Adventist Mordo

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Moved by the Spirit

BY BILL KNOTT

Tell me: which is more important—winning a person to faith in Jesus, or keeping that person in the faith of Jesus?

Like many other divisive queries posed to us today, the question represents a false choice. Clearly, no one can stay with Jesus who hasn't first come to Him. And those who come to Him but never stay to walk with Him aren't counted His disciples. As Jesus said in sorrow: "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62, NRSV).

The question also unrighteously inflates the importance of human activity in building a lasting relationship with Jesus. On our best days, our efforts to evangelize reach only those whom the Spirit has long been nurturing. We count the moment when they step into the water, while heaven values the long and quiet process in which they listened to the Holy Spirit's promptings. Their membership in God's remnant church is undoubtedly supported by the preaching of the Word, by strong, consistent pastoral care, and by participation with small, caring groups of fellow believers. But they won't stay within this fellowship unless they find a vital, daily relationship with Jesus in which they hear the Spirit's voice and increasingly do the Spirit's bidding. The saving and keeping of a believer is a work of God, and all of grace.



The media of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is well-tuned to report the wonderful results of Spirit-filled preaching and witnessing. This magazine, with many others, regularly reports the joyous days when 30,000 persons—10 times the number of those who came to faith in Jesus on the day of Pentecost—are baptized in a single day or at the close of a public evangelistic series. But we also honestly report the alarming statistics

increasingly apparent in data the world church collects: "During that half century and more, our loss rate is 41 percent. This doesn't include deaths. It's living members who leave our church family."*

Those who come to faith in Jesus are called out of one religious system, named in Scripture as "Babylon," and to citizenship in the coming New Jerusalem. Between those two cities, they are urged to find fellowship in a church—an *ekklesia*, "the called-out ones"—where they are loved, challenged, nurtured, and developed into disciple-makers themselves. The church of Jesus is always both a soul-winning and soul-keeping reality—a single, integrated place of witness and fellowship that continually births new witness and new fellowship.

This unique edition of *Adventist World* is designed to make you more fully aware of the many resources that both help you build a vital relationship with Jesus *and* share the good news with those who don't yet know Him. In print, on the Web, through video, in podcasts, and even in virtual reality (VR), this ministry is building strength into the body of Christ, preparing it for more effective witness, and leaning toward that day when Jesus comes to take all who love Him to live with Him forever.

^{*} David J. B. Trim, Office of Archives, Statistics and Research, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, published in "Why Do They Walk Away? The Heart-Cry of Adventist Parents," https://adventistreview.org/commentary/why-do-they-walkaway-the-heart-cry-of-adventist-parents.

We believe in the power of prayer, and we welcome prayer requests that can be shared at our weekly staff worship every Wednesday morning. Send your requests to **prayer@adventistworld.org**, and pray for us as we work together to advance God's kingdom.

La Sierra University president Joy Fehr delivers an address during the dedication ceremony for a new sculpture portraying the parable of the lost sheep on the school's campus in **Riverside, California, United States. The February 15** ceremony marked the beginning of the school's centennial celebrations.

Photo: Natan Vigna



100

Episodes of an Australian-produced children's show that has brought the story of Jesus into the homes of thousands of families around the world. The King's Kids show celebrated the milestone with a special premiere of the 100th episode on Friday evening. February 18. The show was launched in 2020 to assist and minister to families during the first extended COVID-19 lockdown. Since then, it has become an international hit and is now broadcast in more than 70 countries worldwide, providing quality Christian TV content for children.

"I feel so happy that I was baptized here at the school. I am the first of many. God keeps working on the hearts of several of my coworkers, and they will also eventually respond. This construction project changed my life, because it is the place where I accepted Jesus."

—Juclei Araújo, construction worker, about the decision to give his life to Christ at his jobsite, the Alagoinhas Adventist School in Brazil. The school construction site moved Araújo and his coworkers to study the Bible.

Adventist Review Ministries Newsletter

Do you want to keep up with what is happening in our church? To receive our



weekly newsletter featuring news stories, inspirational stories, videos sign up today.

www.adventistreview.org/ newsletter-signup N=955

Source: Data shared by ASTR from the Adventist Review Mission Effectiveness Evaluation Report by Petr Činčala and Institute of Church Ministry team, 2018.

Readers were asked, In what ways has the *Adventist Review* impacted you?

ADVENTIST

AR articles have helped me improve **37%** my relationship with other people It broadens my I use ideas 15% understanding from KidsView of Adventist doctrines Information on health issues 46% has influenced my lifestyle 31% It inspires me to save the lost I use AR material 18% in my ministry **Testimonies of other** Adventists touched my life

"It's been nearly two vears. and when we suspended in-person classes we thought it would be for two or three weeks. then a month. We did not imagine that [we] would get used to virtual reality and that we would forget how to be in-person here.... We need to get back to experiencing the wonderful advantages of being together. connecting our hearts among classmates, teachers, and students, in a healthy environment and with great hope."

-Raquel Korniejczuk, Montemorelos University academic vice president, during the official reopening celebration. Hundreds of students from 44 countries were in attendance, many of whom had already begun their first years of college virtually in 2020.

2022 General Conference Session

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

Ted N C Wilson, General Conference President Erton C Köhler, General Conference Secretary

1,000+

The number of people that attended training to strengthen small-group ministry in South Colombia. The special congress drew regional and local leaders to better equip small group leaders and active members in spreading the gospel where they live. The theme for the congress was "Esperanza Definitiva," or "Ultimate Hope." More than 1,000 Missionary Work kits and New Believer kits were distributed among the delegates during the event. "We're called to reach, reclaim, and retain the people of North America with Jesus' mission and message of compassion, hope, and wholeness."

-Jose Cortes, Jr., during the North American Division (NAD) eHuddle event. This year the eHuddle event took place online. The event, also thought of as an evangelism and leadership think tank, is an opportunity for pastors, lay pastors, and elders to gather and reconsider what evangelism means to the church in the current environment.

361

The number of bicycles that Adventist Health and World Vision International donated to help middle school and high school students in northern Mexico. The project "Bicycles That Change Lives" aims to reduce school dropout rates and encourage physical activity. Students will use the bicycles for commuting to and from school and for general recreation. Five more deliveries are planned throughout the year.



Photo: South American Division News

U.S. Conference Establishes Fully Virtual Local Church

By Debra Cuadro, Atlantic Union Conference News

On February 1 the executive committee of the Northeastern Conference (NEC), based in Jamaica, New York, United States, made conference history by establishing its first virtual church. Members voted the Living Manna First Online Seventh-day Adventist Church and announced that Ivor Myers will serve as pastor. Myers previously pastored the Campbell Seventh-day Adventist Church in Campbell, California.

NEC president Abraham Jules is excited about the new endeavor. "The pandemic has taught all of us some lessons, one of them being that we can have church while we are at home. There are many people we will be reaching through this virtual congregation that we would not reach otherwise," he said.

During the pandemic, as many churches moved services online, Myers changed the way he did things, with the online audience tuning into the Campbell church's weekly services. As he interacted with viewers online during his live presentations, he noticed a significant increase in the reach and size of his audience. "We were communicating directly with them. We saw their comments come up and responded in real time. That ended up being a real blessing," he said.

Myers approached the Northeastern Conference with the idea of forming a virtual church. "The difference between streaming services online and forming a virtual church is that the people online are not on the outside looking in; they are not just joining a service; they *are* the service," Myers explained.

"This is a novel concept," Jules said. "I have learned in my life and my ministry that you must try some new things so you may meet and reach [other] people for Christ."

As a virtual church, Living Manna plans to operate much like a traditional church with members occupying a physical building. "The only difference is [the members] will come from around the world," Jules said. "They will be indoc-



Photo: Daniel A'Vard / iStock / Getty Images Plus / Getty Images

Leaders believe initiative opens scores of new possibilities.

trinated in the teachings of the Adventist Church, and we will have elections like any other church—all of the typical auxiliaries will be represented in the virtual church." Living Manna members will utilize Adventist Giving online to return tithe and give offerings. As a virtual church, Living Manna will also operate seven days a week through varied online programming, addressing daily living, finances, mental health, and more.

Pastoring an online church also allows Myers and his wife, Atonte, to minister from a different area of the country. While the virtual church falls under the Northeastern Conference in New York, the Myerses currently live in Huntsville, Alabama, where their ministry also includes serving at Oakwood University. Atonte is a licensed family therapist and will serve as the school's licensed mental health therapist, and Ivor will serve as head dean for the freshman men's dormitory.

When asked about possible impacts of members choosing to support a virtual church and abandoning their local church, Jules was not worried. "I'm not concerned about people leaving their brickand-mortar churches to go to a virtual church," Jules said. "If you are doing what is right and people still leave, it is a free country. You do your best to minister."

NEC associate secretary Nicardo Delahaye agreed. "The online church is catering to a different audience. We are going after two different demographics. The challenge with the virtual church will be trying to foster the congregation into seeing themselves as a system." ©

Digital Evangelism Can Help Reach Chinese Expatriates

By Edward Rodriguez, Southern Asia-Pacific Division, and Adventist World

The Chinese population is growing steadily, and Chinese people are migrating to different countries around the world. According to recent studies, four of the top 10 countries with the largest Chinese population overseas are situated within the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD). Adventist Church leaders believe this can open numerous opportunities for ministry in reaching the Chinese people.

