

C O L L E G E A N D U N I V E R S I T Y

DIALOGUE

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**Profile
of a changing church**

**Genesis and the
geologic column**

Waiting for sex

**HIV/AIDS:
What you should know**

**Adventists
and human dignity**

My difficult journey



Volume 15
Number

1



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Between thinkable and unthinkable

Francis Schaeffer, perhaps one of the great formative evangelical thinkers of our time, introduced two words that define the human dilemma in decision-making: *thinkable* and *unthinkable*.

Schaeffer's thesis is that the dilemma repeats itself every so often in history, and that every generation is confronted with the issue of distinguishing between variables and invariables, between temporary and eternal, between subjective and objective, between relative and normative. Schaeffer describes the phenomena: "There is a 'thinkable' and an 'unthinkable' in every era. One era is quite certain intellectually and emotionally about what is acceptable. Yet another era decides that these 'certainties' are unacceptable and puts another set of values into practice. On a humanistic base, people drift along from generation to generation, and the morally unthinkable becomes the thinkable as the years move on."*

To what areas of life are these categories of "thinkable" and "unthinkable" applicable? Are they similar to Hegel's thesis-antithesis-synthesis, giving birth to a new thesis, ad infinitum? Are there areas in life where thinkable and unthinkable will always remain so, without any mixing? Are there areas where thinkable can become unthinkable, and vice versa?

Christians, of all people, should not find it difficult to face such issues, once they realize that the biblical worldview allows for changeable and unchangeable arenas in human life. For example, when it comes to moral issues delineated by the Ten Commandments, there can be no variability. Sabbath will always be Sabbath, a murder will always be an interference with what God has ordained to exist, adultery will always be a violation of a divine frontier placed between the acceptable and the unacceptable between two sexes. Encroachments or deviations of these divine norms of human behavior can never become acceptable. Upon their immutability stands the enduring quality of created order. On moral and spiritual issues, there can be no question of movement from one to the other. Stability demands an absolute norm.

On the other hand, there are areas of life where what was once thinkable is no longer thinkable, and what was unthinkable is no longer unthinkable—at least for the majority of the human community. Areas that have moved from acceptable to non-acceptable include slavery, colonialism, oppression of women, child labor, etc. The movement from non-acceptable to acceptable has covered an entire spectrum of social issues, such as the concept of equality and equal opportunity for people of all races, and women's right to attempt whatever they set their mind to do. Upon this social mobility, to reject the unacceptable and reach for the acceptable, stands the progress of the human race.

Thus, while moral issues are governed on unchangeable principles, social and cultural behavior tend to move with the times. But what must give the Christian a ground for concern is the slow and insidious way in which the once unthinkable becomes thinkable, with the process often being justified by subtle appeals—to economic growth, "biblical ideas," social justice, etc.—which may seem right in theory but wrong in their application. So we end up doing the wrong thing and justifying

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Editorial

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this by lofty principles. Thus we have economic plunder and greed justified in terms of growth and development, homosexuality justified by appeals to biblical notions of loving without discrimination and loving the unlovable, and modern serfdom promoted as a way to bring about social justice.

For Christians, the thinkable and unthinkable should really pose no great problem. The line of distinction, drawn by inspiration across the pages of the Bible, tells us where to stand. When we stand there, we stand tall.

—John M. Fowler

* C. Everett Koop and Francis Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, rev. ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1983), p. 2.

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The editors are interested in well written articles, interviews, and reports consistent with *Dialogue's* objectives: (1) To nurture an intelligent, living faith; (2) to deepen commitment to Christ, the Bible, and Adventist global mission; (3) to articulate a biblical approach to contemporary issues; and (4) to offer ideas and models of Christian service and outreach.

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Pontius' Puddle

© Joel Kauffman



Profile of a changing church

by Lowell C. Cooper

Prayerful planning, faithfulness to God, and selfless leadership can advance the cause of our growing and changing worldwide church.

You cannot step twice into the same river, for other waters are continually flowing on.

—Heraclitus (c. 540-c. 480 B.C.)

Change, someone has said, is the only constant. It takes place in every organization. Some changes happen quickly and are readily visible, while others occur slowly over time and often escape notice. Members of an organization can cause change, but they are also caught by changes over which they have little or no control. Such is the case in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This article traces some of the changes that have taken place over the past 50 to 70 years and identifies three specific changes that church members can effect in the years ahead.

Membership growth and demographics

The two charts to the right compare the total Seventh-day Adventist membership and the geographic distribution of that membership in 1960 and 2001. During this period of time, the membership has grown by 1000 percent. An equally dramatic change is the shift in geographic distribution. In 1960, 43 percent of world membership was found in North America and Europe. At the close of 2001 that figure is reduced to 11 percent. This does not mean that membership in North America and Europe is declining. The reality is that growth rates in these areas significantly lag the growth rates in other areas of the world.

Today more than one-third of the entire church membership resides on the continent of Africa. Another third is found in Inter and South America.

Seventh-day Adventist Church membership is increasing at the rate of 2,600 new members per day. The accelerated growth rate of recent years results in 25 percent of the world membership having been members for less than five years. In some areas of the world that experience the highest rate of growth, more than 40 percent of the membership will have been members for less than five years. This means that a significant portion of the total membership is still getting oriented to Seventh-day Adventist history, values, lifestyle, and organizational processes.

Figure 1
Membership Distribution 1960

1,245,125 total membership

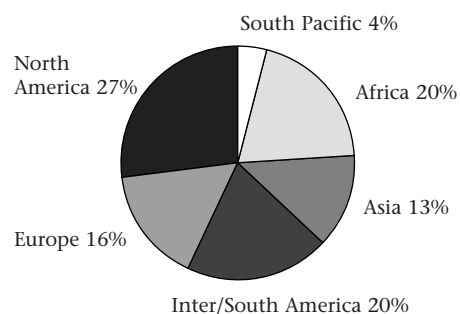


Figure 2
Membership Distribution 2001

12,317,920 total membership

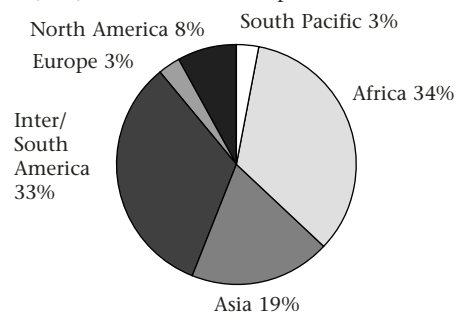
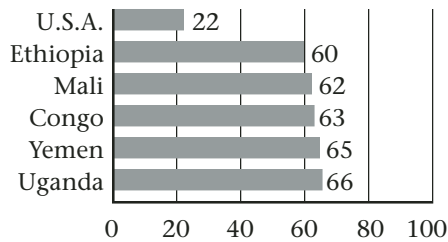


Figure 3
Percentage of Population Younger Than 15 in 2010



Although there is no definitive picture concerning the age distribution of Seventh-day Adventist members, anecdotal information suggests that there is a much younger membership in those geographic areas where church membership has been growing most rapidly. A recent survey (2002) by *USA Today* projects the age demographics in the U.S.A. as compared to five countries in Africa by the year 2010. (See figure 3.)

Resource distribution and support patterns

Figures 4 and 5 present a comparison of the resource and membership distribution. These charts do not reflect comparative faithfulness in stewardship. Such information could only be presented fairly within the context of local economies and currencies. However, in terms of total world tithe the North American Division, despite its reduced proportion of membership as compared

to 1960, still provides well over half of the total tithe. The two charts indicate a concentration of the resource base. Eight percent of membership providing 60 percent of total tithe (2001) is a higher concentration than 27 percent of members providing 76 percent of tithe (1960).

Figure 6 reveals that there has been a dramatic change in the way members support the church. In 1930 Sabbath school mission offerings were equal to 65 percent of tithe. By 2001, this had decreased to 5 percent of tithe. One cannot conclude from this chart alone that members are giving less, since actual currency amounts have increased. Rather, members are giving differently. The rapid increase of special-purpose entities (i.e. Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Adventist World Radio, and other media services) and independent ministries gives members a wide array of opportunities to support the mission of the church.

Church member donations to special purpose entities and to independent ministries are not reflected in the financial reports of the church since these funds do not flow through normal church channels. Instead, the funds are generally sent directly to the organization concerned.

Special-purpose entities and independent ministries have had a major impact on the worldwide activity of the church. At the same time the shift in giving patterns by members, as compared with

several decades earlier, presents formidable challenges to carry on the established work of the church. It is relatively easier to find donors for highly visible and successful evangelism projects than to obtain systematic support for the training of pastors and local church leaders needed to serve the newly baptized members. The infrastructure necessary to nurture the spiritual life of new believers, such as church buildings, Bible study guides, educational programs, and training materials, etc. is heavily dependent on the Sabbath school mission offerings of the worldwide membership. If the historical trend in such offerings continues, there is likely to be an increasing strain on the ability of the church to care adequately for new growth.

Members with Seventh-day Adventist education

In 1950, for every 100 members, there were 26 students in Seventh-day Adventist schools. It is assumed that most were from Seventh-day Adventist families. By 2000, although the total number of students in Adventist schools had surpassed the one million mark, the ratio had declined to less than 10 students for every 100 members. It is estimated that perhaps five of the 10 were from Seventh-day Adventist families. Figure 7 shows the changing relationship between church membership and enrollment in Seventh-day Adventist schools. One must be cautious about expecting a direct correlation between church membership and Seventh-day Adventist school enrollment. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that a decreasing percentage of Seventh-day Adventist members are enrolled in denominational educational programs.

Students graduating (or having received a significant portion of their education) from Seventh-day Adventist schools have formed the primary pool of candidates from which the church has obtained its employees and future

Figure 4
Tithe Percentages 1960

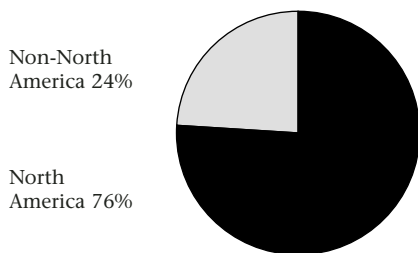
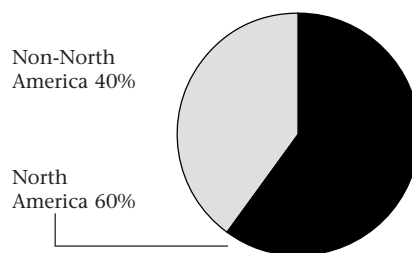


Figure 5
Tithe Percentages 2001



leaders. Such employees are generally well-grounded in an understanding of church structure and operations and are familiar with and committed to its teachings, values, and lifestyle. This is not to imply that persons without a Seventh-day Adventist education are inferior employees or leaders. They simply need a longer time to become oriented to the organizational life and practices of the church. The relatively smaller pool of potential leaders with Seventh-day Adventist education will become increasingly important as the church seeks to address the leadership needs of a rapidly growing membership.

Increasing diversity and cultural awareness

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is present in 203 of the world's 228 countries and carries on its ministry in many different languages. International meetings of the church, especially General Conference sessions, present a tapestry of cultures, languages, customs, and dress. If today's world population were represented in a village of 100 persons, the village would be comprised of:

- 61 persons from Asia
- 13 persons from Africa
- 12 persons from Europe
- 8 persons from Inter/South America
- 5 persons from North America
- 1 person from Oceania

A village of 100 persons representing Seventh-day Adventist membership would have similar diversity but in different proportions. (See Figure 2 above.) The gospel has spread among cultures primarily through cross-cultural missionary endeavor. However, as the gospel takes root in any given culture, it finds expression in ways unique to the local setting. This should be expected—but when the reality is encountered, many questions can arise as to which culture's practice is most in harmony with the gospel.

From everywhere to everywhere

Over the years, there has been a changing awareness of what constitutes the "mission field". Missionaries, now called interdivision employees, were sent primarily from North America and Europe, the so-called homeland divisions, to the far-flung corners of the globe. The mission fields were seen as any place that was far away, relatively unknown, and comparatively less advanced economically. Persons returning to their homeland after a period in mission service shared stories of strange cultures, economic hardship, and primitive communication systems.

This, too, has changed. While remote villages and economic disparities remain among the world's nations and in some regions the Seventh-day Adventist presence is minimal, there is a sizeable

membership on every continent. A wide array of educational institutions has been established, church leadership positions are largely in the hands of nationals, and local resources are increasing. Former mission fields now provide as well as receive interdivision employees.

In 2000, there were 169 new appointments to interdivision/intradivision service. A further 339 employees returned to interdivision/intradivision service following furloughs. Only one of the church's 12 world divisions was not a "sending" division in the year 2000. All divisions were "receiving" divisions of employees from other divisions.

There has also been a growing involvement of Seventh-day Adventists as volunteers in international projects. During 2000, more than 1,500 persons left their homelands as volunteers to serve in other areas of the world; only two of the world divisions were not represented in the list of "sending" divisions. In addition, several independent supporting ministries also provide opportunities for international service on a voluntary basis.

