

adventist today

NEWS
ANALYSIS
OPINION

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A. New Beginning for Adventist Creationism?

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First Strike

JOHN MCLARTY

Through the early months of 1994, the government of Rwanda prepared their people for violent action by an intense information campaign. Through radio station RTLM, the Hutu population was reminded of all the bad things Tutsis had done in the past and were warned of Tutsi plots of future hostile action. If the Hutus didn't eliminate the Tutsis, then surely eventually the Tutsis would harm the Hutus. It was either strike first or be a victim.

The Hutus chose to strike first. In four months, they killed 800,000 Tutsis. With machetes.

This kind of violence is repulsive, repugnant. For Adventists, it is particularly haunting because many of the killers and the killed were Adventists. One of the men accused of taking part in the genocide was a conference president. He is charged with cooperating in the killing of his own pastors and church members who were seeking sanctuary on church property.

In Rwanda, the largest religious body is the Roman Catholic Church. Second largest is the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Both are worldwide communions that claim a spiritual identity transcending national, political and tribal identities. Both affirm the teaching of Jesus: "This is how everyone will know you are my disciples: if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). But while there were individual acts of great heroism motivated by Christian principle and spiritual identity, in general members of both dominant denominations readily cooperated in the killing of their co-religionists. Adventists who had been baptized together, shared the Lord's Supper and engaged in evangelism together were united in the horror of bloodshed, some as killers, some as victims.

That was 1994 in Africa. Now the president of the United States is doing everything he can to convince the American tribe that we face immediate and dire threats from Saddam Hussein and his tribe of Republican Guards. We are repeatedly reminded of Hussein's past cruelties. If we do not strike first, we will be struck.

The remedy is to launch a war.

In recent years growing numbers of Adventist young people have been attracted to the U.S. military by its offers

of income and education. There are about 200 Seventh-day Adventists in Iraq who enjoy more religious and political freedom than Christians in surrounding nations, some of which are regarded as American allies. So when the United States invades Iraq, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Adventists will be shooting guns, laying mines, dropping bombs. And tragically, Adventists will probably be among their victims. I wonder what will happen to the Adventist churches in Iraq, and to the Adventist children and grandmothers, when the bombs begin to fall?

The United States will not attack Iraq with the blunt edges of machetes. We will use the precise weaponry of modern technology. But the transition from knives to smart bombs is not a moral advance. Of course, the U.S. will attempt to minimize civilian casualties. Even President Bush, in his rhetoric, makes a distinction between the Iraqi people and their evil leader. But war is a terribly blunt instrument, no matter whose hand wields it.

“When the U.S. invades Iraq, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Adventists will be shooting guns, laying mines, dropping bombs.”

And if the United States attacks Iraq, Adventists will be bombing Adventists.

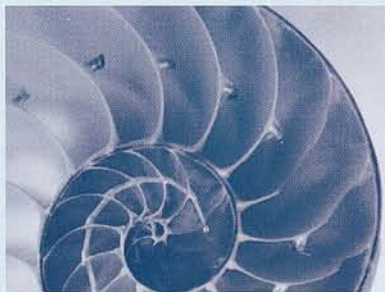
What can we do? We can implore our president to back away from the rhetoric of war and especially the strong doctrine of first strike. We can renew our historic witness for peace by encouraging our young people to find education and careers outside the military, especially as the nation moves toward an unabashed militaristic stance. We can call our church community to reckon with the teachings of Jesus when debating political issues.

There is plenty of room for argument about just what Jesus meant when he spoke of turning the other cheek when we are struck. But I don't see how there can be any serious debate among followers of Jesus over whether we should strike first. ■



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Ordering the Church

In your recent "Notes from the editor" entitled "Ordering All Things Sweetly" (AT May/June 2002), I was interested in your question: "But how do we keep quiet confidence in God from paralyzing us? If everything is already 'ordered sweetly,' what business do we have agitating for change?" In response to this you wrote: "As partners with God, we are called to order our church as sweetly as humanly possible. If God has placed me (or you) in a position where we can affect the shape of policies and corporate decisions, we are obligated to use our influence to bring the church closer to God's ideal."...[This implies that] we have a special knowledge of what God's will is in any particular issue of concern... I think it is easy to sound arrogant if we are ambitious to correct "wrongs" and move the church forward in the direction we think best. Upton Sinclair once wrote: "It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it." We can see this to be true for others; but perhaps it would be helpful to think how the principle he suggested works in our own lives. Do we allow ourselves to be fenced in... by our prior positions on issues, our associations and our perceived role and mission? I think we do, more often than we care to admit.

Dean Riley | Banks, Alabama

Women at the Ogden Conference

Very interesting report. I have only one comment...other than to compliment you on what I perceive is your objectivity. Why was it important to mention that there were only two women participants? Does not having more women participants make the issue/decisions of this meeting less valid? Frankly I don't think so. Your pointing out this small fact is only symbolic of the Political Correctness (Woman's Ordination) that you and many of those in the liberal wing of Adventism have.... A conference such as this should be open for all to understand the differing points of view.

J. R. Layman | Lubbock, Texas
(moderator_atomorrow.com)

Ogden Conference and Doubt

After reading through your reports, I was reminded of the words of Ellen White which echo the statement of 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, concerning "believing a lie."

"I saw that those who wish, can have plenty of room to doubt the inspiration and truths of God's word. God compels none to believe. They can choose to rely upon the evidences he has been pleased to give, or doubt and perish. It is life or death with you, Bro. Hull. Already I saw a cloud of evil angels surrounding you, and you at perfect ease among them. Satan has been telling you a pleasing story about an easier way than to be in constant warfare with conflicting spirits; but choose that way, and in the end you will find that you will have a heavy and fearful toll to pay" (*Review and Herald*, January 19, 1864).

I admit that I do not have the answer to this age of the earth question, however, it is clear that neither do the scholars. And while I do not believe that this topic needs to be a question of salvation; I do believe that it quickly could become one as it did with "Bro. Hull."

The problem that I have always had with higher criticism is that it leaves the reader or hearer in the valley of doubt about God's word, never seems to come to a conclusion, and does little or nothing to edify the believer. This method to me, while deemed as intellectual, can only be a demonic devising.

Dave Moench | Tacoma, Washington

Unmitigated Drivel

I am an avid reader of *Adventist Today*—cover to cover on the day it arrives. However, it never fails to amaze me how under one cover you can combine discussions about topics of great import to thinking SDAs and at the same time insist on publishing...unmitigated drivel. For example, "Jubilee Festival: Christians and the Ancient Sanctuary" and "The Year-Day Principle and the 2300 Days" (AT July/Aug 2002). I know that our obscure Sanctuary doctrine and our "prophetic insights" lie at the heart of the theology of people who live and work at Wildwood and Weimar

and are charter members of the Adventist Theological Society. However, I would suggest that you develop a new journal called "Adventist Yesterday" or "19th Century Adventist" and publish those types of articles in such a venue! Please only allow articles of relevance to thinking SDAs living in the 21st century to grace the pages of *Adventist Today*.

George Albert | Glendale, California

Dr. Desmond Ford's reply

Dr. Richard Davidson's letter in the recent issue of *Adventist Today* has just been brought to my attention. A few comments may be in order:

1. The article Dr. Davidson refers to was not initiated or written by me. It clearly stated that Dr. Davidson and I are not at one in beliefs, except for the central issue of justification.

2. It is clear that Dr. Davidson has never given adequate attention to the Glacier View manuscript. When Dr. Heppenstall received it, he declared, "The church will never be able to answer this," and the last 22 years have proved him right. Dr. Davidson has certainly not answered it. He still upholds positions long ago rejected by most Adventist scholars such as historicism and the year-day principle. In a thousand years he could not get his view of the Investigative Judgment and 1844 from the New Testament, or the Old for that matter.

3. It would be good for Dr. Davidson and others to get copies of the talks recently given at Avondale College by Dr. Fritz Guy and Dr. Norman Young. He would find that the key points of my Glacier View manuscript were there publicly affirmed in an SDA official gathering, such as the impossibility of proving 1844 as a prophetic date and many other items. I recommend the presentations of Drs. Guy and Young to all but especially to Dr. Davidson. I wish the latter God's richest blessing in all things including his biblical research that he may be saved from the agony of realizing his errors too late in his ministry.

Desmond Ford

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Dispute Resolution Process in Southeastern California

EDITORIAL STAFF

Since the state of California is increasingly allowing ecclesiastical institutions greater latitude in resolving internal disputes, the Southeastern California Conference (SECC) believes it is wise to institute an orderly method of fairly resolving disputes.

In *Schmoll vs. Chapman University* (1999), a case involving a chaplain who was supposedly unjustly fired, the California Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, ruled in part: "In this case of first impression, we hold that establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution bar judicial review in a lawsuit alleging a church-affiliated university modified the terms of employment of its campus chaplain in violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act Government Code section 12900 et seq." In conclusion the appellate judges approvingly quote from a relevant 1989 California Appellate Third District decision: "Secular courts will not attempt to right wrongs related to the hiring, firing, discipline or administration of clergy. Implicit in this statement of the rule is the acknowledgment that such wrongs may exist, that they may be severe, and that the administration of the church itself may be inadequate to provide a remedy. But the preservation of the free exercise of religion is deemed so important a principle as to overshadow the inequities which may result from its liberal application. In our society, jealous as it is for separation of church and state, one who enters the clergy forfeits the protection of the civil authorities in terms of job rights."

Three years ago leaders of the SECC were interested in studying the concept of a judicial commission. They invited Dr. James Walters, professor of religion at Loma Linda University, to draft a proposal for such a commission, one that would enable persons who have conflicts within the church to resolve those dis-

putes fairly and thereby avoid the necessity of settling such matters in secular courts. This proposal would draw on the experience of other Protestant churches.

Over the past several months, Walters and four colleagues from the Members for Church Accountability, Inc., (MCA), a nonprofit organization concerned with the financial integrity of the church, have prepared a document to be reviewed by the Constitution Committee of the SECC. The group has held three meetings with conference leaders. The SECC leaders were so attracted to the proposal that Secretary Gerald Penick suggested that a "trial commission" be established to fine-tune the system before it was presented by the constitution committee to the next constituency meeting in 2004. The next meeting of the working group is planned for October, and the group hopes that the trial commission can be operational early in 2003.

The current suggestion is that there be 10 commissioners on the judicial commission (plus one chosen from the leadership of the SECC). The delegates to the constituency meeting would choose the 10 commissioners from a slate of 16 presented by the nominating committee. The nominating committee would compile the list of 16 from nominees forwarded by the constituent churches in the SECC.

The following excerpt is from the working document:

"Church members who [have a problem that requires resolution] are advised to follow Jesus' advice and seek to resolve the issue at the most personal level possible. Hence, the need to address the responsible individual(s) first. If there is no resolution, then the local pastor should be asked to intervene, who may request assistance from the Board of Elders. If this intervention is unsuccessful, then the final congregational appeal would be to the church board. If need be, the relevant conference department may be brought into the discussion.