According to statistics across the SSD territory, Indonesia ranks first, with millions of Chinese people living in that country. Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore also have millions of Chinese expatriates in their territories.

SSD Interfaith Services director Samuel Wang said he is excited to make the most of this opportunity to reach out to his fellow Chinese expatriates.

"Chinese in general are proud of their history and heritage," Wang explained when asked about the challenges of reaching out to fellow Chinese people in this generation. "Buddhism, consumerism, secularism, and many other influences have had a great impact on the Chinese all over. Many of the overseas Chinese have lost their language; as a result, the Chinese cultural identity has become blurred. So it is more challenging," he said.

Wang added that it is necessary to reintroduce many Chinese expatriates to their history and legacy, as well as introduce them to the truth for life found in the Bible. "They are prone to be exposed to the real Chinese origin and legacy, something that can help to easily establish a connecting bridge to the Bible," he said.

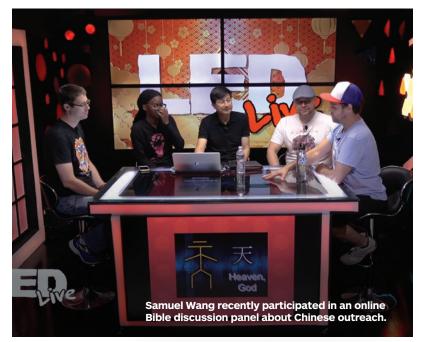


Photo: Southern Asia-Pacific Division News

According to Wang, digital evangelism is a providential instrument from God to this generation, as it can break down the walls and barriers of religion and culture. It is something that enables the message of hope to reach households that have been long closed to the truth, he said.

Producing online content that is made available for various audiences is an effective tool for reaching those who are curious and seeking answers, church leaders said.

In January 2022 Wang was invited to join an online Bible discussion about Chinese outreach, produced by the Little Light Studios. More than 18,000 people viewed the material in the first few days since it launched January 29.

Before the program, Wang had been active in producing online content that provides resources on how to reach Chinese people. Content about Chinese heritage presents opportunities to learn more about China's history, culture, and ethnicity.

Wang intends to produce more online content to reach the 1.44 billion Chinese people around the world, he said.

"People are getting more and more interested in learning and expanding their perspectives on culture, history, and the deep and vast love of God. It also explains the extrabiblical pieces of evidence of God's love and the authenticity of the Bible interpreted in its ecclesiastical and practical sense," Wang said. "This type of information and message provides a unique way to reach people's hearts for understanding more of God's love and His revelation to humanity. It is expected that this will soften the soil for the seed of the gospel to grow."

1,271,891

Membership of the North American Division (NAD) as of December 31, 2021

Up to 1,500

Number of cases of water that members of Harbor of Hope Seventhday Adventist Church distributed per day. The Benton Harbor community in Michigan was affected by a tainted water system, because of corrosion in the original lead water pipes. The city reached out to community partners, and Harbor of Hope church responded and enlisted volunteers to distribute water filters and bottles to the community. The church has established itself in the community as an important and trusted Adventist presence. O "The people are the most important part of what we're doing. The baking, the sewing, and handyman jobs are just the channels through which we can develop relationships, serve our community, and reveal the beautiful character of Christ to those who need to know Him. So let's smile and laugh a lot, show an interest in them, and listen with the love of Christ. We are not called to 'fix' them; only Jesus can do that. He just wants to love them through us, and He will do the rest."

—Debbie Boskovic, a volunteer at Giving Back project located in St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, about the meaning and purpose of the ministry. The Adventist project takes place in partnership with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and is focused on helping those marginalized in communities because of criminal records, substance abuse, mental health issues, and disabilities.

"As we learn the beauty that God has given His people—Black people, Brown people, White people, Yellow people—I believe that that understanding will cause us to embrace the beauty in all people and . . . love all people as God loves them."

-G. Alexander Bryant, president of the North American Division, in a special video message to church members during Black History Month in February. "We want to help them be successful in finding careers and providing for their families. AdventHealth's goal is to look at health care from a wholistic perspective. We want to provide support as they adjust to life in a new country."

—Jeanette Metzler, community benefit manager at AdventHealth Shawnee Mission, about a recent Career Day. The hospital hosted a Career Day event for students from a neighborhood where many refugee families live. The students were invited through New Change for Youth, a youth group for refugee families. They spent the afternoon at the hospital, learning about the different education requirements and other gualifications.



Photo: Rayno Victor, Lake Union Herald

Perspective



How Youth Ministry Keeps Changing Lives

Why young members should remain an Adventist priority.

Youth ministry matters—it always has and always will! Many years of youth ministry have clearly shown me that young people are a number-one priority for the church.

This is not an idle claim, but one that I can personally attest to. As a teenager I attended a Seventh-day Adventist school. My parents were not particularly interested in the church, but they wanted to provide me with the best, so they sent me to the Adventist school. However, during those pivotal adolescent years my life changed dramatically.

Noting my growing interest in the Adventist faith, my father once said to me, "You'll never become a Seventh-day Adventist, because if anyone offers you a game of sport on the Sabbath, you'll play it." He was both right and wrong. He was right that at the time sport was my number-one priority, but wrong in underestimating the power of the Holy Spirit's influence working through a group of contagious Adventist school friends, together with a dedicated and very relational youth director.

This was youth ministry at its best, and it eventually led me to surrender my life to Christ and put Him first. That decision changed my life dramatically. I went on to study for the ministry, and have now spent 30 years working in youth ministries. In this capacity I have seen firsthand that although times may change, the relational needs of young people remain the same.

Into this mix comes the pivotal role of life-transforming youth events, in which young people have the unique opportunity to meet and mingle with other like-minded youth at events specifically tailored for them. These include local church youth days, conference-wide youth rallies and camps, national and international youth congresses, and Pathfinder camporees. The significance of these events is corroborated through a series of very important youth studies over the years.

The Valuegenesis Europe Youth Survey (2007) involved more than 6,000 young adults, ages 14-25, and revealed not only that youth ministry has a powerful impact but also that youth ministry events are very highly rated. "74.6 percent of those that actually experienced

Photo: Rawpixel / iStock / Getty Images Plus / Getty Images

such activities say that the youth ministry of the union or conference is important because it fosters their faith development."* Faith development is important at all stages of life, but most crucial during the teenage and young adult years, when so many life-defining decisions are made.

I remember my first international camporee, sitting around the evening campfire bowl, awed by the atmosphere. This was also true of my experiences with youth congresses. I vowed that as long as I am involved in youth ministry, I will ensure that other young people have the opportunity to enjoy similar experiences. To be part of a faith-affirming event involving hundreds and even thousands of other like-minded young people is inspiring.

Life is a cycle. This is what a parent who was very involved in helping my generation of young people once said to me. "In turn, you will help my children's group," he added. I've never forgotten those very wise words, and I pray for the current generation of youth leaders at all levels as they help our young people establish, keep, and share their faith. ©

*Stephan Sigg, "A Spiritual Home for Young People? The Adventist Youth and Their Church as Seen From the Valuegenesis Europe Data, Part 1," Spes Christiana 24 (2013): 164.

Focus

Family Ties Designed to keep us together

dventist /orld

t all began when a group of mostly young adults, excited about Bible truths, got together on a late November day in Dorchester, Massachusetts, United States. The year was 1848. At that meeting Ellen

White, one of the participants of the conference, received a vision that has shaped the ministry of *Adventist* Review (and Adventist World) for more than 170 years. After coming out of vision, she told her husband, James White: "I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first. From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world."1

For the past 18 years Adventist World, the magazine you hold in your hands, has been part of the fulfillment of this prophetic message given to a small group of believers. With 1.5 million copies printed in seven languages every month, it adds significantly to the "streams of light" going "clear around the world."2 Add to that four additional languages offering a digital version of the magazine,³ and another 170,000 copies of the Adventist World digest printed every quarter in 25 more languages serving smaller language groups, and you can clearly see the reach of the "little paper" that was to "be a success from the first."

There is more to *Adventist World*, though, than you may imagine. In this issue we'd like to introduce you to the family of Adventist Review Ministries (ARMies) products. Starting with the oldest thing in Adventism, the *Adventist Review* magazine, published continuously since 1849 (and with slight variations of the title name), we have embraced all kinds of media, including video, audio, social media, websites, as well as virtual reality and games, to communicate the everlasting gospel proclaimed by the three angels of Revelation 14.

MANY FACETS-ONE MESSAGE

We invite our viewers, our listeners, our followers, and-yes-also our readers to keep anchored in the Word and engage actively with a world that desperately needs to hear the good news of the soon-coming Savior who offered Himself so that we could live eternally. You will hear about our extensive news operation that helps us keep connected as we see how God works in parts of the world we've never visited. All news is not always good news, but as a family we learn to celebrate as well as cry together as we share in each other's lives.

You will be blessed to hear about our extensive library of videos and podcasts that communicate the same Bible-based messages of hope as do the articles and stories in the print magazines. We are working hard to produce multimedia material that isn't limited to English only. Many of our partner ministries around the world focus on different languages, and we are rapidly building our library of subtitled translations in several languages.