Church members can create change

In the midst of such macro-level changes over which they have little or no control, Seventh-day Adventist Church members can be intentional about change. Positive change is the result of

Figure 6
Mission Offerings as a Percentage of Total World Tithes

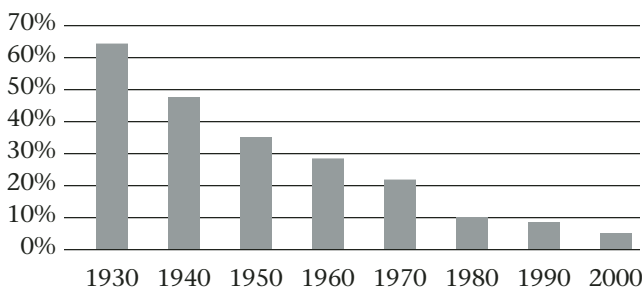


Figure 7
Membership Growth and Seventh-day Adventist Church School Enrollment

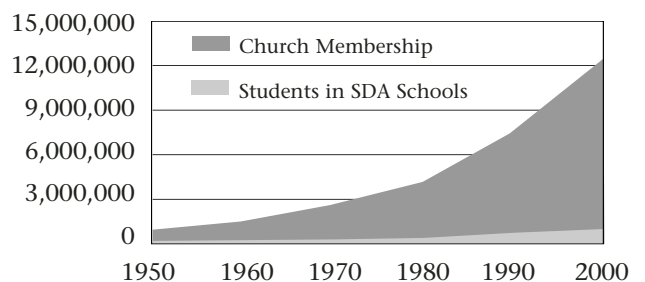


Figure 8
Strategic Issues for the Church

- Church life
- Church unity
- Church growth



deliberate action towards widely understood goals and objectives. Three strategic issues have been identified for the attention of the worldwide membership. Regardless of where one lives, what language one speaks, or how long one has been a member of the church, he or she can make a positive impact in the following three areas of emphasis:

1. *Quality of local church life:* The essence of Seventh-day Adventism is seen most clearly in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist family at the congregational level. It is here that church teaching and lifestyle find their expression in attitudes, behavior, and relationships. It

is from the dynamics of the local church that individual members make their impact on the local community. Every member can make a deliberate and positive contribution to the quality of life in the local congregation and its area of ministry.

The leadership team of every local church should review such questions as: How do the services of this church promote spiritual growth among the members? What provisions are made for the nurture of new members? Are the members being taught a deeper understanding of Scripture? Are they being trained in all areas of discipleship? Is the atmosphere of fellowship in this church conducive to the development of a growing membership?

2. *Enrichment of worldwide church unity:* Both the local congregation and the worldwide family are expressions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The needs and interest of one end of this spectrum must not lead to a disregard of

the other. Seventh-day Adventists see themselves as charged with the proclamation and illustration of a global end-of-time message concerning the kingdom of God. Inherent in the life of an organization with a rapidly growing membership are the tendencies to fragmentation and preoccupation with matters of immediate or local concern. There can be a corresponding loss of awareness and sensitivity to the collective identity of the world family. Church structure alone is insufficient to maintain worldwide unity. It is message and mission that hold the church together.

3. *Focus on unfinished mission:* The gospel commission constitutes the central task of the church. The life that is lived in God becomes a living witness to the world for the purpose of extending His kingdom. Seventh-day Adventists must always be challenged by the awareness of an unfinished task. Our collective vision must be focused on bringing a Seventh-day Adventist witness to the gospel in every community on earth. The church cannot afford to become self-satisfied with its accomplishments of the past nor consume all its energies in the maintenance of its present infrastructure.

New horizons, new opportunities for witness, new ways of proclamation, new locations for establishing communities of believers—these are the realities that compel the life of those who serve as the followers of Jesus Christ. Seventh-day Adventists are not to withdraw from the world but to infiltrate the world. Every member is valued. Every member is needed. Every member can make a difference in the strategic issues, for the glory of God.

Lowell C. Cooper is a vice-president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A. E-mail: 74617.2166@compuserve.com

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Genesis and the geologic column

by Ariel A. Roth

What does the geologic column say about the truth of Creation?

Why and how did those terrible dinosaurs become extinct? Many ideas have been proposed. One scientific article lists 40 possible reasons, ranging from stupidity to changes in the gravitational constant.¹ More recent considerations suggest the possibility that a huge asteroid, rich in the element iridium, struck the Earth, causing a gigantic catastrophe that destroyed dinosaurs and many other forms of life. This arresting idea is especially popular with the public media and geophysicists, but comparable groups of other scientists, especially the paleontologists who study fossils, think that other factors, such as heat or volcanoes, caused the extinction of the dinosaurs.²

Scientists who believe that the Bible is the Word of God interpret the past history of life on Earth differently. They see the worldwide flood described in the Book of Genesis (chap. 6-8) as the horrendous event that would have destroyed the dinosaurs and deposited the main fossil-bearing layers of the crust of the Earth. Such a view is not accepted at present in scientific circles, although it very much was in the past. The variety of ideas about the demise of the dinosaurs warns us to be cautious in interpreting a past we cannot now observe.³

A crucial question

Which is true? Science or the Bible? The differences between the scientific evolutionary model and the biblical creation model are striking, and could hardly be more different. This is not just about dinosaurs dying. The evolution model proposes that life originated

thousands of millions of years ago by itself, and then evolved into more and more advanced forms, eventually producing human beings. The creation model, as given in the Bible, proposes that God created the main forms of life, including humans, a few thousand years ago. Because of humanity's wickedness, that creation was destroyed by a worldwide flood. How we interpret the arrangement of the fossils in what we call the *geologic column* has much to say about these two models.⁴ More importantly, these models can profoundly affect our worldview. Are we here only as a result of a prolonged, meaningless mechanistic evolutionary process, or were we created in the image of God, with purpose, responsibility, and hope for future eternal life, as indicated in the Bible? Many have struggled over these questions, and many will continue to struggle.

The geologic column—what is it?

The geological column is not something you can find in the rock layers that form the crust of the Earth. It is more like a map. It is a column-like representation of the general order of the rock layers over the surface of the Earth. The lowest layers that would have been deposited first are at the bottom of the column, and the most recent are at the top as we find them in nature. When you look at deeply eroded places like the Grand Canyon in the United States (Figure 1), you are seeing a significant part of the geologic column represented by layers that are exceptionally thick in that locality. You can also think of the



FIGURE 1. View of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River. The Precambrian is exposed in the layers just below the tip of the black arrow at the left, the Cambrian Explosion and the Phanerozoic in the layers just above.

geological column as a slice of a layered cake. The slice represents the various layers in the order found in the cake. Likewise, if you would cut a thin vertical slice through layers forming the wall of the Grand Canyon, you would have a geologic column of the area.

As is usual in the study of nature, the picture is complicated. Often in many parts of the Earth, some layers of the geologic column are missing. We can tell they are missing because we find them in other places. No place on Earth's surface has a complete geologic column. In a few places the major divisions are all well represented. The complete geologic column is the ideal where all the layers are represented in the expected order as we go up or down through the layers of the crust of the Earth. The geologic column was patiently put together as paleontologists compared the fossil sequence in the geologic column of one locality with another. It was noted that certain kinds of fossils, like crab-like trilobites, were below dinosaurs, and dinosaurs below elephants. A sample of a few characteristic organisms found in the main parts of the geologic column is illustrated in Figure 2. The column shows a striking difference between the Precambrian part, where fossils are very rare, and essentially microscopic in size, in contrast to the

higher Phanerozoic where the fossils are comparatively abundant and represent a variety of much larger organisms. Very scarce, and very odd (Ediacaran) types of larger organisms are found immediately below the Phanerozoic.

How reliable is the geologic column?

When you look at the Grand Canyon (Figure 1), you are not aware that major parts of the geologic column are missing. While the Cambrian period is represented (layers just above the arrow at the left in Figure 1), the Ordovician and Silurian periods are absent. Furthermore the Mesozoic and Cenozoic eras (see Figure 2 for terminology) are not there either, as they comprise layers that lie just above the Canyon wall.

Since the geologic column is assembled from sequences in different localities, and since parts of the column are often missing, can we trust the sequence that has been assigned together? Furthermore, there are a few places where normally lower parts of the geologic column lie *above* higher parts, but these are disturbed areas where lower layers have been thrust up over younger ones. In spite of these weaknesses, in most areas of the world, the geologic column is generally in the right order and remarkably reliable.

The geologic column and evolution

The geologic column provides one of the strongest arguments for evolution. Simple life is believed to have evolved 3,500 million years ago, and one does find evidence of simple life forms in the lower Precambrian layers (Figure 2). Above this, in the lower part of the Paleozoic, one finds more complex marine animals like sponges. Just above these, in the upper Paleozoic and Mesozoic, are more advanced land animals and plants like tree ferns and dinosaurs. In the uppermost Cenozoic, we find the most advanced organisms like elephants and flowering trees. In general, simpler organisms are also found in the higher layers but advanced organisms are not found in the lower ones. The suggestion of some advancement as one goes up

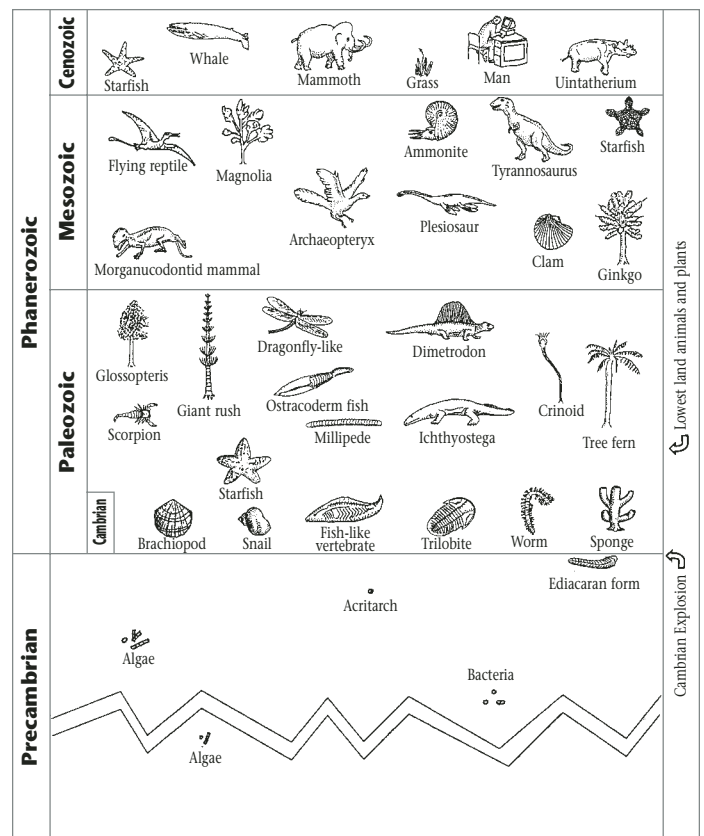


FIGURE 2. Major divisions of the geologic column and examples of some representative organisms.

the geologic column is considered to represent evolutionary advancement over eons of time as the layers were gradually laid down, trapping organisms that became fossilized.

The geologic column and the biblical model of origins

The advancement of life seen as one ascends the geologic column has been explained in several ways that fit with the biblical model of a recent Creation. Crucial to these explanations is the worldwide Genesis flood as the event that caused the deposition of most of the Phanerozoic layers. Explanations include: (1) During the Flood, the larger more advanced animals could escape to higher levels. This can explain some sequences of advancement that we see in animal fossils, but it is very unlikely that it can explain the whole geologic column. On the other hand, exceptional organisms like whales would be expected to escape. (2) Some experiments show that the carcasses of more advanced forms like mammals and birds float for weeks, while less advanced animals like reptiles float for a shorter period, and simpler amphibians for only days.⁵ These lengths of time fit well with those of the Flood events, and this may be a significant contributing factor. (3) The most comprehensive explanation is the Ecological Zonation Theory.⁶ This model proposes that the distribution of organisms before the Flood (Figure 3) is responsible for the distribution of organisms in the geologic column. The organisms living in the lowest regions of the world before the Flood represent the lowest part of the geologic column, and those in the highest, the top of the column.

The suggested mechanism for the Ecological Zonation Theory is that as the surface of the Earth was broken up and the waters of the flood rose *gradually*, the various landscapes before the Flood were destroyed as waves eroded them. The waters would erode and carry

the sediments and organisms away from low-lying areas first and deposit them in still lower regions (sedimentary basins). Higher and higher areas would then gradually be eroded and deposited in order in large sedimentary basins where a geologic column would form. The process was placid enough that the deposited layers were not significantly disturbed and remained in order as we see them now (Figure 1).

Some questions

While the general distribution of organisms on the Earth now fits the general distribution in the geologic column (see below), this is not the case in certain important details. These are considered to be the most serious objections to the Ecological Zonation Theory. For instance, in the geologic column we find mammals and flowering plants mainly in the upper parts (Figure 2). This would have been high up in the terrestrial landscapes before the Flood, while on Earth now we find these organisms way down to seashore level. To accommodate these and other objections, it is proposed that the ecological distribution of organisms before the Flood was somewhat different from the present. A worldwide flood would be expected to cause some differences. The distribution of organisms before the Flood may have been more restricted and orderly than at present, and there probably were seas at different levels (Figure 3). Note the similar distribution of organisms in Figures 2 and 3.

