDAs work to help the poor and protect the environment, but many others do not. Charles Kammer III has written:

"If we believe in a God who stands at the end of history, whose kingdom will be established no matter what we do, does human history have any meaning? If we can be

saved if we just "believe that Jesus is Lord" irrespective of the lives we live and the structures we support, why should we take the needs of others seriously? Does it really matter if we act to establish human rights in society, or try to prevent a nuclear holocaust? Does it matter that we support structures that impoverish and dehumanize others? The implication is, of course, that it really does not matter."

Micah tells us that the Lord requires "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8b). Jesus told the Pharisees, with whom Adventists would do well to critically compare themselves, "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and herbs of all kinds, and neglect justice and the love of God" (Luke 11:42a). This combination of justice and love of God is a restatement of Jesus two "greatest commandments."

Forget about escaping responsibility by claiming Christians shouldn't meddle in politics. We remember 1 Peter tells us to respect authority, but we forget that in a republic we have the authority. It's our duty to do what we can to end injustice. When an organization that perpetrates injustice doesn't provide a mechanism for democratic dialogue—and the WTO doesn't—then taking to the streets in protest, even with the limitations of that medium, is a viable way to work for justice. With the WTO now determining how to proceed following the failure of their Seattle conference demonstrates the efficacy of the public protest medium. ■



Jim Stoicheff is working on a BA in theology at Seattle University and applying to Masters in Fine Arts programs in creative writing. His poetry has been published in Insight and elsewhere. His fiction will appear in The Northwest Review early this year. He worked for the Greater New York Conference Community Health Services from 1986-1991.

LSU students and faculty reflect on their WTO experience

Several students and faculty members of La Sierra University went to Seattle in November to protest the World Trade Organization (WTO). These individuals shared their experiences with the La Sierra community at a Soup Session hosted by the Stahl Center on December 8.

John Webster, professor of theology and history of Christianity, attended the Friday, Saturday and Sunday preliminary lectures and teach-ins held in Seattle. Webster thinks he was the only Adventist at many of the packed lectures, and this surprised him because of the similarity between the lectures' content and SDA positions. Webster was impressed by the serious and focused young people. He called the environment "anarchy in the real sense of the word" as a movement "bubbling up from the bottom with nothing enforced from the top."

Johana Shull, a former LSU music student, went to Seattle as an observer and to participate in a labor march. Johana refers to herself as a usually reserved person, and said that it was a real challenge to face down police officers and say "I'm sorry, but you can't go through." As part of the human chain, she made police cars and commuters turn around, blocking a major entrance into the city. On Wednesday, she was one of the first arrested from the 70 taken from her group. She was one of nine who were forcibly ejected from jail after two days due to misplaced paperwork.

Out of this terrible experience Johana found an amazing irony: she spent two days in King County Jail for practicing civil disobedience. The entire county was named for the man most associated with the American peaceful protesting tradition.

Reported in the University Vitae, Dec. 22, 1999, published by the La Sierra University Office of Public Relations.

SDA colleges and universities: A snapshot

Dennis Hokama

If one were to plot SDA college enrollment in North America for the past five years, a virtually straight line with a slight upward tilt would be the result. The number of full time equivalent (FTE) North American Division SDA college students enrolled in 1993 was 15,335. Five-years later (in 1997) there were 16,803. That amounts to a 9.5 percent increase over a five year period. The total number of students (head count) enrolled over that same period plots a parallel line 3,000 students above the FTE line: There were 18,014 bodies in SDA colleges in 1993, and 20,049 in 1997.

Seeing the Trees: Snapshots of Individual Colleges

It should be understood that every school representative that responded and wrote or spoke enthusiastically about their respective school's quality and excellent blend of spirituality and academics. Those schools that did not respond would undoubtedly have claimed the same qualities for their school. But in order to conserve space, such comments will not be repeated.

Andrews University

Doug Jones (University Relations) wrote that AU has noticed a trend toward more graduate students, and a greater number of undergraduate students transferring in. They are also getting more international students. A seminary building expansion as been set for this spring. A liberal arts complex campaign and building project is underway, and a Center for College Faith has been established.

Atlantic Union College

Despite an exceptionally rocky

start to the school year (See AT vol. 7, No. 4), Ruth Brand (PR) reports that AUC actually recorded a 4 percent increase in FTE enrollment over last year. Some there refer to AUC now as Comeback College. She reports that AUC is in a more stable financial position than it has been in several years. Buildings are being renovated. A new computer system has been installed. An expansion of the playing field to accommodate soccer has been completed.

Canadian University College

CUC was one of the few colleges that was so enthusiastic about their increase in enrollment to an all time high that they put up their numbers on their website: a 25 percent increase in their head count to 411 this year. (That number had to be converted to a FTE estimate in the table.) John McDowell attributes that to the leadership of Dr. Randal Wisbey, and strong marketing. A marked trend is an increase in U.S. students.

Columbia Union College

AT had no response from CUC's PR at the time this piece had to be submitted, but some items were gleaned from their excellent website. CUC is Montgomery County's only four-year college. Its location in Takoma Park, Md, close to the U.S. Supreme Court, gives pre-law students a unique perspective. CUC's new Center for Law and Public Policy sponsors bi-

monthly mock court of cases that are currently receiving media attention. After the mock court session, a guest speaker (usually a lawyer) goes over the case with them. One of the Center's recent guest speakers was Nicholas Miller, a lawyer in the Supreme Court case regarding the Separation of Church and State, and who ideologically opposes CUC's ongoing legal battle with the State of Maryland to get a share of funds from the Sellinger program

Every school representative that responded and wrote or spoke enthusiastically about their respective school's quality and excellent blend of spirituality and academics.

(See AT vol 7. No. 5).