THE NEXT GENERATION

You too may be worrying about the next generation of Adventists as you consider our children, grandchildren, teenagers, and young adults. Research has shown that significant numbers are leaving our faith community. That's why we started *KidsView*, a magazine for younger readers, now in its nineteenth year of publication, that *Adventist Review* subscribers receive for free. *KidsView* also reaches thousands of students at Seventh-day

There is more to Adventist World, though, than you may imagine.

Adventist schools around the North American Division. We thought about the next generation when we decided to consistently use two pages of *Adventist World* to help grow the faith of younger readers.

You will be intrigued to hear about the work of our innovation lab and the creative ways we are developing to stay on the "cutting edge" of media and relevant to the next generation. Many of them spend significant time every day on social media. That's where we want to meet them as well—including on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram.

Like me, you may enjoy holding a real book in your hand as you sit down to a good read. In 2020 we published 28 Ways to Spell Your Faith, our first volume of repurposed articles published over more than a decade in Adventist World. Portuguese and German translations of the volume are in the works.

In the following pages we hope that you will catch a better vision of the length and breadth of the ministry of our ARMies team. This ministry is not a conglomerate of disconnected initiatives or products, but is marked by intentional and close family ties designed to keep the global family of Adventists together and engaged in the mission God entrusted to that group of young adults meeting together in Dorchester, Massachusetts. ()

 ¹ Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 125.
 ² The languages include English, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Korean, Bahasa, and French.
 ³ The digital magazine can be read in Russian, Chinese, Kiswahili, and Papiamento.

Gerald A. Klingbeil serves as an associate editor of ARMies and leads the editorial team of *Adventist World*.

Meet the Family

Putting the pieces together

Do you remember the last large family reunion you attended? Wasn't it fun to catch up with uncles, aunts, grandparents, cousins, or nephews and nieces? This section is designed for you to *meet the large family* of Adventist Review Ministries (ARMies) products and initiatives. Some you may already enjoy, while others may be completely new to you. We hope you'll relish the "family reunion" and make new and long-lasting friends. -Editors



Adventist Review Still Shining—Keeping Company and Building Faith

Friends of mine and entire church congregations are often glad to assure me that they read the *Adventist Review (AR)*. Truth be told, most of the time the magazine they know is *Adventist World (AW)*, a paper that circulates by the millions all over the Adventist world. And though *AR* is more than 170 years old—older than the Adventist Church itself—its young and sprightly relative, *AW*, quite outdistances it in global spread and hard copy readership.

This wonderful reality acknowledges that multiple audiences make up worldwide Adventism. Having a single editorial team produce both magazines keeps us alert to the diet our younger church members need for growth to spiritual maturity, and, simultaneously, conscious of what older, stronger, and more mature Christians need to be digging their teeth into. Planning print issues together is the first level of integration for ARMies, and illustrative of what we seek to achieve at all levels on all our platforms. *AR*, the veteran, continues to blaze a trail along with its fellow print journals and multiple digital platforms.

A regular, monthly, 76-page issue of *AR* [72 pages plus covers] contains news pertinent to the world church, biblical studies, devotional thoughts, theological discussions, commentaries by leading thinkers and writers, as well as a miscellany of faith-building stories, data charts on some current question, or a time line on some relevant historical matter. For spiritual edification and growth, and for a word of truth to share in your witness, *AR* is there for you.



Visit www.adventistreview.org and get a taste. Then sign up to subscribe to the oldest thing in Adventism that keeps us thinking and growing together.

Lael Caesar serves as an associate editor of ARMies and leads the editorial team working on *Adventist Review.*

KidsView

It's a Child's World We Need to Live In

When pondering the future of an organization, a publication, and yes, a ministry, we think about the people being served and anticipate their coming needs. But to build upon that, we look to the generations coming up behind those who patronize you now. For us, the future of ARMies is found in the children of this church.

This coming autumn *KidsView* will celebrate 20 years of being the "baby" in the ARMies family. A publication founded to meet a need that was not being met at the time—a general-interest Adventist magazine for children ages 8-12—*KidsView* aims to create a vital link between the future of the church and ARMies.

My job, since 2007, has been to be the editor of *KidsView*. In that capacity I work with our designer, Merle Poirier, to create issues that feature activities, STEM (acronym for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) columns, devotionals, student writing, guizzes, stories, and a perennial favorite, our interactive and highly creative calendar. I look at new content creation through the eves of children with the aim of keeping them smiling. *KidsView* can be the vital link between the Adventist Church of the present and the Adventist Church of the future.





To read the latest issue and back issues of *KidsView*, visit www.

kidsview.com or connect on Facebook.com/kidsviewmagazine.

Wilona Karimabadi, an assistant editor of ARMies, is editor of *KidsView*.

News

Telling the Stories

Several months after I began contributing to ARMies, I was asked to cover an important church event in Cuba. Once there, I was able to witness the unabated enthusiasm and joy of faithful church members in that nation. Everything I had heard about our church family in Cuba was accurate.

A year later I traveled to Japan to support evangelistic efforts by the General Conference. In a more challenging field, I felt moved by the quiet devotion of Japanese Adventists. Their songs, prayers, and greetings reached me to the core.

Telling stories about the church and its members connects us with people so different and yet so similar to us in purpose and goals. It makes prejudices fall. God loves the few thousand calm and committed members in Japan as deeply as He cares for the many thousands more outgoing members across Cuba.

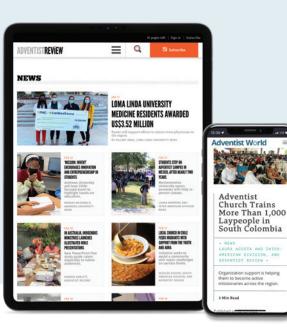
The news operation of ARMies works with world church fields to update and encourage our readers around the world, both online and in print. It provides journalistic coverage of the church's major events offering two or three daily news pieces six days a week, sharing vetted articles on theology, religious liberty, health, mission, and outreach. Important decisions made by collective leadership and copies of voted documents are shared. Members from one region learn to connect and pray for others. Above all, the ARMies news operation illustrates that God is engaged and active, working to draw people to Himself.



Follow the news affecting your Adventist Church family and the larger world

around us every day at www.adventistworld.org and www.adventistreview.org.

Marcos Paseggi is a regular contributor to the news operation of ARMies and lives in **Ottawa, Canada**.



Adventist Review Ministries Books

Repurposing the True and Trusted

About six years ago, the ARMies team developed a strategic plan to repurpose articles from the vast repertoire of past issues of *AR* and *AW* into book-length publications. Over a period of years, several articles will appear on a related topic and bless thousands of readers online and in the print magazines. Separately, each article was helpful, but drawn together, these related articles can be shared with a new audience in a new format, and the blessing is multiplied many times over.

An example of this beneficial reuse is the recent book, 28 Ways to Spell Your Faith, which started out as a series of articles in AW on the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Each of the articles was written in a timeless way to introduce to new believers (and as a review for other church members) the precious Bible truths we hold dear. With authors from all over the world, the series was well received in the magazines. Why should those articles go into a drawer or the rubbish bin, one by one, over several years? Why not put them together in a book and give them new life to minister in many other ways?

AW and *AR* are committed to inspiring and edifying members of the Adventist Church, and a book collection of articles is an invaluable way to expand the reach of the ministry.



Interested in catching up on Bible truths? Visit https://tinyurl.com/ muamyane and order your copy.

> Tim Lale is a freelance editor and copyeditor living in Columbia, Maryland, United States.



Adventist Review TV 1,500 and Counting

The aroma of breakfast still lingers on a warm Sunday morning as I reach out for my remote control. I flick through the many TV apps on my Apple TV: Netflix, Disney, HBO, and finally settle on Adventist Review TV (ARtv).

Instead of watching programs in a predetermined traditional linear progression of 30-minute slots, an extensive menu of "on demand" videos appears on the screen in front of me. I scroll through several categories: Health, Business and Money, Devotionals, Music, Faith, Nature and Science, Documentaries, Cooking, Mission, until I get to the category I am looking for, History. There is a new series that I would like to binge-watch. Gone are the days of waiting a whole week to watch the next episode in a TV series.

I settle back into my chair as I start with episode 1. ARtv was the first on-demand streaming channel in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and also one of the first religious channels. It started in late 2017, years ahead of such other streaming giants as Disney, HBO, and Amazon Prime. The Adventist Church is known for being a pioneer in media, having been one of the first religious organizations to broadcast on radio and television. It is great to contribute to a pioneering work—daily curating and creating content in video form.

You can access ARtv, with a catalogue of more than 1,500 videos, online at adventistreview.tv, on Roku, Apple TV, Fire TV, Android TV, and on iOS and Android phones.



Watch the documentary "Breaking the Curse," about the Otamari people of Benin in Africa and see how introducing

the cursebreaker can transform a people. https://tinyurl.com/25ak76su

André Brink is a video producer who lives near Capetown, South Africa.

GERALD A. KLINGBEIL, 1011

Podcasting

Listen to the Good **News Anywhere**

Audio on demand, or podcasting, is a collection or series of digital audio files made available for downloading or listening via the Internet. Podcasts are typically hosted by an individual or individuals who lead a conversation. share stories. or report the news.