Questions also arise as to why, thus far, convincing examples of fossil man are found only near the very top of the

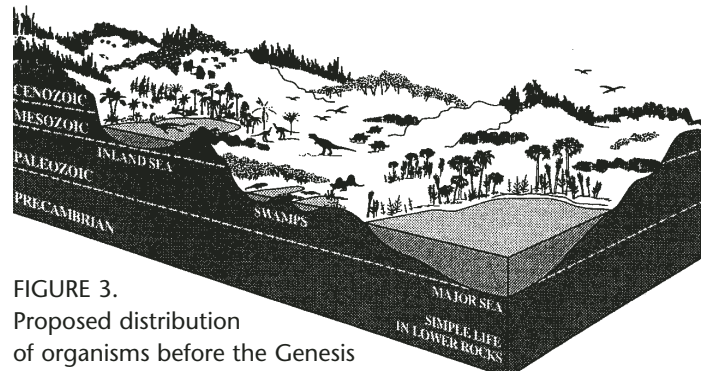


FIGURE 3. Proposed distribution of organisms before the Genesis flood. The Ecological Zonation Theory suggests that the gradual destruction of these environments by the rising waters of the Flood would produce the fossil sequence we now find in the geologic column.

geologic column. Explanations include: (1) Before the flood, humans and mammals resided in only higher, cooler regions. (2) During the Flood, intelligent humans escaped to the highest regions where chance of burial and preservation by sediments were slim. (3) There may not have been that many humans before the flood, hence the chances of finding them are meager. The biblical record indicates much slower reproductive rates before the Flood. Noah had only three sons in 600 years (Genesis 5-7).

Geologic column supports biblical model

The presence of fossils of simple microscopic organisms throughout the Precambrian fits better with the biblical model than the evolutionary one. These fossils would come from the recently discovered microbes of various types, including algae,⁷ that live in deep rocks. For the evolutionary model these microscopic fossils mean that virtually no advancement took place for 3,000 million years (Figure 4), some five-sixths of all evolutionary time. The Precambrian does not look at all like gradual progressive evolutionary development.

All of a sudden, just above this level, in what evolutionists call the *Cambrian Explosion*, almost all of the basic animal types (Phyla) appear (Figures 2 and 4).⁸

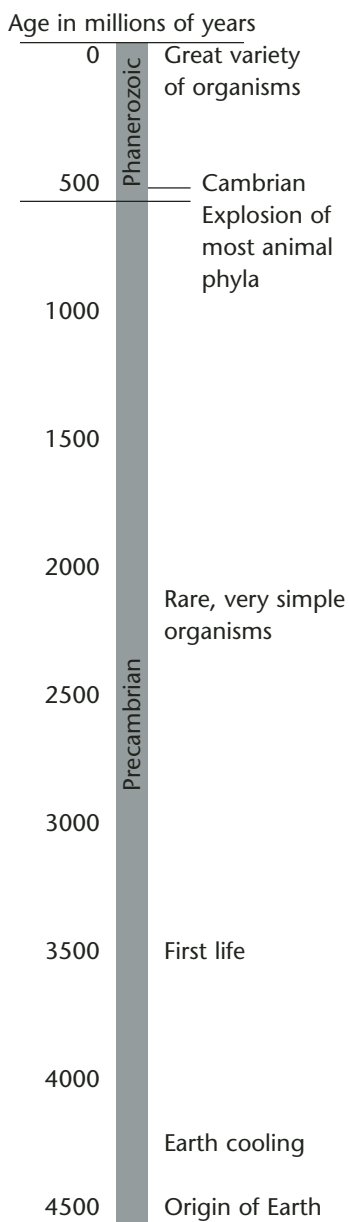


FIGURE 4. The evolutionary time scale. The Cambrian Explosion took only about 20 million years. Proposed ages not endorsed by the author.

This looks more like creation than a gradual evolutionary process. Evolution needs all the time it can muster to accommodate all the virtually impossible events necessary for producing complex life forms, but the geologic column does

not allow for much. Evolutionists speak of only 5 to 20 million years for the Cambrian Explosion!⁹ That is less than one percent of all evolutionary time. Samuel Bowring of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, whose specialty is dating rocks, comments: “And what I like to ask some of my biologists friends is, How fast can evolution get before they start feeling uncomfortable?”¹⁰ The black arrow at the left in Figure 1 indicates the location of the Cambrian Explosion in the Grand Canyon. The Cambrian Explosion fits very well with the Ecological Zonation Theory. This represents the lowest seas (Figure 3) before the Flood, which harbored a great variety of marine animals, just as are found in present seas.

Moving farther up the geologic column, you encounter marine (ocean) types of organisms, up to the middle of the Paleozoic. At that point, a great variety of land (terrestrial) organisms begin to appear (Figures 2 and 3), including fungi, mosses, rushes (horsetails), ferns, insects, millipedes, spiders, and amphibians.¹¹ Evolution has to answer why so many different kinds of land organisms evolved at about the same time. For the Ecological Zonation Theory, this would represent, as expected, the lowest dry land regions before the Flood.

Farther up the column, one finds, according to the evolutionary scenario, that most of the orders of mammals appeared in only 12 million years, and living orders of birds in 5 to 10 million years. Some evolutionists characterize such rapid rates as “clearly preposterous.”¹² Fossil species are thought to last several million years each, and evolutionists believe that a great number of species generations are required for any significant evolutionary changes.

Another serious problem for evolution, as revealed by the geologic column, is the absence of fossil intermediates—especially between the major groups of plants and animals. This is specifically where one would expect the

greatest number. A few have been described, but where there should be hundreds or thousands, such as just below the Cambrian Explosion, virtually none exists. There is a little evidence here for any evolution development.

The verdict

Many evolutionists feel that the vague progression of life forms as one ascends the geologic column is compelling evidence for their model. However, a closer look reveals rather severe problems; especially erratic rates of evolution, insufficient time, and the absence of fossil intermediates. In a biblical context, one would also expect some general progression of life forms as the Genesis Flood contributed to the geologic column. A worldwide flood on our present Earth would also produce a geologic column with a general increase in complexity. Lowest would be the simple microorganisms that live in the deep rocks, next would be the marine organisms of the oceans, and highest the advanced land organisms of the continents. Furthermore, if the landscapes of the Earth before the Flood were as pictured in Figure 3, and they were gradually buried in order by that Flood, this would produce the geologic column as we see it. Evidence such as the simple of microscopic life in the deep rocks, the Cambrian Explosion, and the same level of appearance of a number of terrestrial organisms, provide strong evidence for the Ecological Zonation Theory and the biblical flood explanation for the geologic column.

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Continued on page 18.

Waiting for sex

by Nancy L. Van Pelt

Sex before marriage may seem fun, but the real joy is in waiting until marriage. Some timeless principles.

Dear Nancy: *I've been dating my boyfriend for almost a year. We are both 23 and very fond of each other. We plan to be married when we finish our college studies. To be very honest with you, we've had sex several times. I never thought I'd go this far before I married him. But we are so much in love. I don't want to do this, but I feel trapped. Please help me!*

Dear Nancy: *I've read your previous articles in Dialogue and really appreciate them. You've explained the stopping points in the pair bonding process, but how can a couple who is really in love keep from going too far too soon? That's what I need to know.*

Is it possible in today's sex-saturated society for young adults who possess real sex drive and who are very much in love to put the brakes on physical affection? Most young adults have never set limits on their conduct, especially not their sexual conduct. Phrases like "I never really thought about it" are commonly used. Such "go-with-the-flow" attitudes create opportunities for sexual situations to develop.

One of the smartest things you can do to achieve abstinence is to think through your standards and develop a criteria for physical intimacy based on your personal values and God's Word. Take time for a thoughtful self-inventory and decide what limits you will put on your behavior to obtain the goals you have for your future. Decide at what point in the steps to pair bonding (see my previous article on the steps to pair bonding in *Dialogue* Vol. 13, No. 2) you

will stop. Recall the number of the pair-bonding step which is your stopping point before marriage. This should be a number/step you would be proud to discuss with your parents or a trusted friend or pastor.

Young women must recognize that when they allow intimate kissing and hugging, when they allow a man to touch and fondle their breasts, he assumes that she wants to go further. When she has allowed him to go this far, he takes this as a signal that he can go even farther. This is why it is safest and wisest to stop at step 6 or 7. But even a couple in a formal engagement should never proceed past step 9. The stopping lines beyond step 7 get very slippery and blurred and move frightfully fast since all sexual motors are turned on. Staying on the safe side of step 7 can save countless couples many a heart-ache.

Babe Ruth, the American baseball legend, once played before a hostile stadium. Amid the boos and hissing, he pointed his bat to the exact spot in the grandstand where he intended to hit the next ball. Then he hit the ball to precisely where he had pointed for a home run. When you are setting up rules for your conduct, think of Babe Ruth. Carefully think through and set your standards, planning how to maintain them. Develop a specific plan to follow so that you can continue in a healthy, growing love relationship without compromising your principles.

Everyone else might tell you can't do it, but your standards can never be too high. The more clearly your standards are defined, the more likely you are to

achieve them. Just keep thinking about where the bat is pointed.

Some may question whether total abstinence till marriage is realistic or even possible in today's sex-driven society. Is it possible for single adults, those who are very much in love, to practice abstinence? I not only think it's possible, but in the days of rampant sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and AIDS, it is imperative. Here are some steps to follow:

1. Be clear about your values.

Tell dating partners about your standards. This doesn't mean that you introduce yourself by saying, "Hello, I'm Kristin, and I don't sleep with anyone." You can be both forthright and tactful in letting the other person know your limits. Those who are candid with a partner usually receive a positive response.

An easy way of bringing up the subject might be to talk about the standards you have just set for yourself. "It's only fair to tell you about the values I have chosen for my life. I want to develop dating relationships that do not include sex until marriage. I hope you will respect these values and join me in keeping them."

To be so up front about your no-sex policy with someone who may not even have approached you sexually, may be a bit stressful early in a relationship. But once out in the open, you will notice it eliminates stress and uncertainty. Once it's out there, you can both relax and get to know each other as friends.

Open communication between dating partners regarding their sexual ideals and values is an excellent way of preventing arousing situations. It isn't fair to invite someone to the airport without saying whether it's for a plane ride or a parachute jump.

2. Have a clear plan in case of emergencies.

Develop an action plan, should you ever be faced with a "close encounter." You've developed your standards and

are trying to live by them, but at some point, you will likely be with someone who will try to force you beyond those limits. How will you react? What will you do? Or say? Some advance planning now could save you heartache later on.

Let's look at this in three stages:

If it is only a light threat to your standards, you can say "No" and mean it. Begin telling a long, involved dramatic story. Talk about Christ. Get up, change the activity and say: "I'm starved. Let's go get something to eat." Tell a joke: "Do you know why the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years? Because even then men wouldn't stop and ask for directions." When there is no serious threat to your standards, any one of these ideas may take care of the situation.

A medium threat to your standards is a little more serious. A simple "No" hasn't worked. You may need to use a firmer "No" through an I-statement: "I feel very threatened when you pressure me in this manner because you show no respect for my wishes." Or, "What part of No is it that you do not understand?" You may need to leave so you are around other people. Young women need to carry a cellular phone, and money for a phone call or possibly even a taxi.

If you feel seriously threatened or scared, trust your instincts. Escape any way you can. Use whatever resources necessary to get away. Scream. Fight. Slap and run. But don't wait for a real threat to occur; develop a plan of action before it happens. Think of it as a practice fire drill. The time to find the exit is before the flames are singeing your feet.

3. Be accountable to someone.

Choosing an accountability partner is a powerful deterrent to sex play. An accountability partner is someone to whom you will be responsible for your conduct. A trusted friend, pastor, counselor, or teacher is a good choice.

One young woman went monthly to visit her boyfriend, who was a student

at a college located some 500 miles away. Since he lived in an apartment off campus, and they planned to be married, they slept in the same bed but tried to refrain from having sex. Their tries were as successful as are ropes of sand until this couple chose an accountability partner, and she found another place to stay when she came for her visits.

A couple who really want to maintain the standards they have set will report weekly in person to their accountability partner. While looking this person in the eyes, the couple must give a full account of their time, activities, and conduct. Powerful! I recommend it!

4. Plan carefully.

Plan your dates carefully in advance. Before going out, know where you are going, who will be present, what activities are available, how you will get there, and what time you will return home. If a date can't provide this information or hesitates when asked—*beware!*

Dating should include a variety of interesting activities. Time spent participating in activities should far outweigh time spent in spectator dates where you are being entertained. Plan a variety of fun activities where you will get to know your date's likes and dislikes, total personality, values, goals, and beliefs.

In the early stages of a relationship, group dates are best. Although two of you are together, there is less stress. This allows you to observe how your date interacts with others and his or her sense of humor. In a group you can size up your date faster than you ever could on 10 formal dates alone. Among friends, your date will relax and be himself or herself. It cuts out "masking." Group dating leaves room for friendship to grow, and makes it easier to maintain moral standards and prevent many dangerous "close encounters."

5. Choose your dates with care.

Your relationships should be with those who are about your age, who have

similar interests, ideals, and values. Your best partners are likely to come from the circle of friends you have already established, those you know something about. Avoid a blind date with someone you do not know or have never met unless it is arranged by a trusted friend.

And never date married persons, those whose divorce is pending (they are still married), anyone who is drinking or drunk, drug users, and anyone not in a position to date you openly. Don't be so desperate that you would date twice someone who doesn't measure up to your standards.

6. Avoid stimulating situations.

Avoid situations designed to stimulate sexual pleasure. I am constantly amazed by the daring and calculated risks to their moral standards young adults take without counting the end results. Examples include couples spending hours at the beach cuddling on a blanket while necking and fondling; couples sleeping together without having sex; those who lie down together just wanting to "hold" each other; and those who fondle each other to orgasm without going further. *These are all great risks!* No one can continue to take such risks and beat the odds.

Single adults who live on their own must lay down strict guidelines regarding their deportment when entertaining opposite-sex partners. Periods of cuddling and cooing in front of a cozy fire can lead to sexual intimacy as can candlelight dinners for two with romantic music and nothing else to do. Entertaining the opposite sex should always include another person or a group of people—just to be on the safe side. Avoid settings that are sexually tempting, but also movies, TV, and videos that would encourage sinful desires and fantasies.