La Sierra University

Greg Gerard (PR) reports that LSU has decided to embark on a land development program with their 300 acres of farmland that is expected to drastically increase the university's endowment funds. Although their enrollment has been in a downward trend in recent years, he expects that adjustments



in the curriculum will soon result in a rebound. Recent indications are so positive, he says, that enrollment for winter quarter may even exceed fall quarter, which would be unusual. Ever since LSU's divorce from Loma Linda University in 1990 after a 23-year union, he says, LSU's enrollment has been somewhat volatile as LSU sought to establish its own identity and destiny.

Loma Linda University

Gus Cheatham (PR) reports that LLU's total current enrollment is 3,296. The breakdown of their respective graduate-professional schools is as follows: Allied Health professions: 910; Dentistry: 509; Graduate school: 592; Medicine: 659; Nursing: 270; Public Health: 356. In addition, there are 350 medical residents and fellows in graduate medical education at LLU Medical Center. LLU also supports distance education at Oakwood College, Antillian University, and Fresno City College. Cheatham reports that during the past five years, the percentage of students admitted to LLU Professional Schools based on membership of the SDA church has remained unchanged and steady at 51-52 percent.

LLU has earned accreditation with commendation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) through the year 2008. Dr. Lyn Behrens, President of LLU, has served as member of WASC Commission from 1994-2000, and was vice chair of the Commission between 1995-96.

On the academic side, a faculty member in the school of medicine involved in faculty recruitment expressed major concerns in regards to a serious lack of young SDA talent with advanced (Ph.D.) biomedical and science degrees. As evidence, he cites the fact that out of a School of Medicine faculty of about 42 with funded laboratories, only 5 are SDAs.

"Most of our available scientific talent, he says, "is drained via Dentistry, Medicine..." While these are all honorable pursuits, LLU runs the risk of having very little Adven-

tist Ph.D. talent to draw from in the next 10 years. That means most of the instruction and research in the future will have to be carried out by non-SDA faculty.

The major reasons for this shortage, he says, are many. Adventist young people are not encouraged to pursue careers in science unless it is medicine or dentistry. If they do, and are competent, SDA pay scales will not be competitive with regional wages unless they come to LLUMC. Those willing to make the financial sacrifice may be too frustrated by the intellectual dishonesty often required in toeing the party line or keeping silent to avoid confrontations.

Oakwood College

Although OC, a college serving primarily African Americans, did not respond, if the academic quality of a program may be judged from its website, then OC must be given a high grade. Its website was the most useful and creative of all the SDA college sites visited. It can be accessed through atoday.com.

Pacific Union College

Michelle Mesnard (PR) let *U.S. News and World Report* do the bragging. It ranked PUC the top liberal arts college in California, and in the top 10 list for "Best Values" among liberal arts colleges in the western United States. PUC wins AT's award for the most thoroughly prepared, updated, and substantive. PR release backed by hard data. They have four offsite campuses in Santa Rosa, Lake County, Ukiah, and Napa, and a new evening degree completion program offering three majors that has 190 students enrolled.

Although the Angwin area has become very expensive due to its beauty, she reports that they seem to have no trouble recruiting and keeping faculty in any department.

Southern Adventist University

Doris Burdick (PR) gives SAU's 1999-2000 total headcount as 1,780, compared to 1724 last year. These figures do not include their offsite campuses in South Africa, two locations in India, Bangladesh, or Bolivia, where degrees in business and education are being offered.

Their School of Nursing is launching a new Master of Science in Nursing degree with emphasis in Adult Nurse Practitioner emphasis, and Master of Science in

The number of full-time students enrolled in 1993 was 15,335. Five years later (in 1997) there were 16,803. That amounts to a 9.5 percent increase over a five year period.

Nursing/Master of Business Administration in collaboration with the School of Business and Management.

She reports that SAU has five computer science Ph.Ds in the School of Computing which is becoming a focus of growth for SAU. The teaching of computer animation graphics has also stimulated growth in the Art Department.

Southwestern Adventist University

Dr. Anderson, SWAU President, reports that although their current headcount was 1,151 (converted to 921 FTE estimate in table) they could have had over 2,000. Since their freshman classes were full, they decided to raise standards and denied admission and re-admission to 53 students. SWAU's tuition for a full load, he says, is \$8,962. SWAU has no debt, a few million in reserve, and has recorded operating gains for 24 consecutive years. It has students from 45 different states, 40 countries, and 17 different religions. Ethnic mix consists of 60 percent white, 12-14 percent black and hispanic, and 5 percent Asian.

[Continued on page 22]

Adventists & Education:

can the marriage be saved?

Alden Thompson

The challenge

"Either you think or you believe; you can't do both."

Says who?

Powerful voices in our culture, maybe the whole culture, that's who. For Adventists, it's a dilemma that looms, haunts, lurks and mocks — you pick the verb. It's an urgent issue on every Adventist campus, a tension felt in every Adventist home.

I've heard the "educated" voices. I've seen them in print:

"It's no longer necessary to convince educated Englishmen of the 20th century that..."

"I didn't think even Evangelicals believed that any more..."

"As every schoolboy knows..."

"Carl Sagan says that only those with an IQ between 85 and 120 can believe. If you're lower than that you're not smart enough to believe; if you're higher you're too smart..."

"Either you pursue the truth and destroy the church; or you give up the search for truth to preserve the church."

Our dilemma can be variously described: faith vs. reason; grace vs. free will; divine sovereignty vs. human freedom.

Those were all educated voices, some quite sophisticated. C. S. Lewis has noted that the company of unbelievers makes faith harder, even when their opinions on any other subject are known to be worthless. True. And when the unbelievers' opinions are known to be highly valued instead of worthless, we feel very vulnerable indeed. None of us takes kindly to condescension or scorn. Nobody wants to be dumb. Nobody.

In some ways, the tension between thinking and believing is a modern phenomenon; at least the stakes are much higher now than they used to be. In the past, great thinkers have also been revered as great men of God; the scholar and the saint could happily live inside the same skin: Jerome, Augustine, Wycliffe, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley. Now, it seems, one has to choose.