"The Judicial Commission would provide a mechanism to review unresolved disputes between church members, as well as problems between members and the SECC or other SDA organizations. The commission's recommendations would be forwarded to the SECC Executive Committee for final disposition. If the investigation involves an action of the SECC Executive Committee and remains unresolved, the findings and recommendations shall be forwarded to the next regularly scheduled SECC Session. If the matter is of sufficient urgency in the Judicial Commission's judgment, it could call for a special constituency session. Such sessions are likely to be rare." ■

Interested readers who have constructive suggestions are invited to contact:

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EDITORIAL NOTE

The Committee for Church Accountability presented a major symposium on issues of church accountability in October 2001 (See AT Nov/Dec 2001). As a follow-up to that symposium, the formation of a judicial commission for the purpose of resolving internal disputes in the Southeastern California Conference of SDAs has been recommended. The proposal has been presented to conference administration and is currently being evaluated for possible action at the conference's next constituency meeting scheduled for the fall of 2004.

MONEY AND DIVERSITY: A Report on Annual Council 2002

JOHN MCLARTY

The Annual Council of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (GC) met at the GC headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, Oct. 7 to 10, 2002. The meeting brought together over 200 delegates from around the world to consider matters of money, policy and mission, with money matters commanding the most time and passion.

There was a lot of money at stake: The GC itself has an annual budget of \$115 million and investments worth more than \$80 million. The policies enacted by the GC guide the management of contributions received by the church around the world, which in 2001 amounted to \$1.7 billion U.S.

While I thought the great center of debate would be the realignment of the African divisions, it turned out to be the remuneration policy. This policy had been presented to the GC Executive Committee at the spring council (2002). In the face of intense debate, the policy was referred back to the committee that had been working on it, and all interested parties were urged to submit their comments and proposed amendments for consideration.

According to GC vice president, Gerry Karst, who presented the policy to the annual council and urged its adoption, out of "12 world divisions, over 100 unions and attached fields and more than 300 conferences plus multiple institutions, only 8 written submissions were received." Apparently, it was much easier to protest the proposed policy than to craft a alternative that would be workable in the varied national and economic situations around the world.

In its final form, the policy limits the pay of the division president to no more than 125 percent of the highest paid pastor in the division and limits the pay of any church employee to no more than 125 percent of that received by the division president. This second stipulation is directed to the nonclergy professional employees of the church, such as teach-

ers, lawyers, accountants and doctors. Note this stipulation applies only to the employees of institutions that receive direct church subsidies, such as schools or conferences. It does not apply to church-owned commercial entities, such as hospitals, which are not supported by church appropriations. They are free to set their own wage scales.

This policy was prompted by two concerns: In the United States there has been growing concern about the differences in pay available at different colleges and universities. It was also designed to address the large difference in pay between local pastors and administrators at higher levels of the church organization that has characterized some developing nations through the world. Whatever the regional differences behind the formulation of this policy, it was repeatedly stressed that the new policy is intended to be global. Every Adventist employer was expected to achieve compliance with the new policy within the next five years.

Africa

The realignment of the divisions in Africa turned out to be routine. At least at the level of the annual council, it went very smoothly. Two divisions, the Africa-Indian Ocean Division and the Eastern Africa Division, became three divisions: East-Central Africa Division, Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division, and the Western Africa Division. The realignment was a response to the explosive growth of the Adventist church in Africa. While there have been quibbles about how accurate membership numbers from Africa are, there is no question that the growth has been explosive. At present one-third of all Adventists live in Africa. Estimates of Adventist membership in Africa range from 4 million up.

President's address

For me personally, the high point of the annual council was the opening address given by President Jan Paulsen. He did

not talk about money. He did not sound like a policy wonk. He talked about his vision of the mission of the church. (The entire text of his address is available on the *Adventist Review* Web site.)

He insisted that attention to mission was more important than revival and reformation. And the mission of the church includes humanitarian work. He called the church beyond its historic role as the operator of hospitals and disaster relief initiatives. "It is also right that the church—whether in Africa, in Asia, in the islands of the Pacific, yes, even much closer to where most of us live—it is right that as a community of faith we should also be a mouthpiece for the poor whose number is ever increasing, for the refugees who come to us in waves asking for nothing more than one more chance to build a life for their children. And it is right that we should be a mouthpiece for other disenfranchised minorities. Is not this also mission? I think it is!"

Given the historic Adventist obsession with personal holiness, this focus on holistic mission sounds like a significant departure. He insisted he was not advocating changing to a mere "social gospel" but a broadening of our ministry in response to the example and call of Jesus.

His grave and devout tone was occasionally relieved by understated humor. Speaking about the inability of governments to solve the problems of the world, he remarked, with a wry smile, "We have not expected much from the political leaders of the world, and they have not disappointed us." (This was not in his manuscript!)

He was critical of the carnival atmosphere that has characterized some of the mass evangelism in Africa. We must remain committed to growth, but that growth must be more than large numbers associated with mass baptisms. It must include months of instruction in the basic patterns of Christian discipleship. People must be involved in small groups for in-

struction and assimilation into the church.

From the challenges of premodern Africa, he turned to the challenges of the Western intellectual world. Speaking of the International Conference on Faith and Science that was held in Ogden, Utah, this past August he said these kinds of conversations are never easy, but they are necessary. The worlds of faith and science are different. Many of our scientists are committed believers who regularly face challenges from “the processes and findings of empirical sciences from which most of us are sheltered. The challenge of holding together faith and discoveries is something we need to learn to talk about. We may not be able to reconcile them now, but we need to be able to have a meaningful conversation about these issues in an atmosphere which is not personally hostile.”

He ended by referring to the distinction many demographers of religion have drawn between northern Christianity which is rational, mature and stagnant, and southern Christianity which is buoyant, open to the supernatural, immature and growing. It would be easy to stand in

“ There is a very strong clergy fraternity in our church. The attempt to formulate a consistent, worldwide policy on clergy remuneration reflects this sense of clergy connectedness. There is a very clear ranking of status in this fraternity, with local pastors at the bottom and the GC president at the top. ”

one camp and criticize the other. But, he declared, we are one camp.

I was taken with Paulsen’s ability to articulate a devout, conservative vision of Adventism that honored and made room for both the intense, youthful zeal of the developing world and the more mature, rationalistic perspective of educated Westerners.

Statistics

Bert Haloviak, GC statistician, reported on membership statistics. Because of concerns about the accuracy of membership records, especially in developing nations, the GC commissioned a membership audit. This audit decreased the official membership of the Church by slightly less than 200,000. Even with this adjustment, the official membership of the church is 12 million. At present we are adding about 1 million new members per year. The current growth rate would yield a projected membership in 2030 of 60 million. In a later press conference, Paulsen said that if we counted children and family members the way most demographers of religion do, our present membership is about 20 million.

Hierarchy and dispersed authority

I left the annual council with the impression that we have a very curious mix of hierarchy and dispersed authority. There is a very strong clergy fraternity in our church. The attempt to formulate a consistent, worldwide

policy on clergy remuneration reflects this sense of clergy connectedness. There is a very clear ranking of status in this fraternity, with local pastors at the bottom and the GC president at the top. But while the GC president has enormous influence, his explicit authority does not reach very far. He cannot directly fire clergy who are employed outside the GC. Neither the GC president nor the executive committee has any formal authority over membership in the church. In the discussion of membership, it was strongly reaffirmed that a person is officially reckoned as a Seventh-day Adventist on the basis of a decision by a local church.

In an interview, William Johnsson, editor of the *Adventist Review*, emphasized his editorial independence. Of course, the *Review* is subsidized by church organizations. Its offices are in the General Conference building.

Johnsson is an invitee on the GC Administrative Council with voice and vote. He is part of the system. But he is not an appointee of the GC president, and the executive committee has no formal authority over editorial content of the *Review*. The GC Executive Committee chooses the editor, but the editor has full formal authority over the content. This formal independence has been affirmed at several annual councils when there have been attempts by delegates to mandate specific content to the editor. So the office of editor of the *Review* represents a distinct center of influence within the church system. (For a full report on this interview, see our next issue.)

While the clergy fraternity is very strong, there are laity on the GC Executive Committee. Some were outspoken. I cannot assess their actual impact on the decisions, but they were clearly present and vocal.

A final note

It has long been obvious that the Adventist church is an American-shaped system. In the past that meant an advantage for Americans in church politics. What struck me in this council was the remarkable ease and fluency of clergy from Africa and Asia. Their English was readily understood by Americans. They were thoroughly at home in American idioms and Western approaches to management and finance. In personal conversations, they seemed very conversant with American culture, both intellectual and popular.

While the native cultures of these clergy may not have strong traditions of law and democracy, it appears to me the church is developing a cadre of clergy who can function comfortably according to the norms of accountability and democracy that are the greatest values of Western culture. As North Americans become a smaller percentage of the church (at present less than 10 percent), the measure of our success will be our ability to create a system that does not depend on American (or Western) personnel to call the church to honor the ideals of law and democracy. ■

Adventism and War

MARK F. CARR

Today, while touring through Founder's Hall on the campus of Atlantic Union College, I was shown to a room full of treasured items in Adventist history. A piece of "ascension rock" from William Miller's farm, lots of old pictures, books, and other odds and ends. I was surprised to see a rather large silk sash draped over an old rocking chair. I read with interest the index card pinned to the sash. The sash belonged to Frederick Wheeler, one of the very first Sabbath-keeping Millerites and minister of the Washington, New Hampshire, church. The sash indicated his commanding rank in the local militia there in New Hampshire.

I was prompted to ask, "What is the Seventh-day Adventist position on involvement in the military?" If a consensus view exists, at least in North America, regarding the historical perspective of Adventist involvement in the military, it would likely be that we urge our young men to enlist—if they must—as noncombatants. And only if they are certain to be allowed to maintain faithful Sabbath-keeping. I wonder if such a consensus view exists, however. Are there times when we would urge our governments to go to war? Would we support the notion of national self-defense? Or are we peacemakers in any and all situations?

Recently the General Conference Executive Committee issued a statement titled "A Seventh-day Adventist Call for Peace." This article is a brief analysis of this statement.

From whence the call for peace?

Upon what conceptual foundation does the church stand in its call for peace? The document asserts that "from a Christian and practical perspective, any lasting peace involves at least four ingredients: dialogue, justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation."

Two of the four pillars, namely, forgive-

ness and reconciliation, I consider to be rather idealistic. This is not necessarily bad, in my way of thinking, just wholly unrealistic. Dialogue and justice, on the other hand, are broad enough to be relevant to most all parties involved in some sort of conflict. Even the most diverse populations have concepts of justice and dialogue. While these concepts vary widely there are similarities nonetheless. The document shines when it argues, "There needs to be dialogue and discussion in the place of diatribe and the cry for war. Lasting peace does not result from violent means, but is achieved by negotiation, dialogue, and, inevitably, political compromise."

Similarly well put is the view taken of justice which calls for "nondiscrimination, respect for human dignity and equality, and a more equitable distribution of the necessities of life." The exposition of justice offered here includes a call for religious liberty and an explicit support of human rights. Herein lies the more important conceptual—I won't say theological—foundation for the document.

"Justice requires respect for human rights, in particular religious liberty which deals with the profoundest human aspirations and undergirds all human rights." Although Christians who support the notion of universal human rights do not normally do so from the perspective of religious liberty, our church's explicit support of human rights is to be applauded. Human rights are often derided as thoroughgoing secular humanism, and many conservative Christians refuse any support of the notion whatsoever. Seventh-day Adventists do well to support human rights even if we come to it with an underlying agenda to urge religious liberty.