AR Audio's earliest digital releases featured AR's Digging Deeper series, which delved deeper into important doctrines of the church. This series, along with audio versions of numerous articles featured in both print magazines of ARMies, is available each month, recorded by the authors and made available as podcasts and on the AR and AW websites.

Currently the GraceNotes podcast, a weekly devotional on grace, written and narrated by Bill Knott,

is produced in English and French. In North America a radio version of GraceNotes is broadcast each week on the LifeTalk and 3ABN radio networks. Plans to produce GraceNotes in Mandarin, Spanish, Portuguese, and Swahili are under way.

As AR Audio continues to produce AR and AW podcasts, supporting and augmenting the mission and vision of our magazines, we show that podcasts are just another way to share gospel content "on demand," so the bread of heaven may be consumed in the most efficient manner possible, providing for as many as possible the nourishment of eternal life that is Jesus Christ Himself.



To get a taste of this, listen to Adventist World storvteller Dick Duerksen recounting "An Incred-

ible Partnership With God" at https://tinyurl.com/yc5d7y5h





To access all our podcast content, visit https://adventist

review.podbean.com or https:// adventistworld.podbean.com.



To sign up and receive GraceNotes by email, go to: https://tinyurl.

com/2p89ww6p

Greg Scott is an associate director of ARMies and directs the AR Audio division.

Social Media

Find Us at Your Favorite Social **Media Platform**

I remember sitting in a church business meeting of my local congregation while some of the founding members emphatically stated that social media was not real evangelism. It wasn't really outreach. It didn't really influence people to decide for Jesus, join the Advent movement or further their Christian walk.

But the data is clear, both in my own experience and in how ARMies has engaged in social media over the past few years. Social media is where the flock is at. In the past, the medium was historically a print platform, followed more recently by Web-based content. Today, most



of the engagement of the ARMies ministry is on social media, where people are spending most of their time. Specifically, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are the three channels where the most engagement is seen.

The ARMies social media channels have seen a dramatic increase in engagement over the past few years, particularly around content that is simple and closely connected with Scripture, as well as discussing ideas that appear in Ellen White's writings. As Wilona Karimabadi, one of the editors working with social media, noted: "People appreciate things that connect them to these sources of inspiration and truth. This is why we share quotes and inspiring stories. But the most engaging content emerges when members around the world share about their culture and how it can inform and inspire the greater Adventist family."

- @adventistworldmagazine [for AW] @adventistreview [for AR] @adventistworldswahili [for AW Kiswahili] @adventistworldespanol [for AW in Spanish]
- **[**0] @officialadventistworld [for AW] @adventistreview [for AR]
 - @adventistreview [for AR] @adventistworld1 [for AW]

Jared Thurmon is a marketing consultant and lay pastor who lives in Adairsville, Georgia, United States.

Adventist Review Ministries Media Lab

Staying on the Cutting Edge

The Adventist Review Ministries Media Lab's role is to imagine content creation for up-and-coming media platforms, and to harness and maximize the potential of these new platforms-as well as shaping them.

Aristotle once said, "Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand!" The Media Lab is constantly looking at new media platforms to share and engage with our audiences. One such example is our implementation of augmented reality in our children-focused magazine *KidsView*. Using an accompanying app, the user can visualize relevant 3-D objects from the article.

Keeping at the forefront of technology and sometimes forging forward in the creation of new media technologies to better communicate with digital natives and digital innates are some of my passions.

In many cases there is no stylebook on how to adapt content for virtual reality, augmented reality, or gamification. The Media Lab interfaces with content creators and experts to optimize the narrative to the platform.

I'm sure that James White, if he were alive today, would embrace every media platform available to communicate the everlasting message of God's love to the world.



Learn more from about the visualization by visiting https://www.

kidsview.com/app. Download the app and then try it for yourself using this image.



Daryl Gungadoo directs the ARMies media lab and lives in the United Kingdom.

Adventist World Kiswahili WhatsApp Channel

Reaching and Sharing Where People Are

Adventist World began as a way of reaching a global audience in more contextually relevant ways. As a member and reader, I feel passionate about contextualization of the gospel. We benefit so much when we listen to one another in the great diversity among humanity. We all experience God in different ways. Language is one of our differences. From my home in South Africa, I help to coordinate the production of AW for Kiswahili readers in East Africa and all over the world.

Part of this contextualization involves generating content created by Kiswahili authors from within the East-Central Africa Division (ECD). One of the most enjoyable parts of this work is engaging with wonderful Adventist believers from Kenya and Tanzania, and learning more about their lives and the church's work in those regions.

I find it particularly exciting to support a product that is delivered digitally on WhatsApp, to be read on mobile phones or tablets. For this project, Adventist World doesn't have to worry about ordering enough paper to print a magazine and then shipping the finished product to a far-distant

World

place. The content of AW is literally reaching thousands of people wherever they are and making it easy for them to "click and share" the life-changing material with friends. Adventist World plans is to add more languages using this delivery method in the future

Penny Brink is a pastor and editor who lives near Capetown, South Africa

1G Adventis

How to Subscribe and Share

Method One:

1. Add the number 1-240-540-3000 to your phone's contacts list.

2. Go to your WhatsApp and send any message to that number's WhatsApp.

3. You'll receive a message in return. Choose your menu language. (Materials are all in Kiswahili.)

4. Follow the menu by typing the item number in the message bar and sending the message. In this way, you can choose to read the magazine or GraceNotes, send in a message to Adventist World, or share the group with a friend.

Method Two: Scan this QR code and follow the instructions Method Three:



Click this link to watch an animation in Kiswahili about the WhatsApp group and how to subscribe:

https://tinyurl.com/59jn43e2.

Adventist Review Ministries Digital Platforms

Staying Relevant and Connected

How can ARMies continue to provide meaningful dialogue, interaction, inspiration, and noteworthy news to a new generation of readers?

We recognize that current media consumption trends point to digital media as the preferred platform of a new generation of readers. In line with our mission, ARMies digital platforms bring to the audience new ways to organically integrate deep spirituality into their daily routines.

Our dreams about flexible, well-designed, curated digital venues providing an atmosphere conducive to spiritual interactions, introspection, growth, and understanding are becoming a reality. In the first week of 2022 we released the new *AR* website. While still in its infancy, it represents a flexible platform that changes and adapts, grows as it learns about the user, and delivers the things that matter in the user's journey with Christ.

We have concentrated our efforts on making the navigation process as straightforward as possible. A minimalist design provides focus and concentration, while the new robust search feature makes the magazine's rich heritage of content available to the user. The website will develop from its current multimedia state into a fully interactive site and a virtual community of believers.

We also plan to launch a refreshed version of the *AW* website in 2022. As we navigate the volatility of the end-times, our digital platforms will continue to support mission, nurture, and hope to those seeking wholesome multimedia expressions.





Visit www.adventist review.org and www. adventistworld.org, bookmark these pages, and include them in your daily wanderings of the digital realm.



GraceNotes Sharing the Best News

Hundreds of thousands of Adventists and friends around the globe follow the weekly ministry of *GraceNotes*, a brief, inspiring focus on goodness of the everlasting gospel. *GraceNotes* appear in text; via email; on FaceBook, Instagram, and Twitter; and on radio through the LifeTalk and 3ABN radio networks. Thousands of believers share, translate, and propel this "open source" gospel content to those they care about.



You can sign up for GraceNotes at https:// tinyurl.com/2p89ww6p

and read past *GraceNotes* at www.moregracenotes.com.

Bill Knott serves as the executive editor and publisher of ARMies.

Adventist Review Ministries Newsletter Bringing It All Together

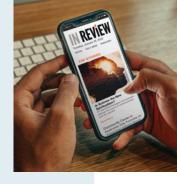
One of the ways ARMies continues to connect with our audience is through daily social media posts and a weekly email newsletter. The newsletter brings to our readers a digest of the biggest news stories and articles of the week, along with a *GraceNotes* podcast and highlighted videos from ARtv.

The Friday email is a weekly touchpoint that helps us to engage with our readers and raise awareness of influential articles and videos. The newsletter reaches thousands of subscribers who can connect to events and developments in the Adventist Church and find inspiration in devotional and practical content.

Online audiences have become used to receiving emails to be notified of new content, and they are also more oriented to finding articles of interest through social media posts. Every day, posts about *AR* and *AW* articles appear on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to help readers connect

with church-related topics of interest to them. The newsletter and social media posts provide extensive visibility for ARMies products in a world of online readers and viewers who have come to expect a curated product that brings them relevant content.

You can sign up for the newsletter on both adventistreview. org or adventistworld.org.







Enno Müller serves as communication director of ARMies.

Gabriel Begle is the director of ARMies digital platforms.

Global View

"Take Off Standing on Holy Ground Your Shoes!"

love playing practical jokes, but one day I took things too far. At the Seventh-day Adventist university I attended many years ago, there was a secluded prayer garden near the religion department. Many of my fellow theology students and I would often retreat there to ask God to deliver us from another Hebrew exam or to help us find a wife.

One day I saw a fellow student, David, praying alone in the garden. I sneaked up on him, hid behind a tree, and in my deepest voice said, "David, take off your shoes! You are on holy ground!" I then peeked around the tree to catch his response.