I don't like the choice. Not at all. I want to think and believe. And I believe we can do something about it — more than just huddling together after dark to talk about this funny business of being educated and Adventist.

But before we consider ways of saving the marriage, a glimpse of history will help us understand how the two partners have drifted apart. And it's not just an Adventist problem. I don't know of any church that has a tidy solution. Church historian, Mark Noll, one of the first "evangelical" scholars to gain respect in the "secular" academic community,

bluntly addressed the problem in his book, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (1994). Noll argues that believers simply haven't devel-

oped good universities.

For me the issue was cast into bold relief several years ago when the academic dean from Whitworth College (Spokane, WA) told our faculty that of all the Presbyterian colleges founded in the 19th century in the US, only Whitworth has retained an explicit Christian identity. All the others have gone secular. In our own town, Whitman College is a constant reminder of that phenomenon: a respected liberal arts college

with a handsome endowment, a kind of west coast Ivy League campus.

Ironically, the most persistent echo of its Christian past is in the name of its athletic teams, the Whitman "Missionaries."

Adventists still have a cluster of colleges and universities. Some are at risk; each is struggling in its own way. But each is still fully bonded to the church. That's good. The challenge is significant, however, and deserves our careful attention.

Diagnosis: historical perspective

Our dilemma can be variously described: faith vs. reason; grace vs. free will; divine sovereignty vs. human freedom. In the end, the tension is rooted in the ambivalent human response to authority: from fear and submission on the one hand to hostility and rebellion on the other. If fear destroys the spirit of inquiry, rebellion elevates it to the point of arrogant independence. Thus the biblical ideal of authority as something which liberates and enables is replaced by a view of authority as something which represses and restricts. On such a view, authority must either be passively accepted or totally rejected. But to describe the biblical ideal positively in terms of "enabling" already betrays my bias; the rebel sees only "repression" ("It is time this scriptural tyranny was broken," shouts a cover blurb on *Deceptions and Myths of the Bible*, 1975, 1995). And the war rages on.

At the risk of over-simplifying, it can be said the fruit of the medieval period was a church which restricted human inquiry in the name of God. In 1633 Galileo was forbidden to see what he had already seen, and Galileo was "wrong" until

Rome finally declared him “right” in 1992. No wonder the Enlightenment announced the independence of human reason, ruling the divine out of court.

Culturally, however, believers still held the upper hand. At the beginning of the 19th century atheism was seen as almost a form of insanity. With reference to the Bible, Sir Walter Scott could say: “Better had they ne’er been born, that read to doubt or read to scorn.”

But by the beginning of the 20th century, the tables had turned in “educated” circles: atheism was assumed; belief was scorned. Speaking of the Bible, the great American poet Wallace Stevens exclaimed: “I’m glad the silly book is gone.” By the 1920s, Fundamentalism had sent “believers” and “thinkers” into opposite camps. We’re still paying the price.

The Adventist scene is particularly striking, for our schools were established right in the middle of this war,

shaped by a prophetic mandate in the name of God. Ellen White called for the rule of “sanctified reason.” Fundamentalism has left its mark on us, to be sure. But I’m convinced that without the prophetic ministry of Ellen White, Adventists would have no schools and we would simply be a tiny sabbatarian sect with a footprint similar in size to that of the Advent Christian Church or the Seventh Day Baptists.

Instead, Adventism is a tumultuous, unruly body, struggling with problems of diversity and church polity, burgeoning growth and unsettling decline. I think all this tumult and frenzy is linked in part with Ellen White’s dictum, that “Christ can be best glorified by those who serve him intelligently.”

Rescue and rehabilitation?

Can the marriage be saved? In-

deed. And I believe Adventist education can do much to brighten the corner where we are. We can’t go far if we go it alone. But our unique heritage, our commitment to “sanctified reason,” will enable us to capitalize on significant cultural trends which are making it easier to think and believe.

Two British authors deserve a great deal of credit: G. K.

Chesterton and C. S. Lewis.

Lewis described Chesterton’s

The Everlasting Man (1925) as “the best popular apology for Christianity.” Though certainly no Fundamentalist, Chesterton wrote just as Fundamentalism was reaching its peak and provided believers with understanding as well as ammunition. He noted that the drive against traditional religion was fueled by “a particular mood of reaction and revolt” with predictable effect on the ability to be even-handed: “An iconoclast may be indignant; an iconoclast may be justly indignant; but an iconoclast is not impartial. And it is stark hypocrisy to pretend that nine-tenths of the higher critics and scientific evolutionists and professors of comparative religions are in the least impartial.”

Beginning in the 1940s, first by radio and then in print, the brilliant and devout university man, C. S. Lewis, introduced millions of readers to the life-transforming power of Jesus in his *Mere Christianity*. He himself had once been an atheist and spoke candidly of the uncertainties on both sides of the divide: both the believer and the atheist have their moments of terror when the other’s position seems so temptingly true.

Today, I see several hopeful impulses in the broader culture: a touch of humility among scientists, a renewed interest in mystery and spirituality, a readiness to hear the message of Scripture without insisting that it be merely a human book on the one hand or an absolute reflection of God on the other.

Adventists, like other conservative

Christians, are inclined to focus on the errors of dominant cultural trends. Yet these trends often correct previous excesses. Just as the Enlightenment helped break the hammerlock of church authority, so Postmodernism is loosening the grip of Enlightenment rationalism by focusing on the importance of the

I believe Adventist education can do much to brighten the corner where we are. We can’t go far if we go it alone.

individual experience. That’s good.

Finally, I would suggest that the real reason for the war between faith and reason is the powerful impulse from both right and left to take Scripture as a final and absolute revelation of God. Both extremes assume that if God were to reveal himself, it must be in absolute terms. The left rejects such a position and the right defends it, and neither one is really hearing Scripture.