The theological foundation of the document is seated in the Great Controversy theme. "All violence and terrorism are really one aspect of the ongoing controversy, in theological terms, between

Christ and Satan. The Christian has hope because of the assurance that evil—the mystery of iniquity—will run its course and be conquered by the Prince of Peace and the world will be made new. This is our hope."

Mining the tradition

While there is much to be applauded in this church statement, I wondered at times who the intended audience was. And with whom do we stand as Protestant Christians speaking on involvement with the military? There is a very rich and long-standing tradition in Christianity addressing this issue and I hoped for some direct connection with this tradition in the document. Do Seventh-day Adventists stand among those radical reformers who, like the Mennonites, urge a non-violent stance toward war? Or are we pragmatists of the sort associated with the position most widely known as "just-war" theorists?

In the Christian ethics tradition, both nonviolence, or pacifism, and just-war thought emerge from what is called the "love ethic." Shaped by the biblical notion of *agape* (the unconditional love of God toward all creation), this ethic is interpreted in two distinct ways with regard to war. Pacifism focuses on the role of witnessing that humans play in the revelation of God's love. Just-war thought focuses on how we might best love our neighbors who may be suffering the sorry fate of being attacked by an aggressor.

Nonviolent resistance

The Mennonite, John Howard Yoder presented the most persuasive academic argument for pacifism in the 20th century. It was his contention that Jesus' life and thought directs his disciples toward nonviolence. As Christ's disciples we are to be self-sacrificial in a manner similar to Christ himself and thus never engage in violence. According to Yoder, we are not responsible for making the world turn

out right and enforcing some sort of Christian hegemony on national or international scale. Rather, this is in God's hands. The key to our existence is not effectiveness on the world stage but patience in the life of faith. It is in the resurrection of Christ that we are to hope, not in the power of God's manifestation in the supposedly Christian community of politics and power. Mind you, pacifism is not passive. Pacifism is active nonviolent resistance to those who would use violence or wage war.

Just-war theorists

Paul Ramsey was equally influential and is most often classed as a just-war theorist. He thought we are justified to get into war only when our efforts are in

menting on Leviticus 19:18, she speaks of neighbor love and says that Abraham was "defending the oppressed"). Just-war theory compels us to give our lives in the defense of the neighbor. However, our behavior within war must always be moral. Once one is engaged in a war, proportionality is crucial. One can never be justified in killing the aggressor as a punitive measure; killing, if it is necessary, is purely for the defense of the neighbor. Furthermore, to harm civilians, with or without intention, is unacceptable in this view. Even here, the presumption is against war, but once all the political options have been exhausted, one is justified in stopping the aggressor.

So just how does the recent call for peace from the General Conference read?

Is it a call for pacifism or nonviolent resistance to war? Or is it a call for peace that allows for some notion of a just war in which Adventists might engage ourselves as a last resort?

In the final analysis, the document urges peacemaking that is consistent with nonviolence. Seventh-day Adventists, argues the statement, must reject "expressions or deeds of violence." Furthermore, we need to repent of the violence that "Christians and churches, throughout history and even more recently, have either been involved in as actors, have tolerated, or have tried to justify."

The statement goes on to note the means through which the church works for peace. Broadly stated, Adventist "concern for social justice is expressed through the support and promotion of religious liberty, and through organizations and departments of the church which work to relieve poverty and conditions of marginalization."

More specifically, the church's educational institutions, now numbering over 6,000, are being asked to lead the way in

advocating peace. The statement calls for these schools to "set aside one week each school year to emphasize and highlight, through various programs, respect, cultural awareness, nonviolence, peacemaking, conflict resolution, and reconciliation as a way of making a specifically 'Adventist' contribution to a culture of social harmony and peace."

The statement goes on to urge pastoral involvement at the congregational level: "Pastors are being asked to use their pulpits to proclaim the gospel of peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation which dissolves barriers created by race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, and religion, and promotes peaceful human relations between individuals, groups, and nations."

Strikingly absent, I think, is a call for peacemaking among the church's administration. While the statement does emerge from the Executive Committee of the General Conference, it does not call for similar statements from division or conference offices around the world. Congregations and church schools are called upon to carry on this work of peacemaking while divisions and conferences are, presumably, free to ignore the work of peacemaking if they wish.

Conclusion

Recently, a fellowship of Seventh-day Adventists concerned for peace formed in Washington, D. C. The Adventist Peace Fellowship issued a covenantal document that states, among other things, that our church pioneers refused to "bear arms in the military." I suspect that Frederick Wheeler would be surprised to read this. Of course, further research may show that he later gave up his command for a position closer to pacifism. Frankly, I hope he did. And I hope the church continues to move toward a thoroughgoing position of nonviolence upheld in every mission, conference and division around the world. The recent statement, "A Seventh-day Adventist Call for Peace," will help if we pay attention to its admonition to be peacemakers. ■

Mark Carr is associate professor of religion at Loma Linda University and the theological co-director of the LLU Center for Christian Bioethics.

“With whom do we stand as Protestant Christians speaking on involvement with the military? There is a very rich and long-standing tradition in Christianity addressing this issue and I hoped for some direct connection with this tradition in the document. Do Seventh-day Adventists stand among those radical reformers who, like the Mennonites urge a non-violent stance toward war? Or are we pragmatists of the sort associated with the position most widely known as “just war” theorists?”

behalf of our neighbor and only as a last resort. We must act, not out of self-interest, but out of self-sacrifice for our neighbor (interestingly, Ellen White writes in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 135 and 136, of Abraham's courage at going to war for his nephew, Lot. Com-

A New Beginning For Adventist Creationism?

ERVIN TAYLOR

The “First International Faith and Science Conference” held in Ogden, Utah, was organized under the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists sponsorship. This is the first of three conferences being organized by the church on this topic. This one, and one planned for 2004, are international in scope and will have attendees from all the world divisions. In 2003, sessions will be held in each of the world divisions and organized by division church administrators.

The conference

About 80 scientists, theologians, and church administrators attended the six-day conference. Roughly 90 percent of the attendees were white, middle-aged males. Except for the all-female conference support staff present, there were only two female invitees and one of these had to leave early. All but five of those invited were current or former church employees.

All the attendees I spoke with—no matter their opinions on the subject matter of the conference—agreed that conference organizer Lowell Cooper, GC vice president and Geoscience Research Institute (GRI) board chair, did an exemplary job. He was evenhanded and bent over backwards to be open about how the sessions were conducted. Jan Paulsen, GC president, attended the conference for three days but left early as his presence was required in Africa on an emergency basis.

Many who attended had been dealing with the topic of the conference for many decades and have attended previous church-sponsored sessions including Biblical Research Institute Science Council (BRISCO) meetings, GRI field conferences, and a conference in Portland, Oregon, about 15 years ago that was not widely reported. A number of the progressives attending had been at the Association of Adventist Forums Yellowstone Conference, the proceedings of which were recently published.

For others, particularly those from developing nations, this may have been the first time they had encountered from fellow church members the varying views presented. A number of delegates from Africa and South America wondered what all the fuss was about. Their view was that the organization should simply determine what the church believes and fire anyone who does not agree. Currently, with perhaps one or two exceptions, this is a pressing issue only for educated and scientifically literate North American, European, and Australian/New Zealand members.

An important characteristic of this meeting was the massive amount of material developed for the attendees. Transcripts of all the papers presented were distributed. There will also be a CD with additional materials.

This conference—and the ones to come in 2003 and 2004, if they are conducted like this one—have the potential to be as important for the future of the Adventist church in the developed world as the 1919 Bible Conference and Glacier View. Almost all of the theological and scientific issues, at least in general outline, are now out in the open. As one attendee put it, “The genie is out of the bottle and nothing will be able to put it back in.” Too many people now know too many things about how our church acquired its views concerning creationism and the serious conflicts between our traditional views and the overwhelming weight of scientific data. Publications such as *Adventist Today* and *Spectrum* exist and can address these issues, and the Internet provides ways of getting information around the world in literally seconds.

Many, but not all, of the important scientific and theological problems and issues were put on the table and discussed forthrightly without rancor—at least in public. Everyone appeared to be on their best behavior. However, it was clear to everyone there that there were at least two “camps” represented—although in reality

there were many more than two.

We did not hear anyone in authority comment on the costs of holding this conference, but it would have to have been in excess of \$100,000 since participants were flown in from all parts of the world. One attendee asked whether tithing money was being used and was assured that it was not. In addition to the representatives of *Adventist Today*, the editors of *Adventist Review*, *Ministry*, and *Signs of the Times* attended and actively participated. It should be noted that I was invited to participate in the conference not as a representative of *Adventist Today* but as a scientist.

Commentary

The impression of several attendees was that conservative Adventists, such as those belonging to the Adventist Theological Society, were, on the whole, very unhappy about the outcome of the conference and are worried about future prospects for defending traditional creationist views. (They may have been especially nervous since this conference followed by only a few months a BRISCO session in which it was generally agreed that the traditional Adventist “flood geology” model was in serious trouble). Again, in the view of several conference attendees, traditionalists did not do a very good job of defending their point of view.

On the other hand, the conference met, and perhaps even exceeded, the reasonable expectations of most any Seventh-day Adventist moderate or progressive. Moderates and progressives attending the conference did, on the whole, an exemplary job. Their presentations were, with only a couple of minor exceptions, extremely well done, right on target and extremely effective. Finally, in the words of one attendee, there was no “pussy-footing around.”

One especially well-crafted presentation expressed the speaker’s spiritual and intellectual journey and his personal angst in dealing with the faith/science interface. This presentation worked very well in large

Letter from the chair

part because a former General Conference president got up after the presentation and endorsed the speaker's commitment to the church and commended him for keeping quiet for 15 years.

Several attendees expressed the view that one of the presenters on the conservative side "shot himself in the foot" largely by the style of his presentation.

There were no conclusions or summary voted by the entire group. That was not the purpose of the meeting. The purpose was to set out the problems concerning origins from the perspective of the Adventist faith community. There was essentially no discussion of the Flood problem—that is scheduled to be taken up in 2004. The evidence for long ages was not systematically presented. The time problem was touched on very slightly—basically to say that there is a big problem with traditional creationism's short chronology. On the theology side, there were no formal systematic presentations on Biblical inspiration and hermeneutics. However, it lurked in the background in many discussions.

To the surprise of some attendees, there was considerable discussion of biological evolution and why it is such a powerful scientific model.

At the end, the organizing committee crafted a one-page statement that, with some minor editing, has been published in the *Adventist Review*. It says, in part, that the attendees "recognized the seriousness and breadth of differences concerning questions of origin that are present in the Seventh-day Adventist community."

One high-ranking church official revealed that many of the "brethren" are apprehensive about where these discussions will take the church. He was insistent that we are not going to change our fundamental belief on creationism, although he did not spell out exactly what that entailed.

Unless there is a massive reactionary move, the international conference in 2004 and the NAD conference in 2003 will continue to lay out the fundamental scientific and theological issues and determine if there are ways of resolving the conflicts without doing serious damage to how educated church members outside of developing nations view the relevance of their church to the modern world. ■

The past year has brought changes for all of us, including *Adventist Today*. Our office has moved from Calkins Hall to a modular unit also used by the biology department at La Sierra University. The university had provided space for us for some years in the former men's dormitory, but now they are remodeling it for a women's residence hall and anticipate needing all the rooms. Despite a strong message that there was "no room in the inn," we were able to relocate on campus. While not as roomy as our former location, the new quarters are now serving our needs very satisfactorily. Though we have no connection with the university, we have benefited by the availability and proximity of services. Our address remains the same.