Some think they can travel together and share a motel room or go camping and share a tent. Such game playing is foolish. No one can play with sexual fire for long without getting burned. God

would have us flee the "appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22, KJV). We are not to flirt with temptation.

Once your limits are defined, stick to your guns. Regardless of how magic the moment, the mood, and the music, remind yourself of your chosen standards. Permit renegotiation only in broad daylight, when passion has cooled, your accountability partner is present, and you have both the time and rationale to re-think your position.

Not only will this help you translate temptation into rational behavior, but it also allows you to keep intact a very precious commodity—your self-esteem. Having positive feelings about yourself is the most important factor in avoiding sexual involvement prior to marriage. If you live up to your values, others will think highly of you, and inner conflicts will not tear you up inside. You will respond to others' opinions of you with personal integrity and self-confidence. Your appearance, abilities, or social acceptance will not unduly worry you, leaving you freer to love, study, work, and play.

A. C. Green, one of America's great all-star basketball players, says that as a professional athlete, he is constantly confronted by women who want to meet him and spend time with him. From the time he arrives in a city until he leaves, young women pursue him. Professional athletes often have a larger-than-life image, and women-in-pursuit are everywhere, he says—in the airports, hotel lobbies, restaurants, and sports arenas—all trying to catch his eye.

A. C. isn't blind. He recognizes the kind when he sees one. Furthermore he hears the locker-room talk about the sexual conquests of other players. Yet he has chosen to remain sexually pure until marriage, to follow God's standards rather than secular mores. This has been verbalized to his teammates. He has told them about his stand on sex before marriage and that he believes God has reserved sex for marriage. His teammates

don't all agree with his stand, but they respect him for taking it and standing up for it. A. C. is proud to be a virgin. "I have to respect myself before I can respect others," he says. Right on, A. C.!

If you are going to practice abstinence from this day forward, you must first improve your feelings of worth. When you truly see yourself as a valued child of God for whom Christ died, you will feel more capable of making hard choices that will benefit your future instead of weakening it.

An important part of your commitment to abstinence is relying on divine power. Ask your heavenly Father for His help to remain pure. If you and your date discuss and pray about your commitment to abstinence, it will produce a bond of conscience between you that can serve as a barrier against temptation. Discuss your relationship in terms of "We three—God, you, and I."

Not having sex outside of marriage is abstinence. And it's 100 percent guaranteed to work. You won't get hurt, get a sexually transmitted disease (STD), get pregnant, or suffer a host of other ills. You can choose abstinence any time, even when you've previously been sexually active.

Abstinence. It works! And it pays great dividends!

Nancy L. Van Pelt is a family-life professional and seminar presenter who has authored more than 20 books and many articles on relationships. For more on this topic, see her book Smart Love—A field guide for single adults (Fleming H. Revell, 1997).

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HIV/AIDS: What you should know

by Allan Handysides

*Old moral values are still the
best course to follow.*

The doctor on the phone seemed slightly apologetic. "I was wondering if you would accept the referral of a patient for management and care during her pregnancy and delivery." As an obstetrician, pregnancy and deliveries were my "bread and butter." "Of course I'll accept her," I replied. "Well, before you decide," he said, "you must know she is HIV positive." "No problem," I replied. The doctor let out a sigh of relief. "I thought you would, but she has tried two others, and they both suggested she go to the downtown hospital that specializes in HIV/AIDS, but she doesn't want to go to a clinic setting."

I found the patient to be a picture of health. She was just 29. A recent immigrant to Canada, she was preceded by her husband. He had sought sexual comfort from women of the street, become infected with HIV, and passed it on to his wife when she arrived months later. Now both of them and the developing fetus were in grave danger.

Just what is this disease? Both HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) are viral infections, caused by a virus so fragile that it requires direct inoculative transfer. The virus dies if dried or exposed to sunlight, but is readily transmitted in body fluids—through sex, blood products, or contaminated shared needles.

The June 5th issue of the *CDC Bulletin*, 1981 (produced by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control) reported five cases of pneumocystic carinii pneumonia in young homosexual males, ushering in our current acquaintance with this infection. Since then, the virus has been

identified as a RNA (ribonucleic acid) virus. These viruses are called "retro" viruses and require a retrograde transcription into the cell nucleus. The virus particle carries the enzyme required for this process within its structure. Once inscribed into the DNA code of its host, the nucleus commences the process of replicating long rolls of RNA by commandeering the host's cell machinery. The actual particles of the virus are "nipped off" by an enzyme called a protease, and new cells are then up for colonization. The cells at risk are those carrying a particular protein called CD₄ on their surface. This protein acts as a "lock" into which the viral "key" fits, opening the cell to the entry by the virus particle, and the cycle repeats itself. Unfortunately for the victim, CD₄ cells are lymphocytes that play a strategic role in the immune system. In time, the task of producing viral particles depletes and overwhelms the invaded cells—resulting in failure of the immune system. Infections by nearly any ordinarily readily managed organism begin to threaten the victim. Unusual cancers often affect the HIV-infected person, and in time begin to rampage, as tuberculosis did in earlier generations.

This immune deficiency process takes years to show itself in most cases, though HIV infections in people already weakened by disease or malnutrition may cause death in a matter of weeks or months.

The clinical course of AIDS begins with mild aches and pains, sometimes a transient rash, some enlarged lymph nodes, and a feeling of malaise that the doctor may diagnose as "flu" or a "viral

infection," which, of course, it is, but unlike influenza, it persists.

Initially, the HIV viral count rises rapidly in the blood. There is a fall in the CD₄ lymphocytes, but after three to six weeks, the viral count declines, the CD₄ lymphocytes recover somewhat, and a type of "cold war" begins. The infected individual now looks well, feels well, functions well, and without specific testing, cannot be distinguished from a healthy person. The virus has a predilection for certain sites: lymphocytes, genital organs, and brain. This ensures its transmission and its inaccessibility to eradication with current measures.

Tests used to detect HIV

The most common tests are those that identify an antibody to HIV. Antibodies usually take three to six weeks to be reliably produced, so tests during this interval may be "negative" despite the presence of infection. Occasionally there may be delayed production of antibodies—sometimes for a few months or more—so that while a positive test is rather convincing, a negative test is not totally conclusive.

Fortunately, falsely negative or positive results can be cleared up by more expensive but more accurate tests that measure actual viral particles (called copies) in each unit of blood.

Misconceptions about HIV/AIDS

What are some of the misconceptions about HIV/AIDS?

1. *HIV/AIDS is not treatable.* This is not true. Though not curable, treatment results available from medications are encouraging. Viral counts are suppressed, and white cell (CD₄) counts rise. Drug recipients have an improved quality of life and survive longer than those who do not receive treatment. However, AIDS medications are extremely costly. In addition, drug resistance is a big problem, and side effects are common. But even after weighing all these negatives, life expectancy is up for those who go into

treatment early. However, *treatment* of HIV/AIDS does not *cure* the diseases. If infected people stop taking the drugs that suppress viral reproduction, their immune systems will again be threatened by the virus.

2. *Only homosexuals get HIV/AIDS.* This is also untrue. While it is true that men-with-men sexual relationships carry a greater risk of transmission, the virus is transmissible in heterosexual relationships as well. The virus capitalizes on breaks in the skin and mucosal membrane surface, so men having sex with men have a greater opportunity for transmission. However, in heterosexual relationships, women are about eight times more vulnerable to infection from sex with infected males, contrasted with males who have sex with HIV-positive females. The reason for this is that women have a larger genital surface and receive more viral particles during unprotected intercourse.

3. *Whole countries will be depopulated by HIV/AIDS.* As yet, populations have not decreased because of AIDS, even in Africa where its prevalence is high. This is because the birth rate is higher than the death rate. Some populations in Africa were doubling every 20 years. Such growth has ceased, but declines are not yet to the point that the total population is in decline. Perhaps most disturbing are the changes in life expectancy—down some 20 years in some populations, leaving large numbers of young children orphaned. These demographic shifts have major sociological implications that have yet to be understood and grappled with.

4. *HIV/AIDS is transmitted by mosquitoes.* Not so. There is no scientific evidence to support such a view.

5. *AIDS is not caused by the HIV virus.* One hears certain politicians making this statement, particularly in those countries that shy away from facing the issue. The weight of evidence is overwhelming that HIV is the cause of AIDS. To otherwise believe is to deny the most

sophisticated and focused research that has ever been done on any disease.

6. *HIV/AIDS was created in a laboratory as part of germ warfare.* Conspiracy theories abound everywhere on almost every topic. Like many others, this, too, has no factual basis. Most evidence suggests that the virus came from the chimpanzee, and the earliest serological presence of the disease dates back to 1959 in a sample of blood stored in the Congo. This suggests an African origin for the disease and also explains the dire African statistics, since it has been there longer than elsewhere.

7. *HIV/AIDS can be spread by kissing.* This theory has been studied carefully because the virus has been isolated in saliva; however, no confirmed case of transmission has yet been found. If such transmission is possible, it is certainly not a probable, nor proven, means of transmission.

8. *It is dangerous to live in the same home with someone who is HIV/AIDS positive.* There is absolutely no risk of transmission by touching and hugging, or by eating with same cookware, cutlery, or dishes. There is no risk bathing or showering in facilities used by a patient, neither is there any risk sleeping in a bed that was used by an infected person. Christians, especially, should refrain from stigmatizing persons with HIV/AIDS.

9. *HIV/AIDS can be cured by having intercourse with a virgin.* This misconception is prevalent in some countries, especially in South Africa, where young girls as young as two have been raped by ignorant men trying to expunge the virus from themselves. Such behavior is criminal and misinformed. Besides severely traumatizing innocent children, it can transmit the disease to them.

10. *HIV/AIDS is not my problem.* It is. Doubtless, many families will have members affected sooner or later with this disease. Even if this were not the case, the number of people in need will rise dramatically. Health-care costs will

rise, economic productivity and consumption will decline, dependency of large segments of the population will increase. Anyone who feels this is not their problem is living in a fool's paradise, and is lacking in Christian love and empathy.

11. *How can I be sure I won't get infected?* The best defense against HIV/AIDS is to live a pure and chaste Christian life. The sexual transmission of this virus does not occur when both partners are free of disease. This means a couple who, at the time of their marriage, are disease free do not have to be concerned if they are faithful to their vows. Young people who engage in premarital sexual relationships may consider themselves not to be at risk, but statistics indicate that the earlier they begin to have sex, the more sexual partners they will have. Complete disclosure is certainly not the rule, and even testing is not one 100 percent sure.

The old morality still the best course

A decision to remain a virgin until marriage should be communicated to one's boyfriend or girlfriend, and the relationship should be consciously kept free of tempting situations and permissive environments. Drugs and alcohol are potent agents for reducing inhibitions, and many a case of HIV/AIDS has been traced to irresponsible behavior stemming from drug and alcohol abuse.

Couples contemplating marriage would do well to be tested prior to the marriage. Condoms are often recommended for prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission—data suggests an 85 percent reduction in the transmission when condoms are used, and certainly any success is better than none. However, in many cases condoms are not consistently or properly used, even when young people have been taught the dangers of unprotected sexual intercourse.

Many young people believe that oral sex can keep them from acquiring sexu-

ally transmitted disease and HIV/AIDS. Such is not the case, as sexual fluids teem with the virus if a person is infected. Sharing of needles by drug users is also extremely dangerous, for it can result in HIV/AIDS in addition to the other dangers present in drug usage.

Similarly, tattoos and body piercing carry a risk because the instruments used may become contaminated.

Blood supplies in some countries are now extremely safe, while in others serious risks may ensue if one receives blood or blood products. The sophistication of the system testing the blood is important.

Statistics in North America indicate a rising prevalence and incidence of HIV/AIDS in the female population. This does not augur well for the future, as the female infection is closely tied to heterosexual transmission. Considerable interest is focused on a vaccine for this disease. While testing in animals is currently underway, most specialists feel a human vaccine is still several years away. This means a modern disease is still making old-fashioned morals relevant and lifesaving. It would appear that advice to young men and women to keep themselves pure is as pertinent today as always.

Oh, the pregnant patient? Well we treated her and her baby was not infected. She and her husband are both on medication—and are both holding up fairly well. I saw her last year, and she looked fine. The baby is now 7 years old.

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Genesis

Continued from page 12.

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Adventists and human dignity

by John Graz

Human worth and dignity is at the core of Adventist belief and value system and is what drives its global mission.

*"In promoting religious freedom, family life, health, mutual assistance, and meeting crying human need, Seventh-day Adventists affirm the dignity of the human person created in the image of God."*¹— From the statement issued by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on November 17, 1998 in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Why do we as a church believe and proclaim the dignity of every human being? Why is the right of every human person—the right to equality, health, freedom, personal and vocational opportunities, speech, and worship—regardless of race, religion, nationality, language, color or tribe, so crucial to the vision and mission of the church? The answer is simple. Our mandate for human dignity does not arise from politics or education or sociology or psychology. It is rooted in our faith-commitment to our Creator God.

As such, when we speak of human dignity, we must begin with the God-human relationship and comprehend its deep theological and relational implications. Such a consideration takes in the reality of Creation, the cross, the Holy Spirit, the moral law, and discipleship.

Creation and human dignity

The Adventist concept of human dignity finds its roots in the very mind of God, when God in His infinite wisdom made humankind as the crown of His creation process: When God said, "Let

us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness," (Genesis 1:26),² He was sharing something of His uniqueness with human beings. Human beings are not mere creatures. Their place in creation is absolutely unique. To them was given dominion "over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." To them was given the power to think, to choose, to be creative, to be partners with God in fellowship and stewardship.