Adventists can walk a middle way. When Ellen White said that “God and heaven alone are infallible,” she was recognizing that Scripture points toward God, but is adapted to catastrophic human circumstances and limited human understanding. Some may say that “such an expression is not like God.” No problem, for “God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible.” And that’s because God inspired the “person,” not the “words.” Scripture points to God, but is never the same as God.

The brokenness in our world touches all authorities and they fall short of perfection. But they are still our authorities. The Bible is no exception. If Adventists can make peace with the Bible, we can help the world make peace with the Bible, and thus find peace with God, a God who took human flesh so that we might live forever.

That’s an exciting mandate for Adventist education. ■

Alden Thompson, Ph.D., is Professor of Biblical studies at Walla Walla College.

God inspired
the person
not the word

Mandate for the twenty first Century: Christ-centered perspective

George P. Babcock

God's philosophy of education has not changed since he instructed Adam and Eve. It is the same as when he taught Israel, and the same philosophy he shared with Ellen White one hundred years ago. God wants us to learn to be like him and to love each other as he loves us so that we will be happy living with him. "Godliness—godlikeness—is the goal to be reached" (*Education*, p.18). This is still God's educational plan in the year 2000, a plan that makes Seventh-day Adventist education unique.

Methodologies to implement that philosophy, however, have changed drastically throughout the centuries. The face-to-face method God used in Eden doesn't work as well now because sin has created a barrier between man and God. And Satan has perpetrated a multitude of interesting but false philosophies designed to lead us

away from the goal of "godlikeness."

In view of this, how shall we approach Adventist higher education in a new century? What accommodations, if any, should be made to the various popular educational philosophies around us? Is Adventist education really distinctive? If it isn't truly different, why should we go to all the effort and expense to have a separate system?

Most Adventist educators will agree that Ellen White's books outlining God's philosophy of education led the Seventh-day Adventist Church to establish its distinctive educational system, one intended to prepare Christians for eternity with God. And most will agree that this has been a great blessing to our church. We point with pride to Adventist elementary schools, academies, colleges, and universities around the world, and rest in the conviction that our schools are founded on a platform of solid biblical belief—belief in creation, the Sabbath, the Bible as God's word, Jesus Christ as Creator, Model, and Savior, and the conviction that we have a responsibility for sharing the Good News and helping others.

So what is (or should be) distinctive about

Adventist higher education in 2000 and beyond? The answer is still a Christ-centered perspective. Especially is this true in the areas of science, religion, literature, and history. Where else can one go to get this type of perspective?

The higher we climb on the worldly educational ladder, the more we are taught to question everything (a la Socrates) and, therefore, the more difficult it becomes to decide where to draw the line in holding to our distinctive beliefs. Is *all* the Bible true? Is Christ really the Creator? Was Creation a six-day process? Is keeping the Sabbath on the seventh day absolutely vital to our Christian experience? Or have times changed so much that some of these absolutes need to be modified? And if so, who does the modification?

Reflecting current educational philosophies, Robert Goheen, president of Princeton University, said, "If you feel that you have both feet planted on level ground, then the university has failed you." God, on the other hand, wants our feet firmly planted on the level ground of his word. "As an educating power the Bible is without a rival. Nothing will so impart vigor to all the faculties as requiring students to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation" (*Counsels on Education*, Ellen G. White, p. 62).

Neo-platonism (from which Pantheism grew) when joined to the Socratic method of teaching leads to a cynical skepticism often resulting in a loss of faith, morals, and character. Most worldly theories and philosophies contain some good. If we could clearly see the evil in them, there would be much less problem. But when men and women we respect, real thinkers and honest students, argue against some of the planks in our theological platform, we become confused and begin to chip away at the foundation truths which have for years supported our church and school system. Satan is not stupid. Error is much more palatable when mixed with a healthy dose of truth. So the real test is to remain God-centered while at the same time maintaining a questioning mind and a willingness to examine truth as it grows. But "new truth"



which does away with the basic planks of our Adventist faith and heritage is not new truth but rather old lies that the devil uses to undermine the foundation of our relationship with God.

Colleges and universities today can hardly operate without accreditation. The government does not give educational loans and grants to students attending unaccredited institutions, and total enrollment is the backbone of a school's budget. Thus, getting past accreditation inspections is of major importance, and we work diligently to meet the required standards. Fortunately, none of those standards has yet caused a confrontation between our basic religious beliefs and the needed accreditation. It is possible that someday they might. If a conflict were to arise between our basic religious and educational philosophy and the accrediting agencies, what would we do? While we value accreditation, we cannot let it be our highest value. Unfortunately, some might develop a rationalization that would allow compromise. The slippage in all types of standards is usually a slow process, but it appears to this writer that the process is well underway.

The long-standing denominational policy which says that all full-time teachers in our institutions must be Seventh-day Adventists was compromised on some campuses years ago. How can non-Adventist professors pass on to their students a philosophy to which they themselves do not subscribe? And what do we do if accreditation demands religious diversity among our faculty? If we are already hiring non-Adventists as full-time teachers, we have no argument if the accrediting body insists we hire more professors not of our faith.

One particularly damaging philosophy that has recently gained popularity among some Adventists is that an institution cannot be both theologically conservative and on the cutting edge of educational excellence. The lame definition given for theological conservatism is the degree of effort put forth to uphold traditional Adventist standards of dress, diet, entertainment, and so on.

Southern Adventist University (SAU) continually struggles with this mistaken concept. It comes as a shock to some that a Christian university can be theologically conservative and at the same time quite liberal on social issues, although SAU does put forth a concerted effort to maintain those traditional church standards that have proven to be of genuine benefit. (Yes, even required attendance at worship services.) At the same time, the university keeps up with

the 21st century by offering programs that are truly on the cutting-edge such as graphic design, 3-D animation, computing, physics, biochemistry, nursing, journalism and communication, business, teacher education, and counseling. In the midst of these updated, high-tech programs, Southern Adventist University operates the largest undergraduate School of Religion in the North American Division with nearly 200 theology majors this year.