I expected him to say something like "Ha! Ha! Gary, I know it's you!" But he didn't. Instead, I watched him reverently take off his shoes! I was suddenly flooded with guilt and quickly apologized to my friend and exited the garden. I've never forgotten that experience. The joke was on me that day, because unlike me, David demonstrated true reverence for God.

WHAT IS REVERENCE?

According to the *KJV Bible Dictionary*, "reverence" means "fear mingled with respect and esteem."¹ In Scripture this taking off of one's shoes was practiced by the priests so as not to bring dust or dirt into God's presence. They also showed reverence by bathing, combing their hair, and putting on their special clothes before serving in His temple (see Lev. 10:6; 16:4; 21:10, NLT).²

You see, reverence is how one treats a king or dignitary. Many cultures and religions today embrace this same outward show of respect for those they hold in high esteem. Walking casually or carelessly into the presence of the King of kings would be out of the question for millions today.

But reverence extends beyond outward behavior and into every aspect of our lives. When we respect and fear God, we obey His laws. The first angel's message of Revelation 14:7 says, "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water" (RSV).³ This passage is a clear reference to the Sabbath, and therefore the expectation is that all who reverence God will obey all His commandments (Ex. 20:8-11).

DEEP RESPECT

This kind of deep respect for God may be one of our greatest deficiencies in the church today. This could be because we hear so little about His holiness. But our God is "set apart" (holy) from humanity in love, purity, righteousness, justice, and goodness. In fact, God is so holy He is described as being a "consuming fire" (Deut. 4:24; 9:3; Heb. 12:29).

God is good, and He is the source and sustainer of all life, but it is not safe to approach Him irreverently. In Leviticus 10, two young priests, Nadab and Abihu, disregarded God's directions. They went into the presence of the Lord and burned "unholy fire" before Him and were instantly consumed (verses 1, 2, RSV).

Why? Ellen White explains, "God designed to teach the people that they must approach Him with reverence and awe, and in His own appointed manner. He cannot accept partial obedience."⁴

These two sons of Aaron knew better—they knew God had commanded them to use in their censers only fire *He* had kindled. But these two priests, intoxicated not only by liquor but by their privileged positions, demonstrated a foolhardy irreverence for God (verse 9).



So the Israelites were not led to falsely believe God was volatile or petty in His actions, Aaron was forbidden to publicly mourn the death of his sons. It is a dangerous thing to publicly sympathize with irreverent living and therefore cast reproach on the judgments of God.

God did not consume Nadab and Abihu in a fit of rage. The Bible says they were consumed by His holy presence—"So fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them " (verse 2, NRSV).

Why were they consumed? God Himself explains: "By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified" (verse 3). God expects reverence from His people.

Reverence or respect for God is demonstrated not in partial but in complete obedience to His commands. In Revelation 14:12 the Bible predicts that just before the coming of the Lord there will be a God-revering people waiting for Him: "Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

THE GOSPEL

You might wonder where the gospel is in all of this. How can

we approach God with confidence when we often fall short of the reverence due Him? One of the most famous Bible passages is John 14:6, where Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." When we read this, we tend to interpret it solely as a promise, but it is much more than a promise—it is also a warning. Jesus is saying it's dangerous to go into the presence of God unless we go through Him.

Interestingly, Nadab and Abihu not only offered "strange fire" (Lev. 10:1, KJV), an act of flagrant irreverence toward God; they also brought fire before God that was not from the altar sanctified by the blood of the lamb (Lev. 16:12; Ex. 30:10). In other words, they dared to come before the Father without the atoning blood of Jesus. They came with fire of their own making. In essence, they came before our awesome and holy God on the merits of their own righteousness and not on the merits of Jesus and His blood-bought righteousness by faith (Rom. 1:16, 17). Perhaps things would have been different if they had done this. In 1 John 1:7 we read, "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship

with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

What we need now more than ever is a deeper understanding of the holiness of God and the importance of "walking in the light" (reverence) of His presence. Then we would see more clearly our great need of Jesus, His grace and free gift of forgiveness, righteousness, and repentance from sin. Perhaps then, like my friend David, we would be quicker to take off our shoes in His presence.

Incidentally, several years after my prank backfired in the prayer garden, I met David, who went on to be a pastor in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He told me he never forgot that experience in the garden, because it was a direct answer to prayer. Apparently David was praying that God would give him a sermon illustration for his preaching class examination. His sermon title was "Moses and the Burning Bush"! When he suddenly heard a voice telling him to take off his shoes, it helped him connect with the message in a real way and gave him a great opening illustration! He told me he got an "A" on the sermon. Thank you, David, for having a great sense of humor and for reminding us to be reverent in the presence of our majestic, holy, and grace-filled King. 🔘

¹ "Reverence," King James Bible Dictionary, kingjamesbibledictionary, com/Dictionary/reverence.
² See also Ellen G. White, "The Tabernacle and Its Services," Patriarchs and Prophets (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890, 1908), pp. 343-358. Texts credited to NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.
³ Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by the Division of

Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission. ⁴ E. G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 360.

Gary Blanchard is director of the Youth Ministries Department of the General Conference of the Seventhday Adventist Church. t had been a while since I had witnessed for God or helped someone in a meaningful way. It seemed as though I was becoming useless as a Christian; I wasn't making a positive difference in anyone's life.

That changed recently, however, because of an outing with a group of teenagers.

IT BEGAN WITH A FAVOR

Early one Sabbath morning a neighbor, Nyamka, who's also the pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist church I attend, texted to ask if my husband, Deegii, and I would drive his kids to a location on the outskirts of the city for a teens'

church gathering. He couldn't take them because he had to lead out with the online church service. We agreed, and Deegii and I ended up spending the day with the group.

A similar outing was scheduled for the following Sabbath, and Deegii and I again attended. Shortly after we arrived, though, it began to rain, and we all rushed to find shelter.

A woman who introduced herself as the manager of the parklike area soon showed up and talked with Deegii and Solongo, a 19-year-old youth leader. The woman said we were on private property and needed to leave. We were surprised, but with her permission, and after Deegii paid a rental fee, we

Faith in Action

A Worldwide Army of Youth

More are out there than we may think. headed to a nearby *ger*, a traditional Mongolian yurt. There were about 15 of us. We found refuge from the rain there, and we all introduced ourselves to one another. Solongo then thanked Deegii and me for paying the rental cost for the *ger*.

Even though it was Sabbath and no business would usually be done by my family, Deegii had paid the fee as an offering to God so these young people wouldn't miss the opportunity to draw closer to Jesus, nature, and one another.

Later Solongo shared much of her life story with me. Until just a few years ago, she was one of the 51.7 percent of Mongolians who are Buddhists,¹ the predominant religion in the country. But her life began changing when she was in ninth grade. Boloroo, an Adventist church leader who used to live in Zamiin-Uud and is now my neighbor, visited Solongo's school and invited the girls to a craft session at her home.

Here's part of my conversation with Solongo, who obviously loves God and longs to share His love with others.

Young people from the Adventist church in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, pose for a picture. Milena Mendes is kneeling, front center, in red jacket. Solongo is kneeling, far right, black T-shirt.

A CONVERSATION WITH SOLONGO

Milena: How did you react when you met Boloroo for the first time? Did you think she was somehow different from other Mongolians?

Solongo: My parents, my relatives, and most Mongolians struggle with alcohol issues. So I admired Boloroo and her Christian family, especially her husband, for not drinking alcohol. They knew a lot about education, health, joy, and so on. I enjoyed their fun activities. which were different from what many in our society participate in, such as smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol. Boloroo knows how to cook healthy meals, how important education is. how to teach others to be humble and behave courteously and kindly.

Why did you decide to become a Christian?

Growing up, I noticed the harmful behaviors of my father, his lack of education, and his lack of respect for my mother. I remember my mother crying and telling me to pursue an education and to choose a husband wisely. I decided to become an Adventist Christian when I realized how well organized God is and how big His love is. I also realized what big things I can do with God's help, and how important education is to Adventists. All the Adventists I've met are polite, very helpful, and take care of their health.

How did your family react when you told them you wanted to be baptized and become a follower of Christ?

I started attending church two years before I got baptized. My parents never stopped me from going to church or being a follower of Christ. They've always supported me. But other relatives haven't.

What challenges have you faced as the only Christian among all your relatives?

When I was a freshman in college in another city, I lived with relatives. They would tell me, "You're so stupid because you go to church." They forbade me to go to church on Sabbath days.

What about your friends? Did they support you?

I used to have several friends, and we would go to church together. But now many of them have left the faith. I was lonely, but God was always beside me. Even if I have no friends, if I have God I have everything.

Did you find it difficult to live a Christian lifestyle in college?

It was challenging spiritually because there weren't other Christians to associate with. When I was in my hometown, I went to church almost every day and met with Boloroo. I talked with her about problems as well as good things that were happening in my life, shared testimonies, and learned from her. This helped me to solve problems and grow spiritually. One day she told me, "Soon you will go to another city to be a college student. We won't be able to talk every day. Instead, you'll have to learn to talk to God." After I became a student, I felt so lonely that if I'd not learned to talk to God, I would have lost my faith, as my friends did. It's a big test for students like me who are from small villages. But God never left me. He was always there to listen to me.