All other creatures are also "living things," but humans are to reflect God's image and be doers of His will. Adam received a mission: to be God's manager on Planet Earth. The difference between the biblical concept and the ancient traditions or the theory of evolution is vast. We are not the accidental product of a long, convoluted evolutionary process or the arbitrary action of a lunatic divinity. We are the fruit of God's love and part of His universal design. We are called to be the main actors in an extraordinary destiny. Therefore, when we deal with human beings, we are dealing with their Maker. It is that divine kinship that is at the root of Adventist concept of human dignity.

The cross and human dignity

A second factor that reinforces the theological anchor of human dignity, as Adventists hold, is that God did not abandon the human race to death and destruction, even after they rebelled against His will. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they revolted against God's declared will, and

deserved to die. But God chose to meet sin in a different way. Rebellious though they may be, Adam and Eve and their descendants were still His creation, and God chose to meet rebellion with redemption, death with life, hatred with love. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). However sinful we are, however far we may have wandered away, we are still God's precious possession. He has endowed us with certain dignity. Although it is Satan's studied purpose to destroy this dignity through sin and its many deceptive ways, God through His Son Jesus has revealed how precious we are in His sight. So much so, Jesus died for our sins on the cross. Thus the cross becomes the enduring affirmation that every human being is a person of immense worth and dignity. Indeed, Jesus has so identified Himself with humanity that what we do to a person is equivalent to what we do to Him. "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matthew 25:40). Therefore, every time someone is abused, tortured, or humiliated, Christ is affected. The creature of God, the object of Christ's redemption, should never be treated like an ordinary object to be used, but like an irreplaceable jewel.

Human dignity and being the temple of the Holy Spirit

If God's creative and redemptive acts provide the foundation for our concept of human dignity, that conception is

further enhanced to new heights by the biblical proclamation that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are." (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17). And again, "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price" (6:19, 20).

To say that we are God's temple and that our bodies are the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit is to attribute the highest possible dignity to the human person. Even a non-believer would not dare think of committing an act of sacrilege against a place of worship. How, then, can we be abusive of fellow human beings, created in God's image and potential temples of the Holy Spirit? No one is too small, too poor, too unworthy as to be treated with disrespect. That's not all. Our doctrine of human dignity goes to the extent of requiring of us to treat our minds and bodies with utmost care, and not let them be subject to abuse or ill treatment of any kind. Thus the Adventist call to human dignity proceeds from our attitude to our own self to embrace the whole humanity on a global scale.

Human dignity and God's commandments

The Ten Commandments may be called the first charter of human rights. A violation of one of them directly affects the quality of life, peace, and dignity. Jesus summarized the Ten Commandments in a few words: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with your soul, and with all your mind.... You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37). The first four commandments deal with our allegiance to God, who is the source of our rights. The last six commandments define our relationship with each other as

human beings. While God remains the supreme reference point and definer of our attitude toward others, it is in the specifics of the second part of the moral law that we have our human relations codified. Can you imagine someone having his or her moral compass shaped by the Ten Commandments lie against, murder, or show contempt and disrespect toward his or her fellow humans? This conceptual relationship between the moral law and human dignity was further amplified by Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount. One example will suffice: Jesus defined murder not simply as the act of taking one's life, but even the act of contempt and calling a fellow human being a fool (see Matthew 5:21,22). Hence the Adventist emphasis on the moral law and the embodiment of pure and unlimited love it calls for constitute a firm and unshakeable ground for our advocacy on human right and dignity.

Human dignity: Implications for discipleship

For Seventh-day Adventists, human dignity must not remain a theoretical pie in the sky. To isolate our belief from our practice has been the persistent temptation of our religious life, and this is nowhere as real as in the arena of human relations. When God orders us to love Him with all our being and our neighbors as ourselves, He calls us back to the original aim of life as He intended. The core of life is good and proper relationship—both with God and with humans. The prophet Isaiah declares the inseparableness of the two: "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?" (Isaiah 58:6, 7).

Religion, therefore, is more than a

formal routine. It is more than nice phrases, beautiful prayers, great hymns, or rousing meetings in an elegant and comfortable church. It is not a catalogue of doctrines even through doctrines are important. It is real living! As James says, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). In other words, there can be no true religious experience without respect for human dignity.

This explains why Adventists from the very beginning of their history have committed themselves to uphold the worth of every human being. Right from the start, they took strong positions against all forms of social injustice. Ellen White wrote: "Slavery, the caste system, unjust racial prejudices, the oppression of the poor, the neglect of the unfortunate,—these all are set forth as unchristian and a serious menace to the well-being of the human race, and as evils which the church of Christ is appointed by her Lord to overthrow."³ Again, "The Lord Jesus demands our acknowledgment of the rights of every man. Men's social rights, and their rights as Christians, are to be taken into consideration. All are to be treated with refinement and delicacy, as the sons and daughters of God."⁴

As a result, our church has developed a ministry of restoration and respect for human dignity. Through a global system of churches, schools, hospitals, community services, and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Adventists spread the message of care and concern for all humanity in 203 out of 208 countries recognized by the United Nations. Among Christian churches, we take a leadership role in promoting religious freedom for all. Through pen and voice, through mission and ministry, we not only raise but attempt to provide a meaningful answer to questions, such as: How do we defend and promote human rights? What should be done about

discriminations in various forms in different countries? What do we relate to policies dealing with war and terror? What about systems and political structures that may affect the lives of people, create famine, refugees, concentration camps? How should we respond to the human tragedy of AIDS? What about child labor, slavery, and women's status?

We do not claim to have all the answers or effective solutions to all the problems. But to raise such questions and to work in cooperation with other agencies to promote human values is in itself a necessary task. We cannot afford to be silent when it comes to the violation of the human person in any form.

No room for silence

In 1998 Zdravko Plantak published a courageous book about our church and human rights. The title in itself is eloquent: *The Silent Church*. He wrote: "Adventists must become involved (in the world) because their God cares and wants them to care for each other. Identifying with Jesus means identifying with the poor, oppressed and those whose basic rights and freedoms are denied them. It is not enough to care for a person and have no concern about the laws that affect the life of that person in society."⁵

The Adventist pioneers understood that perfectly. Ellen White may have promoted an improvement of the condition of the slaves, but she condemned slavery in no uncertain terms: "The institution of slavery ... permits man to exercise over his fellow man a power which God has never granted him, and which belongs alone to God."⁶ She went further, condemning the policy of keeping slaves as "an insult to Jehovah."⁷

James White wrote that the Christian "has really as much interest in this old world as any man. Here he must stay and act his part until the Prince of Peace shall come and reign."⁸

This early vision of the pioneers that the Christian must go beyond the tradi-

tional welfare approach to problems of human worth and dignity was reflected in the 1865 General Conference resolution: "Resolved that in our judgment, the act of voting when exercised in behalf of justice, humanity, and right, is in itself blameless, and may be at some times highly proper; but that the casting of such crimes as intemperance, insurrection, and slavery, we regard as highly criminal in the sight of Heaven."⁹

What this resolution called for was the promotion and defense of human dignity through "the act of voting" to change the law. However, the pioneers did set a limit: "But we would deprecate any participation in the spirit of party strife."¹⁰

Human dignity: A core value

Thus to Adventists, human dignity is a core value. We should not support in one way or another a policy or attitude which denies dignity to any segment of humanity. As a church we should be prudent and wise when speaking officially, but being a silent church on vital issues is like being ashamed about Jesus our Saviour and God our Creator. As church members, we should not be part of any enterprise that transforms one made in God's image into a thing or an object. The issue is not only a question of consistency but also one of testimony. We should never forget that on Earth we are the ambassadors of the kingdom of God, and that we are the heralds of a new creation which restores and establishes forever human dignity. Then and only then "your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard" (Isaiah 58:8).

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Employment and Volunteer Opportunities

If you are a Seventh-day Adventist with professional skills, you may submit your personal information or check for employment and volunteer opportunities in the following web sites:

- Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA): www.adra.org
- Adventist Volunteer Center: <http://volunteers.gc.adventist.org>
- General Conference Secretariat: <http://www.adventist.org/gc/secretariat/employment.htm>



Mary Grace Gellekanao

Dialogue with a unique concert pianist

Joyous anticipation was in the air. Parents, grandparents, and extended family members waited outside the Riverside Medical Center in Bacolod City, the Philippines, for

the news, about to break any time now. At last the moment came when the baby girl, her parents' first child, entered this world, and let out a big cry. The birth of a newborn brings its own joy, but along with joy, this little girl brought some great concerns to her parents and grandparents: She was born with a congenital absence of part of her right forearm. The parents named her Mary Grace, as if to reflect the calm resignation and quiet faith of the Mary of the Bible—and as if to imply that this little bundle of life is indeed God's gift to them, to be brought up in His way, according to His will.

Mary Grace Gallekanao lived with her family in one compound, also shared by her grandparents. The grandparents showered their love on the growing child, and did not allow this disability to affect her future. When Grace showed interest in music and piano, her grandmother took it as a challenge. She sought teacher after teacher, but no one agreed to give her lessons. How could a girl without a forearm ever be able to master the keyboard? But both Grace and her grandmother were made of sterner stuff. They were not ones to easily give up. After months of walking up and down their town, their persistence paid off. One teacher wanted to be a part of the challenge, and she agreed to teach Grace, who was then only a child.

Today, 24 years later, Grace has mastered the piano. She practices for at least four hours a day and can play many difficult pieces. She also plays the organ. In 1994, Grace, encouraged by her teacher, Mrs. Sylvia Javellana, presented a solo organ recital. A year later, the country's Volunteers for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped and the Disabled arranged for Grace's first public solo piano recital. It was a hit, but it was just the beginning.

In 1996, Grace started touring internationally and has been busy ever since with college studies and performances. She graduated in May 2001 from the University of St. La Salle, Bacolod City, with a degree in psychology. Grace hopes to use her musical talents to help others—especially those differently-abled such as herself—to accept themselves as God's special creation so that they can live productive, purposeful lives. She is currently volunteering with the 1,000 Missionary Movement in the Philippines.

■ *Grace, when did you first become interested in music?*

When I was around 6, I became very interested in music and wanted to play an instrument. So my grandma took me seriously and did everything possible until she was able to convince a piano teacher to take me in. My grandfather was more than willing to support me financially. Thanks to their confidence in me, I was able to discover an important part of myself.

■ *You have indeed discovered a hidden potential.*

Thanks to God and my loved ones. It didn't take long before I got to know what music is and what it requires. It takes a lot of will power and a lot of practice. I gave all I could to this art I love so much, and today I am able to play difficult pieces. Ironically, my right hand plays the hardest part of the piece. I admit that sometimes it hurts, especially when I'm playing a piece with a lot of runs. But I tell myself that the pain I go through with every key I strike is what makes my music unique from all others. The sound of the people's applause elates me because I make them happy. They appreciate my efforts and that's reward and remedy enough for a hurting forearm.

■ *Where and how often have you performed?*

With the support of my teacher, I decided to do a solo organ recital in 1994, and a solo piano recital the following year. Afterwards, things really picked up. The most unforgettable year for me

was 1996. I went to many places to perform. In February, I performed in Guam during the 40th anniversary of the Guam Seventh-day Adventist Clinic. Two months later, together with some of my fellow students from the music school, I started a recital tour of Europe. The most memorable recital took place in Frankfurt, Germany, at the Buergerhaus of Hausen, for the Family Club of Offenbach. Among the guests who attended the recital was a former ambassador of the Philippines to Germany, the Honorable Francisco del Rosario. Afterward we toured other parts of Europe, and on the way home we passed through Bangkok, Thailand.

Other international concerts followed as I basked in the opportunities to share my musical gift with my audience—and win the love and appreciation of my own family along the way.

■ *Your parents. Coming from the culture such as yours, they must have had their own difficulties to overcome during your early childhood, considering your disability.*

My childhood was somewhat difficult because my parents had a hard time accepting the fact that their eldest child was born with a physical disability. I tried to understand their reactions to my misfortune, though I was really affected by their discomfiture. Nevertheless, I still feel that in one way or another, I'm fortunate that God endowed me with the gift of playing the piano and the organ, which gives me so much compensation for my condition.

I'm happy that God has been so good to me by allowing all these wonderful things to happen in my life. Playing has given me so much joy! And although things don't turn out the way we want them to be sometimes, we should always remember that everything He allows to come our way is with a purpose. God uses even the greatest error and the deepest hurt to mold us into persons of worth and value.

■ *What was your college experience like?*

My college life was the most memorable time for me. I began to mingle with other people. I gained a lot of friends and really started to enjoy life and share my music. I didn't have any trouble with my faith while in college—although it was a Catholic university. I did not have to take any classes on the Sabbath, and students and staff respected me and my beliefs.

I've had a few special people in my life, but there is one person I must mention. This friend has helped me to have a self-worth, fill up the empty space in my life, and keep close to God. She has given me the courage to face life and has helped me trust people. When I was younger, I couldn't express what I felt to anyone. I just kept it to myself. I longed to feel the sense of belonging, to be hugged. But I didn't get much of these—until I met my special friend in college. As I've said, she has made my life more meaningful. I feel so blessed that she and others like her came my way.

■ *Grace, just curious. Why did you study psychology in college, and not music?*

I've always had this dream—to be a missionary through my music, somehow in my own little way, make a difference in someone else's life. I believe that a combination of psychology and music can help me to be effective in music therapy. I also hope that I can inspire others with disabilities. Physical disability isn't a hindrance toward success or happiness. I want people to realize this. I'm eager to make every minute of my life count for God. I'm sure that being a musician and at the same time a psychologist would really be of great help in achieving my desires.