In Ellen White's *Counsels on Education*, p.63, we read: "If morality and religion are to live in a school, it must be through a knowledge

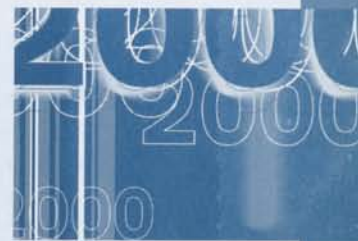
of God's word. Some may urge that if religious teaching is to be made prominent our school will become unpopular; that those who are not of our faith will not patronize the college. Very well, then, let them go to other colleges, where they will find a system of education that suits their taste. Our school was established, not merely to teach the sciences, but for the purpose of giving instruction in the great principles of God's word and in the practical duties of everyday life."

Adventist colleges and universities that uphold traditional Adventist values and perspectives while offering up-to-date programs that prepare graduates for a life of service to God and man—these institutions present a unique product that sells.

At SAU, we feel that the Lord has greatly blessed our efforts to focus on him. Today Southern Adventist University is financially stable, has no institutional debt, is increasing enrollment in both on-and-off-campus courses, offers excellent undergraduate and graduate programs featuring the latest technology, hires only Adventists for its full-time professors, and makes God's word preeminent. Does a Christ-centered perspective make a difference? We think it does! ■

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One particularly damaging philosophy that has recently gained popularity among some Adventists is that an institution cannot be both theologically conservative and on the cutting edge of educational excellence.



My Dream

Steve Daily

for adventist higher education



When I was recently asked by the editorial staff of *Adventist Today* to share my vision for Adventist higher education in the context of my nineteen years working at an Adventist university, I couldn't help but flashback to the year 1980. I was an idealistic 27-year-old entering the employment ranks of higher education for the first time. My new position was campus chaplain and religion teacher on the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University, and I was excited about impacting the lives of young people for the Kingdom of God. I was realistic enough to recognize that my radical desires to see North American Adventism become much more friendly to its young people probably meant that I would not last long in this position. Surprisingly, however, I

found that my ideas were not only tolerated, but even welcomed in some quarters of university administration. Over time these ideas were put into book form and published under the title, *Adventism for a New Generation*. This book called for a Christ-centered Adventism that moves beyond a preoccupation with externals to the heart religion and authentic service orientation of Jesus. This approach, I believe, is naturally attractive to young people. This book is still used as a textbook in Adventist colleges and universities.



With regard to higher education, it was my hope that our colleges and universities would be the primary models of this kind of Adventism. They could be places where faculty, staff, administration and students would first and foremost be driven by a passion for Jesus Christ, a love for his Word, a radical openness to his Holy Spirit, and a strong belief in, and commitment to, the power of faith and prayer.

It seems to me that the vast majority, if not all, of our North American colleges and universities either still continue to function in the context of traditional Adventism, or are moving in the direction of a liberal Adventism that is more concerned with academic excellence (as the world defines it) than lifting up Jesus so that all might be drawn to Him.

It is in this context that I want to share my vision for Adventist higher education. The following four components are not only crucial, but the most important, as I see them. I am in favor of pursuing academic excellence in our universities and have consistently tried to do so personally and professionally over the last twenty years. But true academic excellence, in an Adventist context, is built on the following foundation and does not marginalize or simply give lip service to them to impress various constituencies.

1. A Passionate Love for Jesus Christ.

In my vision of Adventist higher education the most important factor to consider in hiring any faculty, staff, or administrator would be one's passion for Jesus Christ the God-man. I would rather have a highly competent physics professor who truly loves the Lord than a Nobel laureate who doesn't really care about Christ. If professors do not believe that Jesus was God, I question whether they should be teaching in our universities. Admittedly, it is not popular in academic circles to be passionate about Jesus as Lord. But, as he himself said, "For whoever is ashamed of me...of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father (Mark 8:38). All faculty members in an Adventist university must intentionally seek to counteract the culture of disbelief, which is pervasive in academia. The cultivation of faith is the work not only of religion faculty but of every teacher. It is a failure of integrity for a person to teach in an Adventist school and seek to lessen students' loyalty to Jesus or confidence in his Word.

2. A Passionate Belief in the Holy Spirit and the Power of Prayer

One of my favorite quotes comes from the great twentieth century revivalist Leonard Ravenhill, who often lamented the spiritual impotence of most Christian institutions in these words, "Poverty stricken as the church is today, in so many ways, she is most stricken here, in the place of prayer. We have many organizers but few agonizers; many payers but few prayers; lots of singers but few clingers; many pastors but few fasters; lots of fears but few tears; much fashion but little passion; many interferers but few intercessors; lots of writers but few Jacob-like fighters; many leaders but few pleaders; failing here, we fail everywhere."¹ I love the conversion of Saul to

Paul because it was the conversion of head to heart, intellectual arrogance to simple faith, and religious zeal to spiritual humility. No wonder that this man could say, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness to God," and "God's foolishness is wiser than men." "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." "The Kingdom of God is not a matter of words, but of (Holy Spirit) power." "Spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned." And "God has chosen the foolish things of this world to put to shame the wise."²

Jesus expressed similar sentiments in one of my favorite texts (Luke 10:21). "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.'" I believe that these are the kinds of texts that need to be emphasized on our college, university and seminary campuses much more than is currently done. For I don't think it's coincidental that Adventism is growing and thriving best in those parts of the world that have a passionate belief in the power of prayer, an unquenchable hunger for the Holy Spirit, and a discerning recognition of the reality of spiritual warfare. By contrast, it is shrinking most rapidly where these factors are minimized or denied.

I believe that the devil really fears only two things from Christians. A genuine passion to know God intimately through the Holy Spirit, and an active belief in the power of prayer. A crucial criteria for faculty in Adventist higher education should be their belief in and practice of prayer.