Early this year, *Adventist Today's* board was asked if AT would consider publishing a biography of Raymond F. Cottrell. He has served Adventism for over three-quarters of a century, his past 10 years as co-editor of *Adventist Today*. Cottrell's career highlights include mission service, teaching, multiple roles at the General Conference, and perhaps the most significant, serving as co-editor of the *SDA Bible Commentary Series*. The very idea of publishing such a biography was a daunting one for AT, inasmuch as our resources, both editorial and financial, would not be adequate for such a task. But we agreed, under certain circumstances.

Publication hinges on the following:

- Promotion and fundraising for the book is to be done from sources not normally associated with *Adventist Today* supporters.
- No *Adventist Today* (magazine) funds shall be used for the project.
- The Cottrell Biography Committee (Bill Coffman, Dan Cotton and Jim Walters) shall be responsible for all activities in connection with the book development, save for its final editorial approval.
- The Cottrell Biography Committee will work with an AT subcommittee for regular manuscript review during the course of the book development.
- Final editorial approval will be given by AT.

What are Adventist Today's plans for the future?

We are most pleased and thankful for our editorial team. John McLarty's editorial direction and writing continue to shine. Erv Taylor makes things happen. Jim Stirling's editing and writing is the glue, and Diana Fisher puts it all together. Hanan Sadek carefully manages our office.

John and Erv have recently been directly involved in the Creation Conference sponsored by the General Conference, held in late August in Ogden, Utah. You will be hearing much more on this issue. Both will be attending the fall council.

Major issues face the church today. These include everything from evaluation of theological education (IBMTE) and pastor/teacher/worker pay, to discussion of some of the fundamentals held by the church. *Adventist Today* expects to report on all these (and many more) issues as they develop.

What can you do to help make this possible?

AT has not been immune to the country's economic problems, and they have affected our hopes to be on a much more secure financial footing by this time. While we have been more fortunate than some other nonprofit groups, we have come this far only because of the dedication of our staff and individuals who have stepped forward to give their financial support to the journal. Now we have on hand funds sufficient to publish our next two issues (pay the bills through the end of the current calendar year).

Your continued support is more important than ever to enable *Adventist Today's* continued publication.

As you plan your finances for the balance of this year, please make your tax-deductible gift to *Adventist Today* a major priority.

With special appreciation to each of you,

Elwin Dunn, M.D.
Publisher and Board Chair
Adventist Today Foundation

Talking About Creation

JOHN MCLARTY

I arrived in Ogden, Utah, on Friday afternoon, Aug. 23, for the beginning of the International Science and Faith Conference. (I'm writing this on Sunday, Aug. 25.)

In my visits with participants, two major attitudes are apparent: Many (not all) of the scientists long to see the church more open to the findings and methods of science. They believe it intellectually dishonest to ignore what they learn during a lifetime of seeking to understand nature through careful observation and broad-ranging study. At the same time they believe they would lose their jobs if their questions and opinions about origins were fully known. Many (but not all) of the theologians strongly oppose any move to reconsider any of the Adventist church's traditional understandings of what the Bible means. The most conservative of these are very confident that the way we have understood the Bible in the past is exactly right, that every Adventist position is a simple, direct, straightforward development of what is written in the Bible. So it doesn't matter what scientists discover, our views are based on the Bible so we don't need to change.

A number of the scientists I've talked with are worried this conference will clamp down on any attempt to find new ways of reading the Bible that bring the church closer to scientific orthodoxy. They fear the loss of academic freedom. Others worry this conference may sell out the church by admitting life on Earth may have a very long history. If this happens, they fear the church will lose its distinctive identity and fail in its mission to proclaim the Sabbath and the Second Coming.

A number of the theologians fit neither polar position sketched above. They revere the Bible; they appreciate the work of science. They want the church to do the right thing, but they are not sure what the right thing is. They are impressed with the indomitable complexity

of the issues surrounding creation—the science, theology and Biblical interpretation, the ecclesiastical issues.

General Conference President Jan Paulsen gave the opening address Friday night. He affirmed in the strongest terms our confidence in the Bible. At the same time, he insisted we must be open-minded enough to keep learning. We must be charitable in debate. And, of course, he said, we must maintain a healthy skepticism about the supposed certainties of science.

Some of his remarks as I wrote them in my notebook: *Faith is full of mystery. It speaks of that without speaking of how. We are all believers praying that we may also understand. Faith is a priori; it does not depend on science. Burying our heads in the sand will do us no good. Investigation is not bad. We must reject both obscurantism and scientific hegemony. The story of*

“A number of the scientists I've talked with are worried this conference will clamp down on any attempt to find new ways of reading the Bible that bring the church closer to scientific orthodoxy. They fear the loss of academic freedom. Others worry this conference may sell out the church by admitting life on Earth may have a very long history.”

Galileo does not necessarily mean that we must cede the field of commentary on origins to science. Remember that science, too, is interpretation.

“Reasoning together” always applies

to the life of the life of the church. God does not want faith without thought. We must engage in a respectful conversation and look at our differences in a deliberate and humble manner.

While we are aware of the problems of creationism, let's not forget the problems of naturalism. Science is not the only “authority.” In considering the merits of various theories we must evaluate their esthetic, ethical and social implications. We must reject the autonomy of the mind and remember that we are a community formed and informed by the Bible. He ended with a quotation from Ellen White affirming the essential unity of Biblical and scientific revelation.

Dwight Nelson, pastor of Pioneer Memorial Church at Andrews University, preached the Sabbath morning sermon. He argued strongly against placing too much credence in the “facts” of science.

Too often things we have known for sure have turned out wrong. Quoting syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer, he mentioned hormone replacement therapy as one such “fact” that turned out wrong.

Flexible faith, he said, is needed in science—and in theology as well. “Rigid faith” is an oxymoron. Faith means openness to God, including openness to whatever new insights into truth he may bring us from different sources including science. However, whatever we decide about creation must be compatible with the most fundamental of all truths: God is love and perfect love casts out all fear.

On Sunday morning the conference moved to the presentation and discussion of formal papers. These meetings were closed to all but official invitees to the conference. ■

On the One Hand, On the Other Hand

BEN CLAUSEN

The details of the International Faith and Science Conference have been reported elsewhere. This article will mainly present some personal reactions to the conference.

Discussions leading up to the conference suggested that everyone had considerable concerns. Some worried the church was about to relax its beliefs about origins. Others worried the church would more tightly define its beliefs in order to remove unorthodox employees. Most worried about a divisive spirit, antagonism, anger, and even a possible split in the church. I, too, had concerns about what was going to happen. As it turned out, these possible problems did not materialize.

The meetings were carefully planned, but flexible. There was good representation from around the world, from various disciplines, and from various viewpoints. I was pleased by the proceedings and the positive atmosphere. Although differences of opinion were present, a congeniality could be felt. The willingness of the church to sponsor these meetings suggested to me a church confident enough in its position that it could afford to have its ideas scrutinized.

The theological presentations emphasized the importance of a correct understanding of origins, especially relating to the Sabbath and death before sin. It is Satan who is “leading men to look upon God as the author of sin, and suffering, and death” (Ellen White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 24). The “theological” presentation of greatest blessing to me was given by Athal Tolhurst—a Sabbath morning feature with numerous pictures of the beauties of God’s creation. One area that might have benefitted from a more complete discussion was the topic of inspiration, particularly as it relates to accurateness of scientific details in the context of the church’s belief in thought rather than verbal inspiration. Overall, I found no tendency for the church to change its clear present theo-

logical position and drift toward some kind of theistic evolution.

The scientific talks were fewer in number. They outlined some of the scientific evidence for creation, particularly “design” evidence for a Creator. However, Darwin’s original theological problem with the design argument (apparent evidence for evil design) was not addressed. The scientific talks pointed out significant difficulties for a recent creation, for example, order in the fossil record and radiometric dating. Time issues have no simple solution, even for believers who want answers commensurate with a literal reading of Genesis. Origins research by Adventist scientists has not provided convincing evidence in quite the same way as has happened for our health message. Even the numerous examples of catastrophes can in general be incorporated into a long-age model as easily as a short-age model. One talk strongly emphasized the lack of any comprehensive short-chronology scientific model to rival the standard geological model. Overall, this conference resulted in a better understanding of and sympathy for the difficult challenges that Adventist geologists face.

Coming away from these talks, it appeared to be as difficult to fit geology into a short time frame as to fit theology into a long time frame. Both can be done, but neither flows easily from the data. It would be nice to have a final answer with science definitively supporting a biblical short chronology, but there appears to be a need to live with paradoxes and believe without necessarily having all the answers. Perhaps it is the approach and attitude in the process of learning that is more important than having the solution. This conference was a large step in that direction: hearing many ideas with issues clearly laid out, real listening and dia-

logue without having to agree, looking for answers without having to solve everything, recognizing the tensions but without polarization, all in an open, supportive, positive, framework by those committed to Jesus Christ as Lord. We could come away with firm belief and a message to share even in the face of un-

“Coming away from these talks, it appeared to be as difficult to fit geology into a short time frame as to fit theology into a long time frame. Both can be done, but neither flows easily from the data.”

answered questions.

The August meetings were the beginning of a two-year discussion of science/religion issues. Following are some possible suggestions that might help in the discussion:

1. Hold to truth, but without bigotry. Steven Weinberg in his book *Dreams of a Final Theory* finds religious conservatives in one sense closer to scientists than religious liberals. Conservatives believe in what they believe because they think it is objectively true, whereas liberals “think that different people can believe in different mutually exclusive things without any of them being wrong” (p. 257). However, he adds, “it is conservative dogmatic religion that does the harm” with “the long cruel story of crusade and jihad and inquisition and pogrom.” Ellen White seems to concur: “A jealous regard for what is termed theological truth often accompanies a hatred of genuine truth as made manifest in life. The darkest chapters of history are burdened with the record of

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So how do salary scales actually compare between Seventh-day Adventist and public school systems? I compared a copy of the Washington K-12 Salary Allocation Tables for Certificated Instructional Staff (obtained from the Internet) with the Teacher Salary Scale—Category B¹ (used at academies in the

greatly outweighs any cost of living adjustments from one year to the next.

Notice that the Adventist system and the UW use a 9- or 10-month scale and a 12-month scale. Adventist educators typically receive the 10-month salary, while pastors and administrators receive the 12-month pay rate.² The 10-month salaries are paid out over 12 months in

third year of teaching and additional requirements as laid out by the union-level education office. Professional certification is for those teachers who have met the published requirements and have a master's or higher degree.

For educators in the Washington State K-12 system, compensation is based on a combination of college degree, addi-

DOES ADVENTIST EDUCATION PAY?

Salaries at Seventh-day Adventist and Public Schools in Washington State

GILL BAHNSEN

Washington Conference). Instructors at Walla Walla College are on the same scale, which I compared to the 2000-2001 Faculty Salary Schedule and to the Average Salary and Fringe Benefit Expenses by Rank and Service Period for the University of Washington (UW) Faculty, Seattle Campus, 1999-2000 (both obtained from the Internet).