■ *Can you tell something about music therapy?*

Music therapy is the systematic application of music in the treatment of physiological and psychological aspects

of an illness or disability. It focuses on the acquisition of non-musical skills and behaviors, as determined by board-certified music therapists through systematic assessment and treatment planning.

■ *Have you encountered difficulties due to your physical limitations?*

There are times that I feel a little disappointed, especially when there are things that I wish to do but can't because of my limitations. For example, I need someone to help me cut my steak when I eat. I can't go roller skating. I can't open candy wrappers as other people do, and typing is difficult. I have to wear heavy orthopedic shoes, and that can be tiring.

■ *Do you have any words of advice to our readers?*

Never give up, for God is in control. At times I feel like giving up, but then I pray, and find in God the strength and comfort and love I need to carry on. I thank Him for He's always there to see me through. The great thing is that He's there for you, too. My favorite song is "God Will Make a Way." It's true—He'll make a way for us even if there seems to be no way. I've been through a lot since childhood. It was inevitable that some of my classmates would tease me and say things that could break my heart. But since I was young I have reminded myself that "God don't make no junk," as the saying goes, and that's what I want young people to remember. Everyone is special in His sight.

Interview by Kimberly Luste Maran.

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Ben Carson

Dialogue with a pediatric neurosurgeon who, despite surgery for cancer, still thinks big

Author of *Gifted Hands*, *Think Big*, and *The Big Picture*, Dr. Benjamin S. Carson Sr., is director of the Division of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. He is professor of neurosurgery, plastic surgery, oncology, and pediatrics; and has authored more than 90 neurosurgical publications. Dr. Carson is the recipient of 27 honorary doctorates and numerous civic and government awards. He was chosen as one of 89 living legends by the U.S. Library of Congress, and received recognition by CNN as one of today's 20 leading physicians and scientists.

He is also a patient. In June last year, he was diagnosed with an aggressive form of prostate cancer, and was operated in early August. In this interview, Dr. Carson shares his thoughts on the impact this experience has had on him and his faith, and provides an update on where he is now. Dialogue ran a profile on him in 1990, and since that time Dr. Carson has been blessed with many positive experiences. His influence has run as far as the White House and Capitol Hill, but his center of dedication is still at the Johns Hopkins Hospital where he works in one of the most difficult areas of medicine—brain surgery. His success in performing “miracles” is attested by many, but in his quiet and unassuming manner he gives all the credit to God.

Dr. Carson is in much demand as a motivational speaker and has many opportunities to testify to his faith in God and his Seventh-day Adventist beliefs. Coming from an underprivileged background, Dr. Carson rose from being the classroom “dummy” to his current prestigious position through his “mother’s encouragement and the grace of God.” Not that all was smooth sailing. At the age of 14, he had problems with anger and once tried to stab a friend in the stomach. The boy’s belt buckle saved him, breaking the blade.

That incident led Dr. Carson to completely re-evaluate his life and where it was headed. He prayed for the Lord to take away his anger, and to help him with his dream of becoming a doctor. Today, he is one of the most gracious and gentle people you could ever meet, a testament to the ability of the Lord to transform us into His likeness.

Dr. Carson lives in Upperco, Maryland, with his wife Candy, and teenage sons Murray, B.J., and Rhoeyce.

■ Dr. Carson, thanks for being willing to talk with Dialogue again. What has been going on in your life since 1990?

Lots. First, I have become much better known throughout the world. There have been many acts of recognition, and many opportunities to share with others, often at very high levels.

One main thing is a tremendous demand for my services. One could become selective, for example, and only take paying patients, but I could never do that. So I have had to figure out better and better ways to take care of people, and also to refer them to the best experts regionally.

■ What about your professional work? I hear you do more than 400 operations a year.

I’m planning to cut back on the procedures to about 350 a year. I’d like to extend the opportunities for public speaking, which I enjoy—but I never want to do this exclusively.

Some years ago, I considered leaving the medical profession. It can be incredibly frustrating, with all the bureaucracy and managed care that cause financial constraints. I told myself it wasn’t worth all this hassle.

That’s why I have been working to establish the Benevolent Endowment Network Fund that would make it possible to practice medicine in a reasonable way. For those who are under-insured or who have no insurance but who have complex diseases, this fund would mean the physician can treat without worrying about the patient’s financial status. When I was encouraged to become a physician, I studied the life of Christ and His healing ministry. He didn’t check insurance status first! I would love to be able to realize that dream.

Then there’s the Carson’s Scholars scholarship program (www.carsonscholars.org) which is on the verge of exploding. I am committed to this concept of helping young scholars progress, not just from an academic perspective but also for human quality. About \$400,000 has already been disbursed in scholarships, and we have several local branches with more coming.

I have also become more involved in the government area, becoming acquainted with Presidents Bush and Clinton and getting to know some of the

cabinet, senators, and congressmen. Many have urged me to enter politics, but I would only do so if God grabs me by the collar and puts me in. Since I don't believe in political correctness, my views don't necessarily sit well!

■ *What of your current health situation? How does it feel to go from being a doctor to being a patient for a while?*

I think I'm a pretty good patient, for a doctor. However, I much prefer being a doctor to being a patient! Perspectives are different. I hope I am pretty sensitive already, but this illness has made me even more sensitive to people with disease and pain. It also confirms my appreciation for the care given! I've always said that nurses are the infantry of medicine, and being a patient has enhanced that appreciation to an even greater level. Mind you, I don't necessarily always do what I'm told to.

■ *How did you learn about the cancer, and how did you react?*

I had some symptoms, and I had them checked out. After trying antibiotics and other treatments, I had a biopsy. The initial indication was of only an 18 percent chance of prostate cancer. However, the next day I received the results while I was performing surgery. A nurse held the phone to my ear. It was cancer, and a high-grade cancer, too. That kind of threw me for a loop. I said, Thank you, and tried not to think about it during the operation.

On my way home, the thought weighed heavily on me. The cancer could possibly have already metastasized. The cancer was also high-grade. I had something that could kill me. It wasn't the thought of dying, but of leaving family, patients, staff—the myriad people that were depending on me. I felt like I would be betraying them, and this weighed heavily on me. My wife Candy and I talked about it. We were not 100 percent sure what this all meant. While it was kind of frightening,

Candy reminded me that the Lord would take care of it, because He always does.

■ *Can you share some specifics about the results of your surgery?*

The surgery was very successful. The cancer was contained, but within one millimeter of breaking through. The nodes were all negative, and the nerves were spared. I am going to continue!

■ *What has this experience done to your faith?*

Even in the bleakest moments—thinking that I may have had metastatic disease to the spine—my faith was strong. As I've said before, I believe God never makes mistakes. This gives me great confidence. Even if I die, it will be for a reason, and God will make the best of it. Even though I had nothing like Job's experience, I can identify with his statement about God—Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. To my dying breath, I will have confidence in God, and be sure that He will take care of everything. By the same token, I didn't think God would let me die, even if I did have metastatic disease to the spine. He could solve the problem and cure me. It wasn't going to happen.

My experience has deepened my relation with God. Even though I have always started and ended the day with prayer and Bible study, I do so now with even greater vigor. I have been thinking and *appreciating* what God has done: the flowers and the trees, the incredible beauty of birdsong in the morning, the foxes, and the cornfields. I am so thankful for a healthy family, for God's gift of freedom—to come and go as you please, to choose to do what you want—it's an incredible blessing.

I now recognize to an even greater extent how much God loves us. I have been thinking about my own life, remembering the time I was 8 years old, sitting on the dilapidated wooden steps of our home in Boston, surrounded by

weeds and dirt patches and broken glass, with the winos and the gangs. I remember the sense of hopelessness I felt then. Boy, it has been a long way from there to now!

And the person who brought you here was God, I reminded myself. How God brought that little boy from that old tenement to here. I thought of the people of the Bible, and how God was just as active here today. He is willing to listen to us and to work in our lives. As it says in Proverbs 3:5, 6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (KJV).

■ *So what would you want to share with a young person, someone studying at college?*

Keep on witnessing! Don't let anyone else define witnessing for you. If you are a Christian and love other people, that will show through. For witnessing is not necessarily about giving out tracts or conducting formal Bible studies, it's about how we treat people and how we react to things. It's about being kind and loving to others, and not joining in sarcastic, cruel gossip, for example. Don't become the same kind of dogmatic person as those who may argue against you. By looking to further the debate, by respecting opinions that are different from yours, you can be a much more effective witness.

■ *When you speak publicly, what message do you share?*

It depends on the audiences. I give a speech at the hospital once a month. I often speak on the concept that the person who has most to do with what happens to you is you.

With educators, I point to the influence that a well-placed and motivated teacher can have. To political and civil groups, I speak on leadership and re-

Continued on page 31.

by Wolfgang Stammer

That's what Jesus did for me!

*Count your blessings, name them one by one,
and see what God has done!*

1. Jesus was like God in every way. But He did not hold on to being like God. He gave it up freely and became like a slave. He became a man in this world and *shared the life of human beings* (Philippians 2: 6, 7). He became like me in order to share my life and my destiny.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

2. Jesus was born in a stable—not a five-star hotel, not the delivery room of a famous clinic, not a room with a private midwife, private doctors and a private room. He was born in a stable *to share the life of the homeless and abandoned that nobody cares for.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

3. Jesus was born to a virgin, result of a divine miracle. But His enemies accused Him as born out of wedlock. Yet He made it the mission of His life *to share the life of the many unwanted, illegitimate children born in this world. He shares the life of those who are rejected, stigmatized, condemned and despised—or despise themselves—because they were not born into a “normal” family or were born out of wedlock.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

4. Jesus came to this Earth without any possessions *to share the life of the many poor on this globe.* Thus He showed all the poor that their poverty was not a sign of rejection by God. Jesus became one with the poor and remained poor until the end.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

5. Jesus was born into a carpenter's home. The hard work of an artisan was His daily routine. In this way *He shared*

the life of those who go about doing their simple, practical work. He honored those who work faithfully and became one with them—no matter how simple the job may be.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

6. The first to hear of Jesus' birth were not the religious leaders, the priests and prophets, the highly spiritual and respected rabbis, but simple shepherds, watching their sheep by night. Shepherds—men little respected, who had no part in the religious activities of the town. When the angels told them of Jesus' birth, they were afraid. In this way, Jesus *shared the life of those who are spiritual outsiders, the ones from whom nobody expects spiritual contributions, living at the edge of society and doing jobs nobody notices or would want to do themselves. He became one with those unnoticed by the church and with those who unexpectedly meet God—and are afraid.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

7. When Jesus was still a baby, His parents fled to Egypt with Him. Jesus was supposed to be killed. Thus, He *shared the life of millions of refugees, fleeing from violence, war, hunger, and persecution.* For the refugees, He became a refugee.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

8. Jesus lived as an alien and foreigner in Egypt. In this way, He *shared the life of all aliens, foreigners and asylum seekers.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

9. After many years, Jesus returned to Nazareth, a city of bad reputation. He

shared the life of all returning refugees and resettled people moving to an unknown land, having to start from scratch under bad conditions.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

10. When the time had come, Jesus let John baptize Him in the Jordan River in order to do the will of His Father. Thus, He *became one with all sinners and the lost who are willing to confess their sins, change their lives, and be baptized—to do the will of the Father.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

11. After that, Jesus went into the desert, where He was tested by Satan. He was confronted with satanic temptations. Thus, He *shared the life of those who are tested by their life experiences and are faced with satanic temptations.* Jesus was tested to the utmost. He knows and shares the inner battles facing those who are tempted and tested.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

12. Jesus was rejected in His hometown Nazareth and driven to the edge of a cliff by an angry mob. Thus, He *shared the life of those rejected by friends and family because of their faith and their beliefs. He shared the fate of those driven to the edge of existence by their circumstances.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

13. Because Jesus healed on the Sabbath, the religious leaders of His time wanted to kill Him. So Jesus *shared the life of all those persecuted by the religious leaders, their church, or representatives of the church for doing what God has told them to do.* He shared the life of those who meet with rejection, exclusion, and

persecution because of their faithfulness.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

14. Jesus freed people from demonic bondage, drove out evil spirits, and healed people who were bound by Satan. Many implied that He did this not with God's power, but with Satan's. So Jesus *shares the life of those accused of being on the side of evil or getting their power from Satan and helping him to tempt the saints. Jesus shared the fate of those who are so utterly misunderstood and rejected.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

15. Jesus was often misunderstood by His closest companions. Again and again, He had to tell them that they did not understand. So Jesus *shared the lives of those who are misunderstood and misinterpreted*—those who give their best, but still cannot convince others and have to bear the burden of being misunderstood.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

16. Jesus was betrayed to His enemies by a kiss by one of His disciples. So He *shared the life of those ruthlessly betrayed, sold for money, mobbed and sent to their doom with a smile by family, friends, co-workers—people they trust.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

17. Jesus was arrested without having ever harmed another person. He was led off like a criminal, with swords and clubs. So Jesus *shared the life of those who are violently arrested on false charges and put into prison, or for not fitting into the political system, for belonging to the "wrong" religion, or for confessing the name of Jesus and doing good in His name.* They are innocent, but are moved out of the way for causing unrest.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

18. Jesus was not only betrayed by one of His closest companions, but also deserted by all and denied by at least one. So Jesus *shared the life of all those who are deserted or even denied by friends*

and acquaintances—children whose parents abandon them; fathers and mothers left alone in old age because their children don't care for them; people whose acquaintances are ashamed of them and leave them because they end up in situations of deep need, illness, or helplessness; and those whose dignity is trampled on.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

19. Jesus was ridiculed by wicked men. They blindfolded Him and beat Him, telling Him to say who had hit Him. They laughed at Him, abused Him, bound and mocked Him. So Jesus *shared the lives of those who are ridiculed, mocked, beaten, bound and sadistically tortured by others.* He has this in common especially with those abused in the name of religion and the name of God.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

20. Although innocent, Jesus was sentenced to death. He was condemned to death for no reason, and underwent the cruelest torture known at the time: a slow death on a cross under excruciating pain. So Jesus *shared the life of those innocently condemned to death, tortured and painfully killed. Jesus shared their pain, and their unjust death.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

21. While hanging on the cross and in terrible pain, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them!" Jesus *shared the life of those who refuse to harden their hearts in hatred, pride and an unforgiving spirit—despite injustice and cruelty.* Jesus remained true to Himself and even in the greatest pain was authentic. This, too, Jesus *shared with those who remain faithful to their convictions despite the most negative circumstances.*

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

22. Jesus did not remain dead for long. As He had predicted, He rose from the dead on the third day. Jesus is risen, the grave is empty, death could not hold Him. *He is alive!* And so Jesus *shared the life of those for whom death is not the end*

of their being. Because they trust God and place their hope in what Jesus did on the cross, they will be resurrected as He was; they will live forever because He lives forever at His Father's side. They will honor Him as Jesus honored the Father and make Him Lord of Lords. They will all honor the Father by confessing that Jesus is Lord.