Why did you decide to work with teenagers in the church?

Many of the teenagers aren't living a Christian lifestyle. I want to help them to become united and stronger in Christ, to become active in outreach, and to be polite and kind to each other. As I work with them I pray that God will help them to learn to love and know each other well.

What's your biggest dream?

I love working with the youth, and I just want to be a positive influence in their lives.

What advice would you give to other young people who read this story? God has ways to help His people meet and grow together, and He's using young people worldwide to make it happen.

Be hardworking with God. God says, "Go watch the ants, you lazy person" (Prov. 6:6, NCV).² Strive to become strong in your spiritual life, to serve others with your spiritual gifts, to teach what you've learned, and to share what you receive. We can do anything with God.

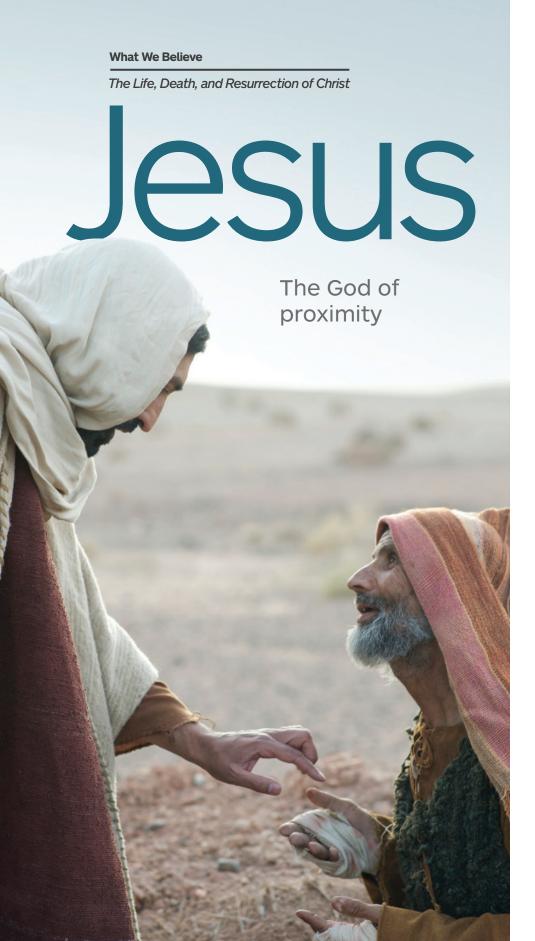
FUTURE GOALS

Solongo dreams of going to America on a work-and-travel exchange program so she can improve her English skills and become a better teacher—and she believes that God answers prayers.

We haven't had church gatherings for almost two years now, as churches are still shut down because of COVID-19. God has ways, though, to help His people meet and grow together, and He's using young people worldwide, such as Solongo, to make it happen. ©

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Mongolia ²Scriptures credited to NCV are quoted from *The Holy Bible, New Century Version*, copyright © 2005 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

Milena Mendes is a Brazilian journalist and English teacher living with her Mongolian husband, Deegii, in **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**.



he leper had been alone for so long. The disease had ravaged his body, but the forced separation from society had ravaged his heart. As he walked toward the Preacher, people scattered, afraid of the disease he carried. It was a painful reminder of his solitude.

It doesn't require much imagination to empathize with the isolation of the leper. Since the emergence of COVID-19, we have lived through shutdowns and quarantines, and many have lost loved ones. Like the leper, we are keenly aware of our own mortality, our need for community, and our need for a cure.

When the leper reached Jesus, he fell at His feet and begged, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean" (Luke 5:12, ESV).¹ In an act of incredible tenderness, Jesus reached out His hand and touched the untouchable. The leper's impurity and disease could not harm the Source of purity. Instead, Jesus' touch and His words, "I will; be clean" (verse 13, ESV), transformed the man physically, socially, and spiritually.

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS

Jesus frequently associated with those deemed "untouchable" by society. Further in Luke 5, the biblical text describes how Jesus and His disciples ate with Levi and other guests. The Pharisees and scribes grumbled that Jesus was eating with "tax collectors and sinners" (verse 30). Jesus was unconcerned. Like the leper's disease, the sin of those around Him posed no threat. In fact, sinners were the very people He *wanted* to be around.

Both the healing of the leper and Jesus' friendship with sinners fit within the prophecy He claimed as His mission statement at the beginning of His ministry: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18, 19, ESV).

In Christ, God did not simply send another prophet—He sent His own Son to dwell with and minister to humanity. to be "God with us." Jesus confronted sin and its effects in the most tangible ways possible: touching lepers, raising the dead, rebuking demons, living with the hungerand-thirst human experience, and suffering and overcoming temptation. He did not shy away from what we consider the "dirtiest" aspects of humanity, but wallowed into the mire to rescue those who cried out for mercy, all while remaining the pure and holy Son of God.

THE DEATH OF JESUS

It is impossible to talk about the incarnation of Christ without also talking about the cross. Simeon prophesied about the glory and tragedy that awaited Jesus even as he held Him as a baby (Luke 2:28-35)—Jesus was "born to face His passion." During His ministry He had touched lepers and eaten with sinners, but on the cross He *became* the outcast.² There was no separation between sinful humanity and Himself. To defeat the sin pandemic, He became the plague (2 Cor. 5:21).

The cross repairs the breach between humanity and God and breaks down "the dividing wall of hostility" within humanity (Eph. 2:14, ESV). In Christ there are no "strangers and aliens" (verse 19, ESV). The radical call of Christ to "take up [your] cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23) is a call to emulate Christ in His humility, to engage and act on behalf of others, even (and especially) when society deems them unworthy, impure, or untouchable.

Theologian James Cone writes, "The cross is the most empowering symbol of God's loving solidarity with the 'least of these,' the unwanted in society who suffer daily from great injustices. Christians must face the cross as the terrible tragedy it was and discover in it, through faith and repentance, the liberating joy of eternal salvation."³

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

In Christ's resurrection what is accomplished on the cross becomes accessible. Those whom Jesus healed and raised from the dead eventually died—their healed bodies were still subject to the effects of sin. But the resurrection promises that sin and death do not have the last word. Jesus has conquered the grave!

The universal offering of eternal life proclaimed in John 3:16 leaves no doubt that Christ's gift of life is given to everyone. The gospel message is to be proclaimed around the world, and those who accept it stand on equal ground before God. Regardless of wealth, status, ethnicity, or occupation, all are welcome at heaven's banquet table (Matt. 22:1-10).

After Jesus performed the miracle on Peter's boat, Peter fell at His knees and cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke 5:8, ESV). Instead, Jesus invited him to join His work (verse 10). When, by every human rationale, Jesus could or should have distanced Himself from people, He drew them closer to Himself. In drawing them close to Him, He also drew them close to one another (John 17:22, 23). The Holy Spirit continues this work and we, who are "heirs . . . to the promise" (Gal. 3:29), live with the full benefits of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The current pandemic has forced

To defeat the sin-pandemic, Jesus became the plague.

us to separate and isolate for medical safety, but it has also exposed and exacerbated existing rifts in our societies. We live in a deeply divided world. My great comfort during this time is that Christ has overcome all boundaries. While we are not immune to the contagion of sin and its effects (such as COVID), Jesus is. He is with us in lockdown and quarantine, through social division and unrest. His ministry sets the standard for loving and empathetic human interaction; the cross offers forgiveness for our sins against God and each other and proclaims solidarity with the oppressed; and the resurrection promises that injustice, sickness, and death have been defeated and will be abolished for eternity in the world made new.

Our God is a God of proximity and a God of solidarity. To those who place their trust in Him, He is always near, ready to be a comfort to the lonely and a healer to the afflicted. What good news for this current age! ©

¹ Scripture quotations marked ESV are from *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ² Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God* (New York: SCM Press, 1974), p. 205.

Sarah Gane Burton is a freelance writer and copy editor based in Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States, where she lives with her husband and two children.

³ James Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2011), p. 151.

Discovering the Spirit of Prophecy

My Journey of Faith

The Spirit of Prophecy Internet ministry

ord! I am Yours! Use me." I still remember that night, crying out to God in desperate agony and pain. I was done running; I was a broken man. Amid a flood of tears I promised God, "I will go wherever You lead."

Just hours earlier my wife and I had buried our 10-year-old son—a victim of leukemia. Drawing close to God after many sleepless nights spent in anguished prayer, I made a promise to Him, not knowing where this journey of faith would take me. In a crisis I remembered: "With earnest, fervent prayer, plead for purity of soul. Plead as earnestly, as eagerly, as you would for your mortal life, were it at stake."¹

Fifteen months later, in May 2001, we flew to the United States to spend time healing with family. I began volunteering at an Adventist academy in Maryland, developing their technology program. Soon afterward I was asked if I would be interested in interviewing for a position at the Ellen G. White Estate. This was a direct answer to prayer. I had been praying that God would open the door for me to become a digital missionary.