The table below summarizes compensation for a teacher just starting out, after five to six years, and at the maximum compensation level available. Data for the Adventist system, Washington K-12 and basic UW are from the 2000-2001 school year. While the two high numbers from the UW data are a year older, the disparity in these numbers between the UW and K-12 systems

the Adventist system and many public school districts.

In Washington at least, one can be hired as a teacher in Adventist schools without holding a state teaching certificate. In my experience as a teacher of English as a Second Language at Auburn Academy, I was strongly encouraged to get my Adventist teaching certificate. At that time, less emphasis was placed on having a state teaching certificate. The table below shows this no-certificate option.

The certification levels described are for denominational teaching certificates. Basic certification is granted to those who have completed the required course work and classroom time. Standard certificates are granted after the

tional credit hours taken, and years of service. K-12 certification requirements do not apply to the UW documents reviewed.

For the first part of their career, Adventist educators in Washington receive higher salaries than their public school counterparts. Looking at only years of experience, we see that a public school teacher with just a bachelor's degree must work six years before making significantly more than a first-year, certified, 10-month, Adventist-school teacher. For educational levels, that same public school teacher must have a bachelor's degree plus an additional 90 credit hours before making higher

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2000-2001																
Career Point	SDA System				Washington State K-12 (for certified instructors)										University of WA	
	certification level	year	months		months										months	
			10	12	10					9					12	
					BA+0 credit hours	YoS	BA+45 credit hours	YoS	BA+135 credit hours	YoS	MA+0 credit hours	YoS	MA+90 or Ph.D.	YoS		
starting	BA (uncertified)		\$ 25,500	\$ 28,644											minimums	minimums
	Basic	1st	\$ 30,600	\$ 34,380	\$ 27,467	0	\$ 30,900	2	\$ 34,252	1					\$ 21,492	\$ 26,268
established	Standard	6th	\$ 35,196	\$ 39,540			\$ 35,055	7	\$ 39,569	7					Assistant \$34,155	Assistant \$41,760
	Professional	5th	\$ 36,468	\$ 40,968							\$ 36,503	5	\$ 40,889	5	Associate \$40,554	Associate \$49,560
max	Professional	16th+	\$ 39,972	\$ 42,972											Professor \$48,141	Professor \$58,848
	Professional	16th+	\$ 39,972	\$ 42,972									\$ 54,923	16 +	Professor \$79,438	Professor \$107,453

YoS Years of Service

High UW figures are NOT maximums.

How many people do you know with graduate degrees who are on welfare¹? As I looked at my friends sitting around me at our last faculty meeting, I noticed several². I never thought my choice to leave a career as an engineer and become a teacher for our denomination would be rewarded by the government placing my family on welfare.

But when my inexperienced students graduate with a four-year college degree and make about \$15,000 more a year right out of school than any of their teachers³ and when teacher's wages are less than pastor's salaries and just a small percentage above the national Federal Poverty Level, one begins to wonder if teachers are being asked to sacrifice too much. This article will address two main issues: first, the price paid by families on sacrificial wages and second, a limited comparison of teacher and pastor salaries.

How college faculty end up on welfare

I had no idea that after six years of teaching and as a newly appointed associate professor of engineering I qualified for multiple state assistance programs. It never crossed my mind to check. I did know, however, that I could not pay my bills with my denominational salary.

An event four years ago opened my eyes to the consequences of living on a sacrificial wage system. As I returned home from work one evening, my then 4-year-old daughter met me at the door in her swimsuit wanting me to take her to the pool—two hours later she was on an oper-

ating table having her ruptured appendix removed. A portion of the cost was paid by the college's insurance, (administered by Adventist Risk Management, ARM). I was left with a balance of \$1,912, our maximum out-of-pocket expense per child⁴, which I could not pay.

I asked the hospital, "What programs do

you have that would help pay for my children as second-class citizens.

Faculty sacrifices

I have never wanted any government benefits beyond Children's Medicaid, so I specifically did not check the box on the application seeking food stamp assistance.

SDA Faculty on WELFARE?

DON RILEY

you have to help families pay their medical bills?" I was handed a one-question survey that went something like this: "Have you been denied Medicaid from the state welfare system?" I was to attach a letter of denial to the form, and then sign it. I had to apply for Children's Medicaid to get my letter of denial. Surprisingly, I was accepted! Better yet, retroactively accepted. The medical bill was gone.

My children have been on state Medicaid now for about four years. It's not the best system and not all doctors take the coupons we receive each month, but it assists me in providing care for my children, which the state has concluded I am unable to do on a denominational salary. While using these coupons, I have often won-

However, earlier this year I wanted to find out the definition and implications of "sacrificial wages." A group of faculty, from first-year assistant professors to seasoned full professors, got together earlier this year to compare notes on the results of living on a sacrificial wage. The faculty were motivated by two questions. First, how can new teachers support their families, and second, how can older teachers survive when previous "sacrifices" have exempted them from savings, home ownership, and investments? Perhaps after potential faculty complete their interviews, they should be asked to visit the state welfare department to put their kids on Medicaid and the mother on the Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC) and sign up for the

Salaries at Seventh-day Adventist and Public Schools in Washington State

Continued from page 16

pay than the Adventist educator just described. Keeping years of experience between the two systems the same, and going up the scale in numbers of years, the chart shows that public school teachers with a bachelor's degree and 45 credit hours average 99 percent of the Adventist pay, year for year, up to the 10th year of experience. Year 11 was 105 percent, and year 12, 108 percent of the Adventist scale.

At the college and university level, bare minimums at the UW for all faculty and/or academic staff are considerably lower than even uncertified Adventist teachers. UW assistant professors are paid on par with K-12 instructors established in their career. But from the associate professor level on up, a UW instructor can start at very near the maximum of the Adventist compensation scale. And the pay goes up from there. Consider the implications of that for the families of

Adventist college teachers, as well as the hiring and retention of qualified, competent educators by Adventist colleges and universities. ■

NOTES

¹The category scale used (A-E) depends on cost-of-living factors in the corresponding region. Washington Conference uses B; Florida Conference is A, Southern California is E, etc.

²AE21, an Adventist on-line school, hires teachers on the 12-month scale.

SDA Faculty on Welfare?

low-income energy-assistance program, all of which I know faculty who qualify for.

Last year the NAD began to realize the magnitude of these sacrifices and voted a 5 percent denominational raise⁵ to help make up for past discrepancies. But we will not see that raise for some time, as there is up to a 5-year phase-in period. Though the NAD is currently overhauling the denominational salary structure, it appears that higher education will not be an integral part of the new plan.

What helps contribute to the sacrificial wages that I am on is that all teachers have been paid at 95 percent of their true salary, with the remaining 5 percent going into a fund to pay the salaries for the teachers who teach during the accelerated summer term. This practice has finally ended with the start of the 2002-2003 school year.⁶

Example of a real family budget

To demonstrate what is “sacrificial” about a sacrificial wage, one of our faculty⁷ shared his family budget. The list is divided into two categories: fixed monthly expense and variable monthly expense.

Table 1 represents real data from a real family. As you can see, the expenses exceed the income. While some may find it possible to trim a bit from this budget, note what is not included:

- Offerings
- Pathfinders
- Retirement savings
- Music lessons
- Pets, food, vet
- Entertainment (symphony, dining out, skiing)
- Newspapers and magazines
- Mission trips
- Savings account
- Car repairs
- School supplies
- Medical costs
- Vacations
- Haircuts
- Cell phone
- Student loans
- Car payments

This family budget should make it clear that too much is being sacrificed.

General government aid

The state of Washington, and the federal government for that matter, has determined that when too much is being sacrificed the government should step in for the welfare of the children. The example I presented earlier for my family, Children’s Medicaid, is just one of many programs available. Table 2⁹ lists several forms of aid that are available where I live, Washington state. Column 1 lists the government program

that is available for those on sacrificial incomes, column 2 is the percent Federal Poverty Level used as the criteria for aid eligibility, column 3 is the family size of denominational employees and salary amounts needed to meet the income eligibility criteria, column 4 identifies which teaching ranks at our college meet the income criteria.

Also interesting are the income eligibility guidelines for our church’s worthy student program. As noted on the stu-

dent aid form I tried to fill out: “parents who receive educational benefits from the SDA church are ineligible for aid.” I will agree that receiving 35 percent assistance is helpful, but Table 1 indicates a family in need of additional assistance.

Figure 1 shows a graphical comparison of the denominational category-A pay scale with the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) as it pertains to eligibility guidelines for government aid. This chart was constructed specifically for a family with four children. A larger or smaller family would adjust the FPL percentages. To see where I fit on this figure, my total denominational salary for the year 2001 was \$36,000¹⁰. This is just below the halfway point on the category-A scale. The arrows on the right demonstrate that at that salary or below you qualify for that particular aid.

Denominational responses

When the subject of denominational salaries is discussed in Adventist publications, it appears that teachers’ salaries are often ignored¹¹. The educational system has in fact been ignored to the point that many colleges and universities have adopted their own wage scale¹². Left with the dilemma of a nondenominational de facto standard emerging, the NAD recently expressed concern over the growing pay scales at some universities. At the 2001 year-end NAD meeting, the Remuneration Task Force Report was presented. While the task force recommended many positive things, the only item addressing higher education was that, after acknowledging much study on the issue and an inability to reconcile the actions already taken, we¹³ “are unable to incorporate into the remuneration system of the church the higher salaries which have already been implemented by several institutions and have in so doing developed by default a separate pay scale, we therefore request the executive committee of the North American Division and the General Conference to express themselves about the actions already taken by several college and universities with regard to remuneration.”

This is one of the more ridiculous and discouraging statements I have read in some time. First, there is no standard

Table 1. Example of a Real “Sacrificial” Family Budget

Income	Amount	Notes
Denominational Salary	\$2,600	Monthly, after tax
Expenses (fixed)	Amount	Notes
Tithe	\$260	10 percent
Mortgage	\$600	\$85,000 mortgage
Tuition ⁸	\$418	Three kids
Property Tax	\$180	
Home owners insurance	\$30	
Auto insurance	\$75	10-year-old Voyager
Garbage	\$11	
Total fixed	\$1,574	
Expenses (variable)	Amount	Notes
Food and hospitality	\$400	For a family of five
Miscellaneous	\$300	Clothes, gifts, etc.
Fuel and maintenance	\$100	
Water and sewer	\$100	
Natural gas	\$130	
Electricity	\$75	
Telephone	\$35	
Total variable	\$1,140	
Total expenses	\$2,714	
Net income (loss)	(114)	Unable to support family

Table 2. Summary of Federal and State Programs Available to WWC Faculty and Eligibility Criteria as a Function of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

Program	%FPL	Family Size	WWC eligibility	Notes
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families	NA	4 \$15,408 5 \$17,760 6 \$20,184	None	Help families help themselves move from welfare to work (was called Aid for Dependent Children).
Head Start	100%	4 \$17,650 5 \$20,670 6 \$23,690	None	Child development programs which serve children from birth to 5 years. Provides preschool and free meals.
Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program	125% (net) 156% (gross)	4 \$22,063 5 \$25,838 6 \$29,613 4 \$27,576 5 \$32,292 6 \$37,020	None None None None Instructors Up to associate	Federal government allows up to 150%, but Washington state sets 125% net (or 156% FPL for gross by subtracting 20% of pay to reach 125% FPL) which still only allows them to help 57,000 of the 300,000 homes in the state below 125%.
Food Stamps	130%	4 \$22,945 5 \$26,871 6 \$30,792	None None None	Provides benefits to low-income people that they can use to buy food to improve their diets.
National School Lunch Program	130% (free) 185% (reduced)	Free: 4 \$22,945 5 \$26,871 6 \$30,792 Reduced: 4 \$32,652 5 \$38,340 6 \$43,827	None None None Instructors All ranks but professor All ranks	Provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day.
SDA Church Student Aid	NA Estimated to be 160%	4 \$30,160 5 \$33,280 6 \$36,400	None Instructors Assistant professors	Provides church subsidy to assist families with tuition expenses.
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	185%	4 \$32,652 5 \$38,340 6 \$43,827	Instructors All ranks but professor All ranks	Provides for health of low-income women, infants and children up to age 5.
First Step (pregnant women Medicaid)	185%	4 \$32,652 5 \$38,340 6 \$43,827	Instructors All ranks but professor All ranks	Provides medical coverage for herself, her baby and other dependent children only.
Children's Medicaid (Healthy Options)	200%	4 \$35,300 5 \$41,340 6 \$47,380	All Instructors All ranks but top prof. All ranks	Covers 100% of medical, dental and vision, birth to 19 years. Can be used as secondary insurance after WWC's Risk Management.
Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	250%	4 \$44,125 5 \$51,675 6 \$59,225	All ranks All ranks All ranks	Provides health insurance to low-income children who don't qualify for Medicaid. A \$10 premium per month for each child enrolled in CHIP (\$30 max per family/month).