THAT'S WHAT JESUS DID FOR ME!

"He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all.

When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human.

Having become human, he stayed human.

It was an incredibly humbling process.

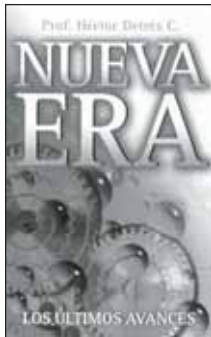
He didn't claim special privileges.

Instead, He lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that: a crucifixion.

Because of that obedience, God lifted him high and honored him far beyond anyone or anything, ever, so that all created beings in heaven and on earth—even those long ago dead and buried—will bow in worship before this Jesus Christ, and call out in praise that he is the Master of all, to the glorious honor of God the Father" (Philippians 2: 6-11, The Message).

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Nueva Era: Los últimos avances

by Héctor Detrés C. (Barcelona: Editorial CLIE, 1999; 171 pp.; paperback)

Reviewed by Merling Alomía

The mandarins of the New Age are at it again—with a vengeance. The new millennium with all its fears and uncertainties, its materialistic grab and spiritual emptiness, has provided the framework and the opportunity for the New Age gurus to take over subtly mass communication to promote their own mendacious prognosis of catastrophes and their hopes—false, of course—of a utopia. As a result, the media today continue to present the allurements and innovations of the New Age movement with more daring and freedom than during the last decades of the past century. Multitudes fall victims to the thrill of the New Age—moving from curiosity to fascination to captivity.

Héctor Detrés provides an excellent primer on the allurements and advances of the New Age and exposes its hidden dangers to true spiritual life. Beware: You have been warned.

He should know. Detrés is a psychologist with a graduate degree from Michigan State University. He is the director of the radio program, “A Family Dialogue” and author of *Television: Its Effects on Children and Adolescents*.

The book begins with a readable and reliable account of the development of modern psychiatry and psychology, holistic medicine, and the ever more frequent appearances of Jesus. The author also explains the Jewish Havurah and the so-called near-death experiences, including those involving

children. But the book is not merely a narration; it goes beyond presentation and analyzes in an authoritative manner the New Age phenomena from a biblical perspective. Thus focused, each chapter of the book unmasks the true author of these occult ideas that have come to redefine our culture in at least 20 common areas of our lives, in just two decades.

Chapters 5 and 6 are the core of the book. They clearly identify the master spirit that is behind the popularization of the ideas and capital errors of the psychics of the New Age. The author shows how these occultist deceptions have influenced even professions like medicine. New Age thinking has produced healers who have saturated the world with their weird psycho-medicinal propositions—as many as 140 and counting. We wish the author had gone deeper in describing some of these medical intrusions of the New Age, but perhaps identifying them and alerting us to the dangers they constitute are sufficient to serve as a wake-up call to those who may be endangered by these false therapies.

The author’s biblical focus exposes the true origins of the occult rituals, beliefs, and philosophies presented as new innovations of the New Age back to age-old Satanic deceptions to distract the saints and confirm the deluded. In this, the author has given us a significant tool to be alert to practices that put on a spiritual cloak, to know how to diagnose the hidden agenda and the subtle allurements of the New Age, and to fight with the armor of God’s Word the enemy that is out to crush the Christian in the cosmic conflict that rages around us (Ephesians 6:10-17).

Merling Alomía (Th.D., Andrews University) is a theologian and educational administrator at Universidad Peruana Unión. His e-mail address: merling@upeu.edu.pe

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La posmodernidad desde la perspectiva profética

by Mario Pereyra and Enrique Espinosa (Libertador San Martín, Entre Ríos, Argentina: Editorial Bienestar Psicológico, 2000; 222 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Miguel Ángel Núñez

Bible prophecy is significant to the Adventist ethos, and it is usually focused on historical events that explain or validate prophecy. However, is it possible to blend theology and psychology in order to better understand the eschatological events just ahead of us? Will such an approach to biblical prophecy help us better understand the postmodern world in which we live?

The task is innovative and challenging, and two Adventist scholars from Universidad Adventista del Plata in Argentina have taken up the challenge. Dr. Mario Pereyra, a professor of psychology, and Dr. Enrique Espinosa, a professor of theology, pool the resources of their respective disciplines to produce a socio-psychological-theological analysis of postmodernism in the light of biblical prophecy.

In the first half of the book, Dr. Pereyra takes a broad look at the social, ideological, and philosophical stance of postmodernism by examining the views of such writers as J. Baudrillard, G. Lipovetsky, J. F. Lyotard, B. Sarlo, and G. Sartori. The emphasis is descriptive, outlining the various tendencies of the present. He underlines the deep psychological changes taking place in human life during this stage of history, and supports his stand by providing valuable statistical data.

Some sections contain real jewels. Pereyra's synthesis of the most characteristic elements of postmodernism, such as the impact of imaging and virtual reality on creating a new type of human being whose interactions are totally at odds with anything heretofore, is truly impressive. This trend has affected concepts like "morality," "values," "principles," and "good and evil," giving to them markedly different meanings. Pereyra contends that behind the change of meaning of these concepts is a totally new semantic overload compared to the traditional philosophical, academic, and colloquial linguistic usage.

The second part of the book contrasts this picture of the human in the postmodern age with the postulates of Bible prophecy, especially with reference to the eschatological framework in Revelation. The study seeks to find psychological traits of human beings delineated in prophecy. From this perspective, the authors compare what they have read in sociology and psychology with what they find in Bible's prophetic writings. From this viewpoint, the Book of Revelation and other eschatological passages take on new freshness as we realize that God foresaw many situations in the psychological development of modern humans, which some may view as the result of mere chance. Dr. Espinosa's theological insights and eschatological analysis provide a breath of fresh air to the understanding of the problems of postmodernism.

On the whole, the thesis and the approach of the book are provocative and make good reading. In spite of some weakness in the use of language and unnecessary emphases or digressions, the book breaks new ground in theological thinking, and lets biblical theology inform us on the psychological condition of human beings in the end time. Such interdisciplinary efforts do shed more light on the problems that confront life today and the solutions that are available to such problems. The Word of God and its promises for a new day takes on fresh meaning.

Miguel Ángel Núñez (Ph.D., Universidad Adventista del Plata) is a faculty member at his alma mater and head of the Department of Spiritual Affairs. He is the author of 10 books and numerous articles.



Continuity and Change in Adventist Teaching: A Case Study in Doctrinal Development

by Rolf J. Pöhler (Frankfurt: Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 2000; paperback).

Reviewed by Aecio E. Cairus

In a world of rapid changes, many find in religion an oasis of stability. Oh, well, they can put up with some innovative worship styles, once in a while. But a change in the doctrines of the church? Most members would find the very idea profoundly disturbing. Though Pöhler provides an excellent introduction to his book, his purpose is perhaps better expressed in a footnote in the conclusion: to demonstrate "that Adventists need not entertain any fundamental (or paranoid) fear of change, knowing that, in a number of cases, doctrinal revisions appear to have been quite beneficial to the church—even when they involved intense personal struggles and protracted theological debates."

The book is based on the author's doctoral dissertation. As such, its historical discussion is often accompanied by methodological and other introductory considerations that may put off some non-specialist readers. Such readers would do well in skipping those sections: They could, for example, begin from page 22, and be surprised at how engrossing the discussion proves to be.

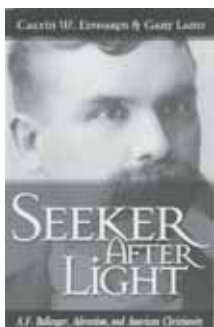
The author's thrust may be summarized by the epigraph on page 225, quoted from the French politician Jean Jaurès (misspelled as "Juares"; 1859-1914): "Take from the altar of the past the fire, not the ashes!" Pöhler shows that early Adventism, born as an inter-denominational, ecumenical movement, was in fact quite tolerant of doctrinal diversity and rapid doctrinal change. This would perhaps imply that present-day Adventists, classified by Pöhler into four groups according to their openness to change (or lack thereof), could *all* have felt somewhat uncomfortable in those pioneering times. Traditionalists would have enjoyed what they heard or read, but at the same time been disturbed by the atmosphere of quick changes; it would have been the other way around with "progressivists."

This is not to say that early Adventists were necessarily aware of their openness or even of doctrinal changes as such. In a particularly poignant episode, the author mentions that Uriah Smith once suggested that someone should be dis-fellowshipped for holding a particular tenet of doctrine, which he himself had introduced into Adventism years before, but was by then happily forgotten (pages 62-65).

Most church historians will probably agree with Pöhler's overall reconstruction of doctrinal transformation in Adventism, though not necessarily with every detail. For example, Pöhler states that "not a single voice" dissented, before the 1890s, with the anti-Trinitarian views of James White, Joseph Bates and other leaders, "Ellen White included" (p. 37). However, Ellen White's statements starting around 1869 (see *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 200; and vol. 4, p. 457 ff.) suggest that she always kept the Trinitarian faith in which she was baptized as a Methodist, in the same way her husband never abandoned completely the anti-Trinitarian views of his Christian Connexion baptism. Even more interesting perhaps for the purposes of Pöhler, the waxing and waning of anti-Trinitarian ideas in Adventism closely match a similar process in the Protestantism of New England as a whole (Christian Connexion eventually abandoned its anti-Trinitarian stance and joined the United Church of Christ).

Thus, some may agree or disagree with certain positions the author takes, but on the whole the book is an enjoyable treasure for specialists and non-specialists alike.

Aecio E. Cairus (Ph.D., Andrews University) is professor of theology at the Adventist International Institute for Advanced Studies, Silang, Philippines. His e-mail address: cairus@aiaas.edu



**Seeker After Light:
A. F. Ballenger, Adventism and
American Christianity**

by Calvin W. Edwards and Gary Land
(Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University
Press, 2001; 222 pp.; paperback).

Reviewed by Joan Francis

Gary Land, professor of history at Andrews University, and Calvin Edwards, a consultant and former seminary student, combine their love of history and their abiding commitment to the church to narrate the story of A. F. Ballenger, a forgotten player in early Seventh-day Adventism. In the 1980s, Edwards started research on Ballenger, an earlier critic of the sanctuary doctrine. The book is an attempt to place

Ballenger and the first 50 years of Adventism in the larger context of American religious history rather than in the milieu of doctrinal controversies.

The authors combed the General Conference archives, Adventists publications, and a variety of other sources such as letters for information on this pioneer who should be remembered for more than his disaffection with the church. Albion Fox Ballenger's father was an ardent Sabbatarian who sacrificed money and time for the growth of the Adventist Church. This influenced young Albion who, although he spent his early years farming in the Midwest, was able to persevere and receive certification as a teacher. With an interest in religious matters, he devoted much time studying the Bible. Meanwhile he also developed his talents as a speaker and minister. His deep Bible study led him to question and seek individual truth rather than blindly accept organizational beliefs.

The book presents a complete portrait of Ballenger and chronicles his many activities in working for the church. These include his work with the Religious Liberty Department where he became the foremost spokesperson for the church and traversed the country tenaciously defending the Sabbath and stirring up discussion on Sabbath keeping. He was also engaged in Temperance and Holiness movements. His work on these causes pushed Adventism and Ballenger in the limelight. The authors credit Ballenger for much of the development of Adventism in England, Wales and Scotland, and this adds to the reservoir of information of Adventism in the mission fields.

The book provides rare glimpses of the mind set of other pioneers who seemed more concerned over doctrinal orthodoxy rather than personal nurture. About the time Ballenger took issue with the church on the sanctuary doctrine, Kellogg was pushing his pantheistic view, and the church was not in a mood to brook any deviation from its established parameters.

The book presents Ballenger as a driven man, willing to sacrifice his family for the cause of truth. He presented his views at the 1905 General Conference and was subsequently relieved of his denominational responsibilities. In respect for the church, he waited for a number of years before he publicly challenged its stance. Unfortunately, because of his controversial views, his name has slipped from the list of early pioneers. This book has corrected this omission.