Six months later I began working for the White Estate. Always be faithful and put your trust in God, "believing that He loves us, and knows what is for our best good. Thus, instead of our own way, it leads us to choose His way."2 Ellen White wisely says, "By prayer, by the study of His Word, by faith in His abiding presence, the weakest of human beings may live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold them by a hand that will never let go."³

IMPORTANCE OF PARENTAL GUIDANCE

STEPS TO CHRIST

My conversion began in eighth grade while attending an Adventist school in Australia. I still remember riding home in the back of a school bus with friends when some of them started doing things that made me uncomfortable. I walked to the front of the bus and plopped down beside a classmate that everyone called a Goody Two-shoes. He was shocked! That decision started my journey toward a new life, one in harmony with my Adventist upbringing. The Bible states, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

Several weeks of deep conversation during our 1.5-hour daily bus ride to and from school resulted in my friend and I deciding to take baptismal classes with our local pastor. I remember him handing us *Steps to Christ*, the familiar volume with a picture of Jesus knocking on the United Nations building on the cover.

It was the first time I read an Ellen White book for myself. Its words spoke to me personally, bringing hope and a desire to follow Jesus. I highlighted the following passage when I was 14, and it prepared me for when I needed it most in the future. "God desires to heal us, to set us free. But since this requires an entire transformation, a renewing of our whole nature, we must yield ourselves wholly to Him."⁴

ALWAYS FOLLOW GOD'S LEADING

Twenty-one years later, while standing in my new office looking at shelves of Ellen White books, I reached for my favorite wellmarked copy of *Steps to Christ*. Thumbing through it, I stumbled upon the quote that, years earlier, had begun my journey of faith. I thanked God for leading me to my new home at the White Estate.

My first task was developing a new strategy for sharing the gift of light—Ellen White's writings. By the grace of God, the White Estate now has three websites and four Ellen G. White (EGW) Writings apps detailed below that reached nearly 92 million visitors from 200 countries during 2021. Ellen White stated, "My writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last."⁵

ELLEN WHITE ONLINE RESOURCES

Each of our websites focuses on different aspects of our ministry. Our most visited website, egwwritings.org, is an extensive database of both Ellen White and historical materials that encompasses 801,331 pages of digitized data contained within 2,908 books, documents, periodicals, and pamphlets.

The ellenwhite.org website is a complete digital resource study center. Some of its collections include: 1,895 answers to frequently asked questions; 6,570 articles and documents; 53,330 scanned letters and White Estate correspondence; 6,988 archive photographs; a virtual tour of the White Estate visitor center; information about our 23 global branch offices and research centers; lessons plans for teachers; and a Pioneer Adventures section full of activities, stories, and games for children to enjoy.

The whiteestate.org website provides information about the life and ministry of Ellen White and her estate. In addition, it features answers to key questions people may have about Ellen White and her prophetic ministry. It also provides access to featured EGW books, eBooks, and audiobooks on the site.

God used a crisis in my life to accomplish His purpose of providing millions of users, globally, free access to Ellen White's writings. They have made the difference in my life and can do likewise for you. Remember: "God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as coworkers with Him."⁶

 ¹Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 1, p. 163.
 ²Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 25.
 ³Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905), p. 182. ⁴Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1892), p. 43.
 ⁵E. G. White, *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 7.
 ⁶E. G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 479.

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Online Collections

EGW Writings: 120 books, 21 devotionals, 77 periodical articles, 203 pamphlets, 25 letter and manuscript volumes, 9 biographical volumes, and 500 audiobooks and eBooks in 14 languages.

Reference: Adventist Beliefs Bible studies, EGW dictionary, children stories, Spirit of Prophecy reference books, EGW study guides, EGW topical index, and historical references.

Bible: 14 Bibles, 5 concordances, 4 dictionaries, 20 commentaries, 6 Seventh-day Adventist Scripture indexes.

Adventist Pioneer

Library: 581 pioneer books, 55 periodicals, 21 miscellaneous titles, 19 recent authors.

Free EGW Writings apps:

Android: EGW Writings 2 app on Google Play

Apple iOS: EGW Writings 2 app for iPhone and iPad devices on the App store

macOS: EGW Writings software for Mac laptop and computers on the App store

Windows: EGW Writings software for Windows 10 computers on the Windows store.

Millennial Voices

Finding My Place



As I continue to teach my children and serve my community, God is enlarging my capacity to love. re You sure this is the right place for me, God?" I prayed after a hard day with my kindergarten class. I had just started a new job in a new country, and I was struggling to find my feet. When I was preparing to move to Korea to teach English, I asked God to put me not only where I was needed, but in the best place for me. I expected that that would be teaching older students. That's where I felt most confident. Instead, God put me in an Adventist kindergarten, teaching 7-year-olds.

I had some challenging children. One day everything seemed to go wrong. One child even threw an earsplitting, screaming tantrum. I was badly shaken. After work I went home and cried, because I felt like a failure. What was I supposed to do with these children? How could I teach and nurture them? I felt out of my depth.

After a while, however, I began to suspect that this sense of helplessness was a blessing in disguise. Instead of relying completely on my own skills and experience, I had to rely on God. I had

to learn new skills. I had to stretch and grow in new ways. "Keep loving your children," I felt God say to me. "Keep being patient with them."

Things got easier in time, although of course there were still challenges. I started to feel more settled in my new community. I also had unexpected witnessing moments in my classroom. My "problem child," especially, seemed to soak up both affection and stories about Jesus. One day, after he had tried my patience all morning, he demanded, "Hug me, Teacher Mommy!" Then as I wrapped my arms around him, he whispered to me, "Teacher, I think Satan makes me do bad things." "You always have a choice," I replied. "God can help you do good things, even if Satan tempts you to do bad things."

Another day one of my girls came to me with tears in her eyes. "My daddy is in hospital," she said. "I'm scared." Instead of simply telling her that I would pray for her father, I felt the urge to pray aloud for him right then. She clung to my legs as I said a simple prayer, and gave me a big, relieved hug afterward. Such moments reminded me that God was at work in my children's lives, and that I had a part to play.

I've been in Korea for eight months now. I can see that in many ways this is indeed the best place for me. Not least, as I continue to teach these children and serve my community, God is enlarging my capacity to love. God knew what He was doing when He brought me here.

God knows where the best place is for each of us. Sometimes His best comes wrapped up with challenges. On hard days I'm encouraged by this quote: "The fact that we are called upon to endure trial shows that the Lord Jesus sees in us something precious which He desires to develop. . . . God never leads His children otherwise than they would choose to be led, if they could see the end from the beginning and discern the glory of the purpose which they are fulfilling as coworkers with Him."

Wherever God has placed you now, He has a beautiful plan He's working out, no matter the difficulties you may be facing. Let's trust God more as He continues to lead us! ©

*Ellen G. White, *The Faith I Live By* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), p. 64.

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Health & Wellness

Is Alcohol Heart Healthy?

What are the facts?

I'm 25 years old and am just finishing a graduate degree. Most of my friends and fellow students drink alcohol, claiming alcohol is heart healthy. What are the facts?

xcellent question! Heart-health benefits were first attributed to wine consumption by French-born scientist and researcher Serge Renaud. He attributed the lower number of heart attacks in the French population compared to other populations on similar diets in Europe to wine drinking—"the inviting glass," as he described it.

Renaud's hypothesis was published in 1992 and named the French paradox. He was interviewed on the popular U.S. television program *60 Minutes* in 1991, and following numerous rebroadcasts, it was viewed by more than 50 million Americans. The following year the sales of wine increased by 40 percent in the United States, and exportation of French wines more than doubled between 1994 and 1998.¹ This brief history lends background to the current debates and the significant influence of the alcohol industry in this conversation.

Many papers on the purported heart-health benefit of moderate alcohol consumption have been published in the scientific literature. There's also a very robust body of literature showing the significant problems of many studies on alcohol use, including the numerous confounding variables, risk of abuse and dependence, methodological issues relating to assessing the level and duration of alcohol use over the life course, and significant differences in the study populations and comparisons in reaching this positive conclusion.²

Nondrinkers represent a very diverse group, adding to the confounding, and it's essential to account for such variances as past drinking history, access to health care and health insurance, education, and socioeconomic factors. Very large and convincing studies using global data confirm the limitations of the evidence for a beneficial effect with moderate alcohol consumption and have concluded that "the evidence for the harmful effects of alcohol is undoubtedly stronger than the evidence for beneficial effects."³ It's also important to note there are no reported heart-health benefits for young people, and the most vulnerable to alcohol-use complications are aged 19 through 45 years.

Alcohol remains the third-largest risk factor for the global disease burden. Alcohol use places many burdens on families, including strong association with domestic violence. Alcohol is addictive. Alcohol use is significantly associated with crime and violence. Even *apparent* cardiac benefits are far outweighed by increased risks of cancer and strokes and overall cardiovascular disease. Alcohol is a known carcinogen, and there's no known safe level of alcohol intake that may avoid this dreaded health complication.⁴

Overall, it's scientifically clear that the safe level of alcohol use is "zero."

Most recently the World Heart Federation has voiced strong warnings on alcohol use.⁵

Read, stay informed, choose health and the abundant life—avoid alcohol completely! ©

¹ Dominique Lanzmann-Petithory, "Professor Serge C. Renaud (1927-2012): French Paradox and Wine Active Compounds," *Wine Studies 3*, no. 1 (Dec. 10. 2014); 7. 8.

³ Hans Olav Fekjaer, "Alcohol—A Universal Preventive Agent? A Critical Analysis," *Addiction* 108, no. 12 (December 2013): 2051-2057 (E-published ahead of print).