3. Spiritual Ecumenicity

Jesus came with a universal gospel for all people in all places. He came as the "True Light" to enlighten "every" human being in the world (John 1:9). My vision for Adventist higher education is an inclusive one. For nineteen years I taught at least one class every quarter that was made up primarily of non-Adventist students. These classes had Hindu, Buddhist, and Islamic students every quarter as well as agnostics, atheists, and a scattering of most other religions you can name. Hundreds of these students were baptized as Christians over the years, but I was equally pleased by those who discovered Christ as Lord while not formally becoming Christian. Not once do I recall being told by a student that my teaching was too narrow, sectarian or exclusive, nor am I aware of such a criticism being made

to others. I believe that Adventist colleges and universities should have a significant minority of students who are passionate Christians from other denominations, as well as non-Christian students who are open to hearing the views of those who believe in Jesus as Lord. It is inappropriate for an Adventist university to be diffident in proclaiming the utter uniqueness of Jesus as the divine creator and the only Savior of humankind. Respect for the views of others should not make us timid in asserting these central Christian convictions. My Bible tells me that Jesus transcends all human-made religions, including Christianity, for he personifies perfect truth and is fully God.

4. A Grassroots Empowerment of God's People

Finally, my vision for Adventist churches and universities focuses on a horizontal empowerment of God's people. A hierarchical structure that is top-down in its management style or an elitist vision handed down by a select group of academics who believe they have the answers for the masses will not do. We need to rediscover what the "Priesthood of All Believers" really means. Jesus was the enemy of elitism in all its forms, and his true followers will oppose such thinking today. The idea that church members or college students don't know what's good for them and need to be controlled by those with the right ordination, titles or degrees is antithetical to the gospel and damaging to God's work.

I share my vision for higher education in the hope that one of our schools will give it a try. I graduated from an Adventist university. I've spent twenty years ministering with the students and faculty of an Adventist university. I have great respect and appreciation for individual Christians I've worked with. But it is time for an Adventist college or university as an institution to make Jesus central, to publicly seek to be an community of prayer and the Spirit, to proclaim with tact and confidence the claims of Jesus and to model his teachings about the role of servant leadership. ■

¹ Leonard Ravenhill, *Why Revival Tarrys* (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1988) 7.

² See 1 Corinthians 1:20; 1:25; 2 Corinthians 1:6; 1 Corinthians 4:20; 2:14 and 1:27.

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I would rather have a highly competent physics professor who truly loves the Lord than a Nobel laureate who doesn't really care about Christ.

the Adventist U·NI·VER·SI·TY

defined

AN INTERVIEW WITH TWO EDUCATORS:

JAMES W. BEACH AND RENNIE B. SCHOEPFLIN

AT: What does "Adventist University" mean?

RS: I believe that the noun is "university," the adjective is "Adventist," and that expresses for me, grammatically, my view of the priority. I believe, therefore, the institution itself should be "university" and we shouldn't invent something else and call it university. There is a vocabulary, there is a culture, and there are attitude standards, a history—a whole host of things that go into the meaning of "university." And you can't stretch the meaning of the term so far that you just give it your own private definition. At the same time, it is modified by the commitment to a variety of characteristics that the institution's founders and its history of

In short, one of the implications is there is no such thing as an Adventist university in the abstract. It must be contextualized.

the institution bring to the meaning of "university." In this case, as it needs to be in every

case, a defining mission that reflects that history and translates that past into relevance for the present.

In short, one of the implications is there is no such thing as an Adventist university in the abstract. It must be contextualized. And that contextualization comes from the constituents who serve it, from the mission those constituents, faculty and the administration define for it in a particular time and place.

It's my view that Adventism has had difficulty taking a relevant and important divine calling for the 19th century and transforming it into one that's relevant for the 21st century. In this sense the fate of Adventist higher education lies, in part, in the fate of Adventism.

JB: The scenario that I grew up with is that eventually "they" will take Adventist educa-

tion away from us. I think this is fallacious. We could very well lose Adventist education, but it'll be because the church lost it, not because secular America took it away from "us".

AT: In other words, the church will lose higher education because of its inability to contextualize and because its mission isn't meeting the needs of the current 21st century college students?

JB & RS: Correct. The needs of Adventist students or others.

AT: Then what is the solution?

JB: Well, the solution is to step out onto a slippery slope that the people from the G.C. [General Conference] worry about. They point to examples of institutions that have gone from church-related to secular. That's your slippery slope. There are a few institutions that navigate that and it's a danger. The idea is hopefully to put together a group of people who struggle to make Adventism fit into the culture in which that particular institution moves. For example, at La Sierra our demographics say we have to address multicultural and gender issues. Those aren't separate from where we live. They are part and parcel of who we are. In my experience, it's very healthy for the spectrum of Adventist young people to see each other and then to recognize that maybe the most religious person in the classroom is a Muslim or a Catholic. And that's happened in our classrooms. It's a life-transforming type of experience.

RS: I think it's difficult for Adventists, and therefore for Adventist higher education, to conceive of the "other" as someone who is good in and of themselves. One of the primary purposes for the existence of all the institutions Adventists have created is for evangelism. And the premise of evangelism (to not be too reductionist) is to make you like me, all right? So tolerance, then, is a difficult concept to an evangelist. It is a kind of paternalistic tolerance. And paternal-

ism is not generally considered to be the way in which we would like to educate our society.

AT: What then, should be the role or purpose of the Adventist university?

JB: Let's compare the role of the church to the role of education. The church's role is reassurance; it's to build the community and maintain the community. All of that's very positive. I'm glad the pastors are doing their job. But that's not the job of higher education.

RS: The role of education is to stretch the boundaries of what community means.

JB: Right. It is to introduce another dimension or dimensions or alternatives. Life becomes richer. But as soon as you have more alternatives it also becomes less comfortable. You create those questions, but then you begin to model how people live with those and also deal with the fact that some pat answers are no longer so straightforward. That's the role of education.