Note: WWC salary data uses 100% values, not 95%. Also, most programs allow "appropriate deductions" that were not considered here, for examples, Children's Medicaid deductions allowed are: 1) \$1,080/year from each parent's income, 2) child care expenses, 3) adult dependent care expenses, 4) court-ordered child support payments, and 5) other favorable income rules depending on the child's situation.

"default scale," as each school deviating from the denomination pay scale uses a different approach. Some are open about it while others are not¹⁴. This is producing the potential for a disastrous future in higher education. My institution and others staying on the denomination pay scale are quickly becoming known as teacher training schools. The reason for this is that some teachers can start on the denomination pay scale at schools like WWC and make more money than they would at a denominational school that does not follow the denominational pay scale. As they matured and became full professors, they could move to another denominational school not on the church's pay scale and make up

to and sometimes much more than twice as much money as a full professor on the church's pay scale¹⁵.

Table 3 shows the 2001-2002 pay scale for one of our denominational schools with a pay scale that rewards senior faculty at the expense of junior faculty.

Nondenominational pay-scale problems

None of the nondenominational pay scales I have found at our colleges use discipline-specific pay scales, but some take the discipline into account and provide a slightly higher salary. The scales used by those institutions leaving the denominational standard appear to be trying to raise each department's salary evenly and re-

ward senior faculty as a group. Senior faculty should be rewarded, but not at the expense of junior faculty.

In my opinion, discipline-specific pay scales are necessary to maintain a quality teaching staff in those disciplines that otherwise have significantly sacrificed salaries. I have talked to several conference administrators who do not see the benefit of such a plan. But how else can good talent be secured? *Counsels on Stewardship* provides an answer: "Let the best talent be secured, even if good, reasonable wages have to be paid." Reasonable wages is not how I would describe the present situation.

I teach in the engineering department at Walla Walla College. Within the engineer-

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ing department we have 12 faculty. Five are civil engineers, five are electrical engineers and two (including me) are mechanical engineers. Yet interestingly, the majority of our engineering students have for some years now been mechanical engineers. Our current salary structure is the reason we currently only have two mechanical engineers. Two years ago we interviewed three good candidates, and all three turned us down. The position remains unfilled.

The most recent faculty member to quit the school of engineering was a mechanical engineer with four children. Two of the last four to have been hired were, and still are, single with no children. When the last group of mechanical engineers was interviewing at the college, each asked me "How do you support your family on the school's pay scale?" My response was simple—if you choose to work here, after signing the employment papers, make a trip downtown to sign up for welfare! While their initial response was incredulous, as I showed them my children's Medicaid cards they realized the magnitude of the sacrifice they would be making. Sacrificing a new BMW is one thing, but sacrificing the well-being of their children

was sufficient for them to tell us, "No, thank you; we cannot come at this time."

The most popular majors at WWC are engineering (18 percent) and business (16 percent). While the data in Table 4 is specific to engineering, data of equal magnitude could be presented for business teachers. This table shows the difference between the salaries of teaching faculty at WWC compared to teaching faculty at four-year private colleges in North America. Very few engineering faculty at WWC come from teaching positions at other institutions. Most came from graduate school or industry. To account for this, Table 4 also shows the difference between denominational salaries and our students' graduating starting salary. As you can see, engineers considering a transition from the practice

school salary that best matches each department. This evaluation has not been completed but is expected to provide a mechanism to establish, as Ellen White put it, "good wages." I cannot imagine how WWC could implement a nondenominational pay scale similar to Andrews, La Sierra, or some others. Faculty in business,

Table 3. Example of a Non-Denominational Pay Scale used at a Denominational University¹⁶

Title	Low (\$)	High (\$)
Professor – PhD	55,557	70,047
Professor – MA/MS	50,001	63,042
Associate professor – PhD	44,488	52,430
Associate professor – MA/MS	37,815	44,566
Assistant professor – PhD	36,828	42,698
Assistant professor – MA/MS	33,882	39,282
Instructor – PhD/MA/MS	30,000	35,491
Instructor – BA/BS	29,820	35,278

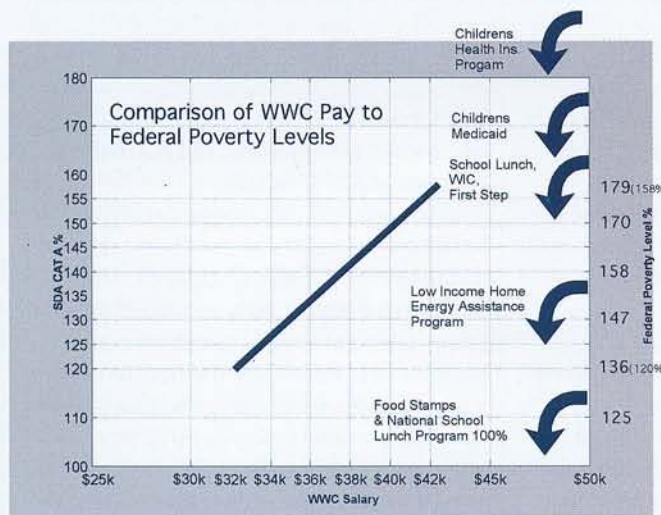


Figure 1. A Comparison of the Category-A Pay Scale to the Federal Poverty Level Demonstrating Income Eligibility for Government Aid.

of engineering to teaching take a considerable cut in pay. Note that the industry salaries are for engineers fresh out of school. The 2002-2003 school year at WWC will be the first year (after 11 years of teaching that followed 5 years of industry work) that my denominational salary will exceed what I made the first day on the job after graduating in 1986.

Our college is currently conducting a department-by-department evaluation to determine the equivalent CUPA faculty comparison to estimate the "average" four-year private

engineering and the sciences will be significantly underpaid as new teachers, which will make staffing replacements very difficult.¹⁷

Teacher's salary vs. pastor's salary

I fear that some will say: "OK, I see that the denominational salary structure needs an overhaul—but it is getting one. A new pastors' salary structure is in the works and it will help other denominational employees, including our college teachers." I do not believe this will be the case. It is certainly not the case with the current salary structure. While church administrators consistently tell us that educators are on the same denominational scale as pastors¹⁸, educators are at a double disadvantage¹⁹ compared to pastors.

The double disadvantage can be compared to running a race. Teachers start late and have farther to run. Educators start their careers later, and then actually take longer, or are never able, to catch up to the salaries of pastors, sometimes even if they started denominational service at the same time. I will refer to these two disadvantages as 1) a delayed start and 2) slower wage progression.

Delayed start

Consider two students who graduate from college at the same time: One decides to be a pastor (immediately employed) while the other chooses to be a math professor. While the pastor is earning a salary, receiving benefits, and beginning to build a retirement fund, the future math teacher is just starting a master's program, with no salary and growing student loans. After the one to two years for the M.S., several more years are required to earn the Ph.D. It could take a total of six years. The six years of graduate school represent lost compensation, lost retirement earnings, and no benefits as compared to the same time interval for the pastor. With the new degree in hand, the teacher starts denominational service²⁰ at 128 percent (\$34,000) while the pastor of the same age has probably just been ordained and is at 150 percent (\$40,000)²¹.

Slower wage progression

The first year a college teacher is in denominational employment, and at the lowest end of the pay scale, a pastor of the

same age is likely on the top of the pay scale. The college teacher would start denominational employment at the instructor or assistant professor rank: 128 percent (\$34,400) or 141 percent (\$37,900) of category A. Let's assume the teacher starts at the assistant professor rank. The college teacher must demonstrate, after 6 years, a clear track record of excellent teaching, research, advising, community and church involvement, student mentoring, and good peer and departmental evaluations. A committee then may or may not choose to advance the candidate to associate professor, which starts at 147 percent of category A (\$39,500). After many more years of service, the teacher may, or may not, advance to full professor rank which starts at 151 percent (\$40,600). Yet remember, the pastor was at 150 percent salary at about the same time the college teacher started employment, in this case about 10 or more years ago. This is delayed advancement.

To illustrate the slower wage progression problem I will compare myself to my neighbor who is a pastor. We both are the same age and received our college diplomas on the same June day in 1985. After

teaching for 11 years, six as an assistant professor and five as an associate professor my 2001-2002 salary was 135 percent of the denomination's category-A wage (which is \$36,000). Figure 1 shows that this is below the halfway point on the denomination's category-A pay scale. My neighbor was at 150 percent of the same category when he was ordained in 1991 after just six years of service. Typically a pastor will reach 150 percent when he is ordained during his fifth or sixth year of denominational employment²².