⁴ https://adventistreview.org/news/there-is-no-safe-level-of-alcohol-use/ ⁵ https://world-heart-federation.org/wp-content/uploads/WHF-Policy-Brief-Alcohol.pdf

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² Alain Marchand, Andree Demers, Pierre Durand, et al., "The Moderating Effect of Alcohol Intake on the Relationship Between Work Strains and Psychological Distress," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 64, no. 3 (May 2003): 419-427.



When Mother Prays

"When I need somebody prayed for, I call Leslie. When she prays, God listens." —Pastor Reginald Richardson



"May I Tell You a Story?"

BY DICK DUERKSEN

eslie Hubbard is the mother of five children from 27 to 4 years of age. She is a mother who prays for the well-being of those children, a prayer warrior who prays with faith that her prayers will be answered. Even when her son Deonta McFerson, Jr., was dying on the emergency room bed, she sensed that God had a plan for her boy and so prayed for him to be healed. She prayed all day, every day, praying with every breath for him to get better. She knew God would heal him.

Mother Leslie has a unique approach to prayer, talking with God person-to-person with complete surrender to the outcome, yet with an earnest belief that God *can* change things.

Deonta was 25 years old, years that had included deep mental and physical abuse, traumas that haunted him for years, making life unbearable. By this day, December 10, 2020, the traumas had driven him into such dark despair and depression that he simply couldn't handle it anymore. On that Thursday night he parked his car, pulled out a pistol, pointed it at his head, and put a bullet into his brain.

"I showed up at the hospital as his pastor," says Pastor Richardson, "even though I hadn't seen much of him around church. His mother had called for me, and I came to support her and help her make the hard decisions. He was, the doctors said, going to die."

There was still blood everywhere, and while Pastor Richardson, Mother Leslie, and the family were standing at Deonta's bedside, the doctors came in and told them that Deonta was not going to make it out of this event alive.

* * *

Several long days later a new doctor came into Deonta's room. He listened to Mother Leslie and carefully explained what was happening to her son. He was very kind as he explained that it was unlikely Deonta was going to make it out of this event alive.

"He shattered his skull," the doctor said. "Although his brain stem seems not to have been damaged, his brain is swelling at an alarming rate and may soon crush the brain stem. When that happens, he will die." "What can you do to help him?" Mother Leslie asked.

"We could do surgery and remove the bullet fragments from his brain. That could stop the swelling and make it possible for him to live. However, if he were to survive, we do not know what he might be like. Though he may live, he may never be able to walk or speak again." "I just want my son to be well, 100 percent better than before and strong in his faith," Mother Leslie responded. "I know that's what God wants too. Please, do the surgery. God will do the rest. Deonta must be well, totally well."

"I listened to her strong belief," says Pastor Richardson, "and then accepted her desire, the start-to-finish yearning she had for her son, and her love became the theme of our prayers."

"Whatever demons were with him on December 10 will be cast out. One of these days Deonta will come right into the church. You watch for that day, Pastor," Mother Leslie told him.

Others also felt the power and believed. Deonta's teenage brother, David, was filled with the same faith. When Pastor Richardson asked David how he would feel if God did not bring Deonta back from death, David's answer was quick and strong. "I would still love God anyway, even if Deonta dies. But I want him back. Totally well."

"It was a difficult situation," says Pastor Richardson. "It looked as though Deonta's life was over. Yet, as Leslie's pastor, I shared the challenges with the church, and we chose to come alongside her together in faith."

* *

The doctors listened to Mother Leslie, performed the incredibly difficult surgery, and removed the bullet fragments from Deonta's brain. Deonta did not die, but improved enough to be transferred to a skilled nursing facility. Mother Leslie continued talking with God about her son, believing that God was performing a healing.

One day, as Mother Leslie was standing at Deonta's bedside, she noticed his eyes seemed more alert. He seemed to be looking around the room, as though he was noticing things.

Another day he stuck out his tongue and responded to the sound of his mother's voice. Then he started to babble—not words or sentences, but sounds. Then the full miracle of Mother Leslie's prayers took hold. Deonta began moving his head purposefully and speaking clearly.

Everyone heard Mother Leslie's shouts of joy!

* * *

When Mother Leslie was finally able to take Deonta home, one of the first things he did was ask for help in studying the Bible. One of the church members, Noah Keller, came over and began studying with him. Then, on a Sabbath in July of 2021, Deonta said he wanted to go to church.

"He was in a wheelchair," Pastor Richardson says. "He was still a little wobbly, but I saw him come through the front door, just as his mother said I would. After that he came often, listened eagerly, and participated in worship."

On a Sabbath in September, Deonta raised his hand when Pastor Richardson made an appeal for baptism. "I want to be baptized," he declared loudly for all to hear.

January 1, 2022, was the day Deonta and his brother David chose to be baptized. Mother Leslie decided to reaffirm her commitment to God and be rebaptized at the same time. They came into church together, verbally confirmed that each had accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and were baptized in the church's new baptistry.

Hear Pastor Richardson remember that special day.

"I cannot adequately describe my immense feelings of excitement, humility, honor, and joy at seeing Deonta walk into the baptismal tank that Sabbath morning. I stood, warm from the love of Jesus glowing in Deonta's eyes, remembering the night in the emergency room. That was a cold day. Very cold and very dark. Ominous. Sad. All hope ripped away. But on this Sabbath everything had changed! Mother Leslie's prayers had been answered. I reached out and clasped her hands. God had chased the demons away. The cold was gone. Hope had returned. Joy filled the room. Deonta was Alive. Alert. Deonta had come home!"

"He's on the road to full recovery," Mother Leslie smiles. "Staying the course with Jesus." ©

Dick Duerksen, a pastor and storyteller, lives in **Portland, Oregon, United States.**

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How to Make a Daily Bible Time Habit

had Fell is famous for using a wad of bubble gum to blow the largest bubble in history. Without using his hands, he blew a bubble that was 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) in diameter! Isn't that amazing? This record was written up in Guinness World Records and hasn't been broken since 2004. The only way Chad was able to set this record was by practicing with bubble gum again and again. Imagine how many times he must have had bubble gum all over his face and hair!

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Think about something that took you a re-e-e-ally long time to learn, such as tying your shoes or riding a bicycle. At first it was difficult to figure out those shoelaces and what to do with them. But after you became comfortable with tying the loops, it became easier and easier, and now you don't even have to look at your laces when you tie them or concentrate on them at all. It has become extremely easy because you practiced the same thing again and again to form a pattern in your brain. This is called a habit. Habits are formed by repeating an activity again and again.

NEW HABITS

Anytime is a great time to start a positive habit. Think about something you can begin doing that will make you a better person to your friends, to your brothers and sisters, and to the rest of your family. God has asked us to make a habit of spending special one-on-one time with Him. The best way to make your habit stick is to do it at a special time every day.

To make your devotion time interesting, try something creative to get to know Jesus. This could include making a prayer list for the sick, the homeless, friends, teachers, family, and church pastors. Or you could draw part of a Bible story that has a special meaning to you. Maybe you want to keep a journal of Scriptures that you like, or listen to the words of a Christian song that you enjoy. You can't go wrong with starting a habit of spending time with Jesus every day. This would be a lot less messy than having bubble gum in your hair every day!

A Bible Study on Faith

Look up these verses about faith in your Bible and get out a notebook. After reading each verse, write down your thoughts in your notebook. Questions, too anything that goes through your mind as you read and think about these important passages.

Hebrew 11:1

Faith is believing in someone or something you can't see.

Romans 10:17

Our faith is increased by hearing (or reading God's Word).

Romans 5:1

We accept Christ's offer of salvation by faith, not because we feel saved. Faith is claiming the promises for ourselves, not based on our feelings or lack of them.

Matthew 17:20, 21

The faith that "moves mountains" of difficulty comes when we get rid of distracting things in our lives and keep our minds clear to hear God's Word.

1 John 5:4

Faith is the most important thing in resisting the devil.

Galatians 3:26

God wants you to believe that you are His child. He doesn't want you to worry about whether you are saved. If you have accepted Jesus as your Savior, trust Him with your salvation.

Ephesians 2:8

Again, praise God that He saved you, even though you (and I) don't deserve it. We can't earn our way to heaven. Our good works are our way of saying, "Thank You, Jesus, for saving me."

James 2:17-22

True faith that works by love and makes us clean from the inside out comes from allowing Jesus to change our lives and our likes!

Ephesians 6:16, 17

The Bible often associates faith with God's Word. So if you want your faith to increase, spend time with the Word.

Revelation 14:12

The "saints" who are alive when Jesus comes will be keeping God's commandments through faith in the power of Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.



Bible Treasure

Faith is a factor in overcoming the devil.

1 John 5:4

🚺 Tips

Find a nice, quiet place to read your Bible uninterrupted.

Put away your screens. This is a special time with just you and Jesus.

Find a time of day that works best. Mornings are a great time to start your day with God, even if that means waking up just a little earlier.

This article was reprinted from *KidsView*, January 2017.



MAY 3 – JUNE 11, 2022

CATCH THE JOY OF SERVICE EXPERIENCE PERSONAL REVIVAL FIND PURPOSE IN TIMES OF CRISIS



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