RS: The role of the Adventist university should be a shifting gaze, if you will. You shift your eyes from looking inward to looking outward. I would like to see Adventist higher education come of age in the sense that is not simply self-referential, but is self-confident enough to believe that what it does is worthy of anyone, Adventist or not.

JB: I think if each institution would take on that task, because of their different vocations each would bring a slightly different lens to their community, then Adventist higher education could be a legitimate contributor to certain areas the same way that other denominational schools are contributors.

RS: And in a kind of ironic way, then, that vision of Adventist higher education would become a powerful tool for evangelism. But in the sense that the "evangelistic" role of higher education is to make the Adventist option credible to a group of people for whom it isn't credible right now.

JB: And it's our belief that some of these issues have to be addressed to these young people: How you are relevant in society? How you can be an Adventist and responsible citizen? What is it that Adventism brings uniquely to make this world a better place? ■

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James W. Beach, D.A., is currently serving as interim Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at La Sierra University.

What is an Adventist university?

James W. Beach and Rennie B. Schoepflin

Before one has an Adventist university in North America, the institution must be informed by the meanings of university found in the western tradition of higher education and enlightened by the ways societies are adapting those meanings to contemporary realities. Adventists won't be relevant to society nor fulfill their calling as Adventists if they claim to have a university but give an isolated, private definition of university virtually indistinguishable from church and clearly fall short of the expectations and standards of the North American academic community. Therefore, an Adventist university is first an institution dedicated to the education of students for responsible citizenship, committed to their preparation for successful careers, and devoted to the growth and dissemination of knowledge.

A university that is Adventist is an institution balanced on a knife-edge between a commitment to its Adventist mission and its obligation to an identity as university. And there are many particular contexts appropriate to that expression and room for many meanings of Adventist mission.

Adventist universities should be informed by the characteristics of their locations and the demographics of their constituents. What is appropriate in Nebraska, isn't necessarily appropriate in Tennessee, and neither may be appropriate for Southern California.

Similarly, there exists no single way to remain loyal to Adventist mission. An Adventist university can be a place primarily dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of Adventist traditions for the purpose of world evangelism. Or, it can be an institution primarily devoted to the training of technicians in the health sciences, architecture, or computer programming. But it could also be an institution primarily called to explore ways to maintain the relevance of Adventism by adjusting to the changing circumstances the church and the world present; and to do so in such a way that it maintains the tension-filled reality of an Adventist worldview.

Such a place, firmly rooted in the world but not of the world, might well be informed by Roger Williams's metaphor for the church as a garden in the wilderness. The Adventist university, then, would be the wall or bridge that both separates and connects the church and the world. It would be an institution devoted to the exploration and perpetuation of the creative tensions at the core of Adventism and would use the insights gained in such an exploration to better both the world and the church.

Snapshot

[Continued from page 13]

Union College

Dr. Dave Smith, UC President, reported current FTE enrollment as 801 (856 head count), representing a whopping 25 percent increase over last year, according to NAD statistics. The big news is that UC is being recommended for full accreditation by both the North Central Association and the Adventist Accrediting Association, although Smith emphasizes that it is not yet official until NCA accepts the recommendation of its accrediting team.

UC's new Physician's Assistant Program is in its second year and will graduate its first class this year. Their ESL program has about 60 students, many of whom are from Brazil. UC is hosting four major regional student events this year, two of which have already passed: a Prayer Conference in September, the Annual Acrofest in November, and an upcoming music festival and a basketball clinic.

Walla Walla College

Veda Logan, *Inside WWC* editor, reports that WWC just recorded its highest HC enrollment since 1981 this year. A big story in their December 2 *The Collegian* was WWC's impending proposal to require a class on Adventist history-theology of all except engineering and nursing students. ■

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Correction

Correction for the article, "Jerusalem and Prophetic Parallels" in the Nov/Dec, 1999 issue.

The next to the last paragraph should read:

If the time of the Jews was represented to be from Abraham's day

until 34 AD when the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 was fulfilled by the Jews when they officially rejected Christ as the Savior and the stoning of Stephen, so the time of the Gentiles which began in 34 AD would run until the Jews officially set up their capitol in Jerusalem (1980), thus fulfilling

Luke 21:34. Please note that being fulfilled did not mean the total end but rather a corporate decision with an extension of time until the final destruction. Events following 34 AD and 1980 are another topic to explore, of great importance in our time.

Robert A. Roach.

A quantum physicist's view of God and our universe

Jim Edwards

John Polkinghorne has been Professor of Mathematical Physics at Cambridge and an Anglican priest. *Belief in God in an Age of Science* discusses the relationship between religion and science from his unique position.

Polkinghorne espouses a new natural theology, different from that of William Paley and others. It is based on the character of the physical fabric of the world, not upon particular occurrences. Therefore it does not conflict with scientific explanation and also allows for the rational potentiality of the universe. God created a universe in which he has self-limit-

Polkinghorne points to the common arguments of man's sense of right and wrong and hope for an afterlife as evidence for God in spite of the presence of evil.

ed power, and that universe can truly be itself. There is freedom commensurate with the character of the various creatures. This freedom carries with it the possibility of evil. Polkinghorne points to the common arguments of man's sense of right and wrong and hope for an afterlife as evidence for God in spite of the presence of evil.

He compares the search for truth in science and religion and finds that the processes of learning truth in both science and religion have much in common. Both assume that truth exists. Both assume that concepts are true when they relate to and explain the actual world, yet they both have to allow for unresolved, paradoxical problems. Theology does not have the privilege of experiment that science has. It has to rely on unrepeatable events from revelation. But even science has some close analogues, such as "cosmology's reconstruction of the unique history

immediately following the big bang and biology's reading from the fossil record the story of the unique evolutionary development of life."

Does God act in the physical world? How do we deal with freedom versus determinism, as well as the difficult concept of time? Polkinghorne makes two assumptions: That humans act with a degree of freedom, and that humans are holistic beings, not divisible into flesh and spirit.