As an engineer, I worked for the government five years gaining experience that qualified me to be at the lowest entry-level position for an assistant professor. Since I only have an M.S., this would have put me, in today's scale, at 134 percent, or \$36,000. After six years of teaching, I advanced in rank to associate professor, which in today's scale is 140 percent or \$37,600. As noted earlier, though, I have only been paid 95 percent of my denomination pay for not teaching in the summer. This is why after 11 years of teaching my taxable income for 2001 was 134 percent, or \$36,000. With the current rank and pay

Table 4. Comparison of Denominational, Private College (CUPH^b) and Selected Industry Starting Salaries^c

Group	Degree or discipline	Instructor	Assistant	Associate	Professor
SDA denominational Faculty ^d salary	BS	32,256	NA	NA	NA
	MS	33,331	36,019	37,632	38,707
	PhD	34,406	37,901	39,514	40,589
Average 4-year private College teaching Salary ^b : engineering	Civil ^e	NA	57,691	66,201	86,157
	Mechanical ^f	28,883	57,692	68,800	93,202
	Electrical ^g	46,705	63,550	71,590	95,194
Average starting industry Salary ^c by discipline	Degree ^h	BS	MS	PhD	NA
	Civil	40,979	44,234	61,606	NA
	Mechanical	48,588	56,565	70,124	NA
	Electrical	52,092	64,188	79,383	NA

a. 2001-2002 WWC faculty salary schedule, denominational category A.

b. CUPA-HR's 2000-2001 National Faculty Salary Survey by Discipline and Rank in Private Four-Year Colleges and Universities.

c. National Association of Colleges and Employers Salary Surveys, 2000-2001. The average student graduating from the department I teach (mechanical engineering) makes \$8,000 more his first day on the job than the highest paid teacher at our school. An MS/PhD is usually the minimum qualification for teaching. If an electrical MS engineer with one year of experience quit his job to teach, he would take (on average) a \$31,000 pay cut!

d. Salary shown is 100% for starting salaries within each rank. Many faculty only receive 95% of this, some more if they teach during the summer. To become an associate professor requires six years successful teaching as an assistant professor and one year of graduate school past an MS/MA degree. Similar requirements for advancement to professor. However, all educational salaries are compared to industry starting salaries.

e. Average salaries by rank as reported by 42 institutions, 331 teachers.

f. Average salaries by rank as reported by 52 institutions, 559 teachers.

g. Average salaries by rank as reported by 50 institutions, 683 teachers. Each category reports highs, averages and lows. It is clear that WWC does not contribute salary data to the CUPA database as other SDA schools do. For example, the lowest reported salary for a full professor of electrical engineering was reported to be \$51,105. WWC's denominational pay for our highest paid teacher is lower than this by more than \$10,000. In other words, the highest paid teacher at WWC makes \$10,000 less than the lowest wage reported by any of the 50 private four-year colleges for an electrical engineer.

h. The degrees of BS, MS and PhD are listed next to the somewhat equivalent academic ranks. Most schools require a minimum PhD for starting as an assistant professor. This listing is just for comparison. All industry salaries shown are average starting salaries for 2000-2001.

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scale used at WWC, I will never exceed 147 percent, \$39,500, which is the top pay for a master's-qualified associate professor, a figure that my same-aged neighbor (a pastor) exceeded in 1991.

It is my hope that the denomination can fix these wage problems. I am looking forward to a full implementation of the counsel, "Let the best talent be secured, even if good, reasonable wages have to be paid." ■

NOTES

¹Welfare is often confused with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, but I am here referring to the simple meaning: "Governmental provision of economic assistance to persons in need."

²It is fair to elaborate that also around me were three faculty members who had filed bankruptcy in the last two years, and a faculty member each with \$30, \$40, and \$50 thousand in debt on credit cards!

³The average salary for a B.S. electrical engineer is \$53,000 while the highest paid most senior faculty at our school makes less than \$41,000. As an associate professor with 11 years teaching experience I made \$36,000 last year.

⁴At this time, the out-of-pocket limit was \$1,912 per child, with an upper limit of three maximum out-of-pockets per family, or \$5,736 per year. This could amount to about 20% of my denominational income.

⁵2001 Remuneration Task Force, George Crumley (retired NAD treasurer), chair. The recommendation reads in part: "VOTED to recommend that the wage factor be increased by 5% overall. This increase incorporates a catch-up provision of 2.6% for the amount that wages have fallen behind the CPI since 1968 plus an additional 2.4% to grant an overall enhancement to the standard of living for denominational employees." The 5% is in addition to cost of living and can be phased in over 5 years. A full discussion of the new plan is beyond the scope of this article.

⁶While some not familiar with college teacher schedules may question the 95% plan and the summer break idea, college teachers use the summers, with or without summer teaching loads, for research, course preparation, new course creation, papers, attending conferences, recruiting students, advising students, grading projects, helping with co-ops and internships, assisting with incompletes, learning new software, perhaps consulting and maybe even attempting to take a little vacation. The notion of a multi-month "summer vacation" to me is preposterous. Prior to teaching, I received six weeks' vacation, plus paid leave from Christmas to New

Year's and ten paid holidays, for a total of nine weeks' paid leave a year. As a teacher, I have taken one week's vacation in the last two years.

⁷This faculty member wished to remain anonymous, but gave me permission to use his personal data. The faculty member is an associate professor with a Ph.D. and three children, all in grade school.

⁸This represents a discount of 35%. Denominational employees are not able to receive worthy student aid from churches even though their salary would qualify them for more than 35% assistance.

⁹This table is by no means exhaustive, but it provides a general overview of programs with income eligibility guidelines based solely on raw income for comparison to the Federal Poverty Level.

¹⁰By way of comparison, my 2001-2002 denominational salary is almost, but not quite, what I received 16 years ago at my first job out of graduate school working for, not the best paying organization, but the government: \$36,500.

¹¹"Of Pastors and Pay Stubs" by Carlos Medley, *Adventist Review*, July 18, 2002, is a good example. While the majority of the article discusses pastor salaries and how they compare to national averages ("Only God knows the depth of a pastor's sacrifice"), when it comes to education, the article simply asks: "What is appropriate compensation... for educational institutions?" This is only one example of many such articles I have seen.

¹²Interestingly the major NAD schools, Loma Linda and Andrews universities, were among the first to break from the denominational pay scale. Others have followed. La Sierra, being so close to Loma Linda, was faced with teachers living in the same town making significant differences in pay (a near relative a number of years ago was offered \$90K to teach at Loma Linda with a \$30K sign-on bonus). The board of trustees told La Sierra to "implement a salary structure similar to Loma Linda's," which took several years to actually accomplish.

¹³2001 Remuneration Task Force, General action RemTF-10, Higher Education. From my reading of the report, this is the only statement addressing higher education, and the recommendation is simply to ask the Executive Committee to "express themselves."

¹⁴La Sierra, for example, shared with me the details of their pay scale in a reproducible manner. Andrews University, by policy, will not share or discuss the details of their nondenominational faculty pay scale.

¹⁵Upon learning how this odd feature of the higher education "default pay scales" worked, I sent an e-mail to the academic vice president of one of our church's schools asking how the school explains the new nondenom-

inational pay scale to new hires. An assistant professor on the new nondenominational plan would start at \$36,827. Had the school stayed on the denominational plan the same teacher would earn \$45,233, a category-D denominational wage used where this school (La Sierra) is located. I never received a response!

¹⁶This pay scale is from the 2001-2002 "target" La Sierra University pay scale. Had La Sierra left the denominational pay scale two years earlier, this is where they would be today. They are in fact phasing in this scale, and a full Ph.D. professor in 2001-2002 made \$57,053. This demonstrates how quickly the upper end is moving to competitive equity but the lower end is skewed disproportionately for several important discipline-specific salaries.

¹⁷Comparing new faculty (assistant professor) starting salary at WWC to the average salary of private four year colleges in the United States shows a difference of \$17,715 in business, \$17,459 in engineering, \$11,997 in computer science, and \$4,860 in physics. Interestingly, for about half the disciplines offered at WWC the denomination's pay scale for new faculty is greater than the average starting salary at private four-year colleges. For senior faculty, all disciplines are significantly under the average of private four-year colleges, with the greatest being engineering (\$49,259), business (\$37,400), physics (\$37,118), and education (\$36,750).

¹⁸I recently had a discussion with an experienced conference treasurer. When I told him my salary, he explained that it was not possible for me to be paid that little on the denominational pay scale. It took me 15 minutes to convince him that I earned 135% of category A after 11 years of service. He insisted that I should be at 154%. That experience has been repeated several times and has helped me understand why our conference leaders have not been sympathetic to educational salary concerns.

¹⁹There are many advantages and disadvantages to these two lines of denomination employment. Here I will focus on the simple comparison of wage rates and wage growth.

²⁰I should point out that a provision is provided to educators to help make up for this obvious disadvantage. At our institution, for a new incoming Ph.D. a lump sum of \$25,000 is available, or spread out over several years. This is not available for new M.S./M.A. teachers, who must struggle with a current salary structure that will never allow them to reach 150%, the level a pastor would acquire after just six years or so of service.

²¹Theologians are not exempt. Recently a pastor joined our college as a new theology teacher. He went from near the top of the salary structure (ordained minister) to near the bottom (assistant professor). Because this theology teacher has a family, he joins other faculty who are welfare recipients at WWC.

²²It is not my intent to suggest that my neighbor does not deserve his salary. I merely use this example to show the discrepancy between faculty and pastor salaries.

On the One Hand, On the Other Hand

Continued from page 13

crimes committed by bigoted religionists" (*Desire of Ages*, p. 309). Weinberg would like to strike a balance between the contributions of religion and its problems, but in so doing "it is not safe to assume that religious persecution and holy wars are perversions of true religion" (p. 258). However, I believe that bigotry is a perversion of true Christianity.

2. Don't tie theology to a scientific model such that an attack on the science becomes an attack on the theology. In this area we can learn from the mistakes of the Catholic church in the Galileo case. Accepting the Bible because science supports it can easily put science above the Bible, and reason and sense perception above revelation, making it easy to discard the Bible when the scientific models change. It is possible to believe in Scripture without having all the scientific answers, or even feeling that a short chronology is the best (naturalistic) scientific model.

During the last 200 years evolutionists as well as creationists have had to change their scientific models numerous times—for example, the role of catastrophes, the amount of geology to fit into a one-year flood, plate tectonics, ice ages, fixity of species, order in the fossil record, and the age of the universe and earth. Gamaliel's counsel (Acts 5) is apropos: True ideas will prosper and false ideas will disappear independent of church action. Scientific issues are not solved by pronouncements.

Two examples, although probably of little importance, suggest some technical difficulties in trying to define scientifically exactly what happened on each day of creation.

The literalness of the days of creation was discussed at the conference. The Bible makes some clear statements on the topic, although translating them into scientific terms isn't quite so easy: How is a day defined before the sun is appointed to divide the day and night? Is the day/night cycle and the Sabbath memorial only for humans on this earth? How is the day defined on a round earth with a dateline and an Arctic circle?

Exactly what was created during creation week was another discussion topic. For the useful model of young life but an old solar system, there are scientific questions: for example, did much of anything happen on days 1, 2, 4 and part of 3, or was the creative activity on these days only a modification of hydrologic, geologic and astronomical cycles that had been in existence for millions of years previous? Although this model may be true, it does appear to be less than a literal interpretation and a significant compromise to the awesomeness of creation.

"The Lord speaks to human beings in imperfect speech, in order that the degenerate senses, the dull, earthly perception, of earthly beings may comprehend His words. Thus is shown God's condescension. He meets fallen human beings where they are. The Bible, perfect as it is in its simplicity, does not answer to the great ideas of God, for infinite ideas cannot be perfectly embodied in finite vehicles of thought." (*Selected Messages I*, p. 22) The Bible used the language of appearance even as we do today, suggesting caution in trying to derive too many scientific details from it.

3. Don't repeat Galileo's mistakes. Galileo's scientific method was not as strong as is sometimes thought. There was no direct evidence for the earth's motion until much later. His tidal proof was wrong; he never accepted elliptic planetary orbits; he used astrology. He ignored the fact that compatibility with his model was different from proof. He overstated his case without recognizing the evidence for the other side. In addition, Galileo had poor people skills. He could be sarcastic and vitriolic; he made the pope appear a fool; and he appeared to disobey reasonable orders.

We need to look at both sides of our

current issue. In his book *The Battle of Beginnings*, Del Ratzsch gives examples of misunderstandings on both sides of the origins debate that need to be cleared up. Each side often attacks outdated arguments that the other side no longer uses.