Polkinghorne discusses the continuing dialogue between science and religion. Science has often been intoxicated with its success but gradually has come to realize that it must reject reductionism and triumphalism. Quantum physics has particularly forced this reality home. There is more acceptance of scientists believing

in religion. Still, it is interesting that, "though it would be considered improper for a believing scientist to exhibit that belief explicitly when writing for the lay public about science itself—as opposed to writing books explicitly about science and religion—it is apparently perfectly all right for the atheist to press unbelief in a similar scientific context." Of course, religion must make adjustments, too. "The ghost of Archbishop Ussher has not been wholly exorcised from theology." In between the certainty aspired to by the Enlightenment and the relativism of present deconstructionists "lies the critical realist approach to knowledge, ever open to correction but persuasive that its power to make sense of experience derives from its correlation with reality. Both science and theology offer support to this middle way of intellectual enquiry."

Here are some brief examples of where Polkinghorne's concepts take

him in theology. Togetherness-in-separation, which occurs in quantum physics, is exemplified in the Trinity. Limited randomness and an open universe suggest the following: Belief in the inspiration of the Bible, but not in inerrancy, allowing for the author to be influenced by personality, education, culture, etc., belief in Jesus as both God and man and in his literal death and resurrection, and belief in the literal Second Coming. Polkinghorne believes in the unity of mind and body, a holistic view of man. (From some of his comments I wonder if he rejects the immortality of the soul, but I am not certain.) He also believes in theistic evolution, including the evolution of man. He views the story of the Fall as an inspired myth. (This varies from some who believe in theistic evolution but the special creation of man, e.g. see Hugh Ross's book *Creation and Time*.)

If we believe in the unity of all knowledge, then we should be able to apply critical realism to learn truth beyond science, in areas such as theology. There is a circularity of theory and experiment in science. This is similar to belief and understanding in theology. We must have faith in order to understand, but we also must understand in order to have faith. The explanatory success of science in spite of its circularity, reassures us that it still reveals truth. So it also is with theology. Anselm succinctly described the process long ago: *fides quaerens intellectum*, faith seeking understanding. ■

Belief in God in an Age of Science

John Polkinghorne

Yale University Press, 1993

Jim Edwards is a LLUSM graduate who practices emergency medicine and is an avid reader.

the spools of my splendor

A STITCH,

A THREAD,

A HURT IS HEALED.

A STITCH,

A THREAD,

A HOPE REBORN.

Sometimes I think the way it was, is how
It always ought to be: a little town
Between two rivers. They'd named it
After Mary Someone. Marysville.
Not much for style or flair.
Halfway up the gray main street
A J.C.Penney store. And now a kid
Goes through the heavy doors
With a dime to buy a spool of mending-thread.
And with a blouse in a paper sack—
To get the color right. That's me.
I'm the little kid with the dime
And paper sack.

The queenly clerk pulls out her many drawers
Of spools of thread.

I don't know what she must have thought
Was wrong with me. I couldn't speak.
It was the spools, the surging energy of color
Lifting up my heart. I think I didn't breathe.
A splendor of color, shading
Like Gypsy music
From blue to blue to blue.
Turquoise, sapphire, amethyst,
Lighter, darker, grayer, clear.
More hues than there are names for,
More shades than there are notes
When the high school band comes marching.

Her majesty the clerk picks out
The proper color, takes the dime
For Mr. J.C.Penney. And the kid
Who was me walks back to "C" Street.
Newly awake to magic, energized
By beauty, with the music
Of the rainbow spools singing,
Singing in her soul
For three whole blocks.

I grew to be a friend of garments torn
Things marred in all the rub and wear of
busy days.

A shirt, a coat, a nail-snagged sleeve. I guess
It's some quirk of our cultural heritage
Makes us believe that no man ever born
Could sew up a seam ripped out
In roughhouse play, or put
A button back where it belongs.
Not that I really mind; I like to mend.
I love the power in my spools
To make things whole. I fill
My box with color, shading
Like Gypsy music from blue
To blue to blue. Turquoise,
Sapphire, amethyst, an energy
Of magic on my closet shelf,
To lift, to lift, to heal.

There's little enough I've come to understand.
And little enough I've gathered on my way,
But there is this: I know just how
God comes. I think I started knowing it
A very little bit, that day
In the J.C. Penney store, buying thread.
I'll tell you how God comes, in case, some day—
Or some dark night— you need to know.
My mighty God
Pulls out Her mending drawer,
Looks in, among us broken things, Her eyes
Reflecting turquoise, sapphire, amethyst.
And in Her lap

The rainbow spools of splendor, shading
Like Gypsy music from blue to blue to blue,
More colors than there are notes
In angel choirs.
She lifts me up so gently, sees the pain
That no one else has ever seen before,
Draws out a rainbow thread and bites it off,
Her amber hair like fragrance covering me.

A stitch, a thread, a hurt is healed.
A stitch, a thread, a hope reborn.
A stitch, a thread: She knows what thread
Which subtle shade will make me strong
And beautiful and whole, and leave no trace.
All turquoise, sapphire, amethyst,
Her garments blend from blue to blue to blue.
My glorious God bends to her mending drawer
And lifts and heals and mends
Until She's done and every rub and pull
Is better for the splendor of her spools.

This is the way my God comes, the Almighty.
She comes, the sweet, sweet Spirit in this place.
Comes to empower, to make of me a healer
Sewing the buttons back where they belong,
Putting the patches on the tattered knees.

I'm glad for little towns where rivers flow
And women do the mending, pulling chairs
Close to the window light, and half aware
That healing is the splendor in their laps.
The rivers don't remember where I swam,
And Marysville's forgotten I was there.
But that hot walk back to "C" Street
Was the start of all my knowing
How God comes to me and who I really am.
I am a mender, called by God
To heal, lift up, empower, to befriend
She has created me in Her image,
After Her likeness
Let me mend!

Maryan Stirling | October, 1996



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