4. Share your position with a humble, unifying attitude. One of the biggest issues seems to be how church employees—professors, pastors and evangelists—present origins issues. Some

“It is possible to believe in Scripture without having all the scientific answers, or even without feeling that a short chronology is the best (naturalistic) scientific model.”

complain that church employees present evolution theories. Others complain that church employees present creation theories with sloppy science and poor logic. Both are accused of leading hearers astray such that they lose their faith, of being reticent to present the weakness of their position, and of using ridicule, condescension, arrogance and dishonesty. I myself can think of arguments presented during my education that didn't hold up, but also of mentors who showed how to approach the difficult issues. Perhaps it is a humble, unifying versus a belligerent, divisive attitude that is most important for a church employee rather than their preference for some scientific detail.

I look forward to a continuing conversation over the next two years. Time will tell how this plays out, but the August conference was a good start. I am pleased with how my church is dealing with these difficult issues. ■

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When I told a friend that I wanted to write a column on wild Christians she laughed. I assumed that she was laughing at the absurdity of idea—Madonna as the poster image of the Christian lifestyle.

“No,” she said, “I was laughing because when people ask who I am, I say I am ‘the wild woman from the woods.’” My friend wanted to make clear what she had in mind. She was not thinking about the wild explorations of youth, or of the Indian legends of the wild woman who lives in the woods and steals children to feed her husband.

My friend is a biologist, and when she thinks of the wild she thinks of the woods in which she spends so much of her time. I have seen her on occasion in a wildlife sanctuary near where I live. I had driven by the sanctuary for years but had never entered it. From the road it looks like a briar patch. Inside it is a post-lapsarian Garden of Eden with wild roses, chokecherry bushes, blackberry brambles, old abandoned apple trees with the tartest apples one has ever eaten, a cherry tree hidden off the trail, and the wildest assortment of thorny trees and bushes imaginable. There are also a half dozen springs in the sanctuary, which are home to a host of water plants and birds and a great temptation for our golden retriever. There is at least one coyote in the sanctuary that my wife and I both hear and see on occasion as it has stalked our dog. A small herd of deer also lives in the sanctuary.

Now none of this might seem very spectacular to those of you who live in the mountains of Montana or Idaho, but this sanctuary is a small five-acre reserve in the middle of town, cut off from the mountains by a freeway. Taking Sunbear, our dog, on walks in this reserve set me thinking about wild things and wild places and wondering why I find them so refreshing. When I am really down in the dumps, I walk to

the wildlife sanctuary and lie in the tall grass, watching the clouds move overhead and feeling the earth turn beneath me. Sunbear usually goes exploring during these times and often comes back soaking wet and covered with stinky black mud, tail wagging and smiling as happily as a dog can smile.

Wild Christians

GLEN GREENWALT

The wild disturbs as well as heals. We can't all go live at Walden Pond, nor would we want to. Not even Thoreau spent a lot of time there.

Still, my excursions into the wild make me think that we need to preserve wild places not only in the forests and city parks but in the church as well. My friend, the biologist, tells me that when she takes her students into an old-growth forest, they often comment how happy they feel. I know the feeling. I felt it most powerfully visiting a Shinto temple in a grove of towering old growth cedars in Niko, Japan. I was awestruck, as in an august presence. I understood why Israel cut down the groves of other gods.

The sacred in the wild

The experience of meeting God in the wild of forests and glens, streams and seas, deserts and sky was a part of the life of all ancient peoples. As Swimme and Berry point out in their

book *The Universe Story*, the aim of primal peoples “was a life in resonant participation with the rhythms of reality. For this reason the drum became their primary instrument.... The drumbeat, and more broadly, the songs, chants, and dances of our ancestors expressed the visions and dreams awakened in them by the spirit of the world, by those dimensions of nature beyond the phenomenal world, but integral with materiality—the wild dimension of the universe. In their rituals and in their life in nature, the first peoples attended to the music sounded in their depths by the surrounding mysteries. To find oneself in the icy sea in a skin-covered kayak when the dark surface parts in the winter evening and a vast sleek presence appears, to be suddenly staring eye-to-eye with this spirit from the depths of the ocean, was cause for years of celebration.”

But the discovery of the sacred in the wild was not just a part of primal religion. It is central to the religion of Israel and Jesus as well. As John Eldredge points out in his book *Wild at Heart*, “If you have any doubts as to whether or not God loves wildness, spend a night in the woods . . . alone.

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Take a walk out in a thunderstorm. Go for a swim with a pod of killer whales. Get a bull moose mad at you. Whose idea was this anyway?”

In the wild we come face to face with a power that is not tame but good, a beauty that is not cheap but tinged with pain, as when river rat in the *Wind and the Willows* hears a piping in the woods so beautiful, he almost wishes

that he had never heard it. Commenting on such experiences Swimme and Berry write, "A wild animal, especially one on the search, alert and free, moves with a beauty beyond the predictability of a machine, far beyond the lock-step process of a rationally derived conclusion. The wild is a great beauty that seethes with intelligence, that is ever surprising and refreshing for the human mind to behold."

Freedom to wander

The amazing thing that scientists are discovering is that all of creation, and not just the animals to which we ascribe some form of intelligence, possess a measure of freedom. Again quoting Swimme and Berry, "To say that the mutations are a fundamental dynamic of the first cells of Earth is to say that rooted at the core of life is the wild freedom to wander, to grope, to change spontaneously, to run galloping as an animal, even as an animal dazed in search of something. The discovery of mutations is the discovery of an untamed and untamable energy at the organic center of life. Not only is such creativity there, it is centrally there. For without this wild energy, life's journey would have ended long ago."

The science and the theology of the past 200 years have been disastrous for wild life. As J. Hillis Miller, in his book *The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth-Century Writers*, has commented regarding the industrialization and urbanization of life, "Everything is changed from its natural state into something useful or meaningful to man. Everywhere the world mirrors back to man his own image, and nowhere can he make vivifying contact with what is not human. Even the fog is not natural fog, rolling in from the sea, but is half soot and smoke. The city is the literal representation of the progressive humanization of the world. And where is there room for God in the city?"

Ironically, the person most responsible for disenchanting the world was himself a staunch Christian who wrote as much on theology as he did on astronomy. He was, however, a person

who had no soul for music or poetry. The person is Sir Isaac Newton. Newton brought an order to the heavens that politicians, social scientists, moralists, and even theologians could only hope for on earth. What Newton showed is that by a few simple rules and principles the mystery of wandering stars could be resolved. With Newton's success in ordering the heavens came a desire to find the rules and principles that govern human and even divine affairs. God became the heavenly watchmaker, and his universe an artifice so perfectly designed that it required no divine mucking about its spindles and gears. Deism is the theological legacy of Newton's science.

An untamed God

Adventists above all people should be those who appreciate that surprising and refreshing beauty that is the wild.

We worship the Creator of the wild on Sabbath, we proclaim the Sanctuary message of an untamed God who met his people in the wilderness, and we center our teaching on the Great Controversy theme that suffering exists in the world because God took a risk on freedom.

Unfortunately, our theology does not always exhibit the same eloquence and beauty found in the wild. Too often our theology, especially in its public presentation, appears fashioned in the clock shops of Deism. The value of a human soul is measured more on a person's ability to know the time charts and the reasons behind our doctrines, than a person's reflection of the image of the not-so-tame God. In this theology God is more interested in his creatures getting the right answers on an exam than in demonstrating the

beauty of his original creation—a beauty that moves beyond the predictability of a machine, "far beyond the lock-step process of a rationally derived conclusion" (Swimme and Berry). The God who created wildness created at the core of life the freedom to grope, to

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change, and even stand dazed as an animal in search of something.

Deism courses through our Adventist veins. It is part of our Millerite heritage. We love the logical, clockwork precision of prophecy. But prophecy will come to an end. What will never end is the restless energy of the God who has promised to do a new thing, greater than he has done before, to create streams in the desert, to raise a mountain in the plain, and to give wings like eagles to his people so that they can soar higher than they have ever soared before. This is the truth we were given to share with the world. All other truths are tame by comparison. ■

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When I was a kid, I used to see this picture of a giant Jesus in some of the churches I'd visit.

The artist had him standing face-to-face with the United Nations building in New York, rapping his fist on it like he was knocking on a door.

The image was a perfect rendering of Christian beliefs: Giant Jesus wants to save the world, if only it will open the door of its heart to him.

Things were so simple back then.

"I can't bring myself to speak to him anymore because I feel so abandoned," said Marian Fontana in the PBS documentary "Faith and Doubt at Ground Zero." Her husband, David, was one of the 343 firefighters killed that day. "I guess deep down inside I know that he still exists, and that I have to forgive and move on. But I'm not ready to do that yet."

The Rev. Joseph Griesedieck, an Episcopal priest who volunteered at Ground Zero, had this to say: "After Sept. 11, the face of God was a blank slate for me.

God couldn't be counted on in the way that I thought God could be counted on.

God seemed absent. I was left with nothing but that thing we call faith. But faith in what?

The face of God

after Sept. 11 is much more of a mystery than it ever was—a face that often eludes us, and frustrates me."

I can't speak for God or account for his whereabouts on Sept. 11. And I don't know anyone else who can. But this isn't the first time we've wondered about his whereabouts. Where was God during the Middle Passage, the extermination of the American Indians and the Holocaust?

Where is he when children are kidnapped, raped and murdered, when women are beaten by their husbands or boyfriends, or when workers lose their pensions and homes because some white-collared fat cat stole another million for his bulging portfolio?

Questions without answers make skepticism easy. Still, something inside us longs to believe. Otherwise, there

wouldn't be more than 5 billion of us on this planet who believe in someone or something transcendent.

Evil—especially when innocent victims are targeted—defies explanation.

But so does good—especially when the people doing good put themselves at risk.

Where does the courage and compassion come from that compelled Harriet Tubman to fight slavery or Dietrich Bonhoeffer to resist the Third Reich? Where did Ida B. Wells get the faith and strength to speak out against lynching, even to the point of risking her life and career?

Where does the good come from that made a Mother Teresa or a Chessie Harris selflessly commit their lives to helping others, often at their own expense without outside support?

Where did the people in the Twin Towers who walked down all those flights of stairs to escape—many stopping to help others—get their strength and courage? And what about the rescue workers who walked into danger, knowing that they might lose their lives? (And many did.)

Reckless, selfless good isn't logical. But it exists. And it helps me to believe that God exists, too.

The God I envision cares and hurts—and struggles with us against evil, sometimes winning, sometimes not. And this mixed record means his greatest challenge isn't saving people from death, but helping them to make the most out of life.

This God isn't the Giant Jesus of my childhood. But for me and many others, he is no less God. ■

David Person's column appears each Friday on the Commentary page of the Huntsville Times. He can be reached via e-mail at davidpe@htimes.com. Used by permission. Copyright 2002 al.com. All rights reserved.

Looking for God at Ground Zero

DAVID PERSON

As a grown-up, I've learned that many people believe that it's God, not the world, who doesn't have a heart. Many of them see September 11, 2001, as the most poignant, recent example.

If Jesus (or God by any other name or form) were so compassionate, he would have stopped the terrorist attacks.

The image of Giant Jesus knocking on the world's door doesn't work for them. They would probably agree more with one of Giant Jesus with his back turned while the two planes crashed into New York's Twin Towers. They would probably say that a God who averts his eyes while people jump 80 stories to their deaths to avoid incineration, or who wrings his hands while others are crushed beneath collapsing concrete and steel, is really no God at all.