The strength of this book is its presentation of Ballenger in historical perspective. It is a biography and yet provides a contextual picture of the issues and personalities involved in the developmental years of Adventism, leading us to a better appreciation of the birth pangs of the early church. The book deals with the controversies surrounding the sanctuary doctrine, which still remain disturbing to many.

Scholarly, well documented with extensive footnotes, and written in non-technical terms, the book is absorbing and

suitable for professionals and lay persons alike. As such, it is an essential read for ministers, Bible teachers, church members and all those interested in the personalities and pioneers of the early church.

Joan A. Francis is currently professor of history at Columbia Union College. She also served as professor of history and coordinator of women's studies and associate dean at Atlantic Union College. Her e-mail address: JFrancis@cuc.edu



**They Had a World to Win:
Fascinating Glimpses Into the
Lives of Our Adventist Pioneers**

by Adriel D. Chilson (Hagerstown, Md:
Review and Herald, 2001; 191 pp.;
paperback). Publisher's website:
<http://www.reviewandherald.com>

Reviewed by Alberto R. Timm

Adriel Chilson, a retired pastor-evangelist, married to the late Winifred White, great-granddaughter of Ellen White, had access to little-known insights and information about Adventist pioneers, gathered from family reunions. *They Had a World to Win* provides "fascinating glimpses" into the lives of a dozen such pioneers, showing that they were men and women of faith with a specific mission to the world.

The book has 11 chapters, dealing with (1) William Miller, "Herald of His Coming"; (2) James and Ellen White, "Number One Team"; (3) Joseph Bates, "Sabbath Crusader"; (4) J. N. Andrews, "Ablest Man"; (5) J. N. Loughborough, "Teen-age Preacher"; (6) Willie White, "Son of the Prophet"; (7) Uriah Smith, "His Mighty Pen"; (8) J. G. Matteson, "Gospel Viking"; (9) Kate Lindsay, "Bike-riding Doctor"; (10) J. H. Kellogg, "Battle Creek Dynamo"; and (11) Anna Knight, "Doing What Couldn't Be Done." The author skillfully avoids the encyclopedic style of isolated entries and shows how each of those pioneers played a major role within the larger framework of the Advent movement.

Chilson mentions many captivating incidents. James White, even as he was recovering from being worn down by overwork, found it difficult to leave his pen alone. Once, in the mountains of Colorado, James asked his son Willie to scrape the available fat from a wolf's carcass so that he could use it at night as a candle substitute to finish writing a pamphlet for the publishing house. Willie White won the hand of Mary Kelsey away from John H. Kellogg and married her, but she was assisted and comforted in her last days by Dr. Kellogg himself. Kate Lindsay and Anna Knight carried a pistol for

personal protection while fulfilling their duties in the Lord's cause.

With its charming style, the book provides its readers with faith-uplifting experiences of people who sacrificed their own lives for the Lord at a time when resources were meager. Hence the author's plea: "Our age of advantages should enable us to complete the work they so sacrificially began."

Alberto R. Timm (Ph.D., Andrews University) teaches church history and serves as director of the Ellen G. White Research Center at Brazil Adventist University, Campus 2. His address: Caixa Postal 11; Engenheiro Coelho, SP; 13165-970 Brazil. E-mail: atimm@unas.br

Ben Carson

Continued from page 25.

sponsibility, and the deleterious effects of bureaucracy.

When I speak in academic circles, at universities, my beliefs are up front. In this environment, I often have to deal with the whole political-correctness thing. There's a tendency to feel that any exotic or Eastern religion is OK, while anything traditional of Christian is not! Tolerance, however, means more than having people agree with you. You have to evaluate, be objective, and demonstrate openness. Intellectuals frequently say of Christians, even those who are educated, that they are weak-minded and need their beliefs as a crutch. But these intellectuals cannot answer why people love each other. The evolutionary scheme does not fit. Interestingly, when I speak at university and college campuses, it might seem that I would not be appreciated, but in fact my reception has been uniformly enthusiastic.

■ *So what of the future?*

What does God have in store for the future? Something quite different to what I think it will be, I'm sure! I just hope I'm ready. He has a tendency to set things up! I don't know, but God does. He knows how all the pieces fit together.

■ *And you still believe in thinking big, to use one of your book titles?*

Yes, that's the message: Think big! That's what God wants for all of us.

Interview by Jonathan Gallagher

Jonathan Gallagher is the United Nations Liaison Director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His e-mail address: Gallagherj@gc.adventist.org

From evolution to creation: My difficult journey

by Walter Veith

Your mother is going to hell where she will be tormented forever and ever."

That's what I heard over and over again from my Catholic teacher about my Lutheran mother, who was dying of cancer. *How can a God of love punish a faithful mother like mine? If there is a God, I hate Him.* By age 10, I was a confirmed atheist.

I majored in zoology at the University of Cape Town, where evolution was

championed. My professors included brilliant men whose work on the evolution of human skulls found a place in museums around the world. A full-fledged atheist, I went on to earn my doctorate and begin a career as a senior lecturer at Stellenbosch University. My whole life revolved around evolution. I taught evolution. I based my research on evolution. For me, God did not exist.

During a lecture, a young girl confronted me: "What you say, Dr. Veith, is a lie. God created the heaven and the earth in six days." I exploded, tearing into her until she began to cry. Students were impressed with my ability to disprove creation.

Life was complete. A wonderful wife, a beautiful baby boy, and a prestigious career. God was the last thing on my mind until the night my son became deathly ill. Nothing that the doctors did was making a difference. In desperation, I turned to God as my last option. I went back to my church—the Catholic Church—to petition God's mercy. My son was saved. And out of obligation more than anything else, I began to attend mass on and off.

I asked a priest one day about evolution and creation. He said, "Everyone knows we exist through evolution." *Wonderful! I can hold on to both evolution and God.*

Then one day I met a carpenter who was to remodel our kitchen and who would later change my life around. In a casual introduction of himself he said, "I walk with the Lord."

"You walk with the Lord—I just want a kitchen. Is that OK?"

He said, "OK" handing me a pamphlet, which I stuck in a drawer.

Gradually, several things in the Catholic Church began to trouble me. *Why do they say the same prayers and celebrate the same rituals over and over? Does the priest really have power to change the bread and wine into the true body of Christ?* As I sat alone in a pew near the back one day, I was drawn to the little red light that blinked on a box, meaning the host or wafer was inside. *They have God locked up in that box.* I prayed "Where are You, God? I don't know You, but if You truly exist, You must show me."

Hurrying home, I pulled out the pamphlet the carpenter had given me. In three columns, it displayed three versions of the Ten Commandments: the biblical, the Lutheran, and the Catholic. Using a catechism and a Bible, I began a comparative study. The commandments did not match! Puzzled, I reached for the carpenter's phone number. That was the beginning of a long series of Bible studies. My confusion worsened when the carpenter began the topic of the Sabbath. "How can you keep a commandment that says the Lord created the heavens, the earth, and the sea in only six days?"

During that same time, my secretary handed me a pile of documents against the Sabbath and Seventh-day Adventists. I gave the material to my wife. "You go through this," I said. "Maybe there's a way out for us." While I grappled with Creation, she struggled with the Sabbath. Completing the material, my wife said, "This has convinced me the Sabbath is right." A document *against* the Sabbath proved to her that

Dialogue for you, free!

If you are a Seventh-day Adventist student attending a non-Adventist college or university, the Church has a plan that will allow you to receive *Dialogue* free while you remain a student. (Those who are no longer students can subscribe to *Dialogue*, using the coupon on page 8.) Contact the director of the Education Department or the Youth Department in your Union and request that you be placed in their distribution network for the journal. Include your full name, address, college or university you are attending, the degree you are pursuing, and the name of the local church of which you are a member. You may also write to our regional representatives at the address provided on page 2, with a copy of your letter sent to the Union directors listed above. If these communications fail to produce results, contact us via e-mail: ssicalo@yahoo.com

the Sabbath message was indeed true.

The risk of accepting Creation

This was a major problem for me. I could not keep holy a day that represented a six-day creation week. I still believed that it took at least six billion years. Struggling over my dilemma, I prayed, "God, if You exist and there is something wrong with what I believe, show me." Our university had the largest evolution-based library in the Southern Hemisphere. A study of a particular book there got me thinking. An older edition of the book talked about a major problem with cetaceans or whales because they appeared suddenly in the fossil record fully formed. However, a newer edition said that cetaceans have an ancient origin evolving from one to another. I went through similar evolutionary models. While older editions admitted to unresolved difficulties, newer versions never admitted to a problem. The more books I compared, the more discrepancies I found. I began a list of them, checking the meaning of Hebrew and Greek words, verifying historical facts, and examining biblical prophecies. At the end of it all, I saw no way out! I told my family, "We're going to keep the Sabbath and start attending the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

While keeping the Sabbath, I continued to teach evolution. In my heart I knew I had to make a change when I was asked to lead a postgraduate discussion on evolution. *Should I stand up for what I now believed?*

At the discussion, I lectured on the whole gene system, highlighting every problem and emphatically ending with the statement—"Evolution is not possible!" There was a moment of silence, then all hell broke loose. One colleague turned blood red and started screaming at me. A special meeting followed where it was voted that the basis for all teaching must be evolution. My life was worthless in terms of scientific credibility. I turned in my resignation.

No smooth ride, but promises abound

We sold our house and bought a wheat and dairy farm, using all our money as well as a large bank loan. We planted wheat, and it grew so high that farmers from the entire district came to look. They said, "A university man like you must know something we don't." *It's because we're walking with the Lord. I figured, Now that we are Christians, everything will go just great.* I was soon to learn that being a Christian doesn't guarantee a smooth ride.

Life was wonderful until a huge flock of birds flew in, and ignoring all the farms around, made our wheat their home. They ate and ate until there was nothing left. To make things worse, both our cars were lost in major accidents. All I had was more debt than my farm was worth. At the same time, the economy of South Africa plummeted. *God, how can you do this to me? I have no way to support myself. My scientific credibility is gone. I can't go back to my old job. I'm finished.*

We wrote down all the promises we could find in the Bible and prayed, "Lord, these promises are for us. Please don't leave us without money or food. May Your will be done."

The phone rang the next morning. It was the university "We have a teacher taking emergency leave for one year. Will you fill in?"

"You know I will not teach evolution," I responded firmly.

"Just stick to science. We're in a jam and need a replacement."

"Great. When do I start?"

"In about three months." *In three months we would probably starve to death.*

Twenty minutes later, the phone rang again. It was the university. Because of some trouble with committees and paperwork, they needed me to start in three days!

We had just three days to find a caretaker for the farm and move to the university. Again, we simply took it to the

Lord. "Lord, we don't have money to hire someone to take care of the farm. Please help us find a way out of our problem." Almost immediately there was a young couple at the door. "We lost our job on a farm because we refused to work on the Sabbath. We are looking for a place to live." God worked miracle after miracle to supply every need. We even found a place to live where we didn't have to pay rent until the end of the month.

A few weeks after I began teaching, I was invited to join a Bible science tour led by Dr. Ariel Roth of the Geoscience Research Institute at Loma Linda, California. I really wanted to go, to see more evidence to confirm my belief in the biblical account of the Flood and Creation, but I couldn't take six weeks off from a new job! Then riots broke out everywhere, my country was in chaos, and the university was closed for six weeks. The timing was perfect. I went on the Geoscience tour and began developing my own series of lectures on Creation.

By the time my one-year contract with the university was over, there were several permanent teaching vacancies. I was considered for one. "Veith is too controversial. He has strange ideas," many said. Yet here I am, head of the zoology department in a secular university. I teach Creation. It seems impossible. But it happened because God wanted me here. And He can keep me here for as long as He desires. When this door closes, He will find something better for me.

Walter Veith is chairman of the Department of Zoology, University of the Western Cape, South Africa. His website: <http://www.amazingdiscoveries.org>

Action Report

Sharing Christ on campus: Seventh-day Adventists and public campus ministry

Evangelism, recreation, and lectures are just some of the ways Seventh-day Adventist students in public universities in the Upper Columbia Conference are sharing Christ in their communities. Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF), a recognized student organization at the University of Idaho (UI) and Washington State University (WSU), with support from the conference and the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Moscow, Idaho, and Pullman, Washington, are sharing Christ on campus.

Campus evangelism is done through Bible studies, evangelistic meetings, and servant evangelism. Alina Arnold, a UI graduate student, gives Bible studies to

her friends. Tim Cantrell, a UI student, coordinates a weekly Friday night Bible study. Other students lead out and participate in small groups. "Harvest" evangelistic meetings invite students to make decisions for Christ. Elder Gordon Pifher presented a "Revelation Speaks Peace" evangelistic series for WSU students. Elder Doug Venn hosted "The Search," a lunchtime UI evangelistic discussion series. Servant evangelism is a tangible way to "show God's love in practical ways." Examples of servant evangelism on campus include giving out toilet paper, water bottles, cookies, and flowers. Christ is seen through simple acts of kindness, preaching, and Bible study.

Recreation is a fun way to share Christ on campus. Examples of recreation used to interact with students seeking faith in God include rock climbing, sports, and group game nights. Pastor Venn and Peter Schact, a working young adult, organized a rock climbing trip to cliffs in the Spokane, Washington State area. Allen Segebartt, head elder at

the Moscow Seventh-day Adventist Church, hosts a weekly basketball fellowship at the local Adventist elementary school. A volleyball game night is coordinated by Luke and Renaye Tschritter, a married couple attending WSU. Jayne Peterson and Doyleene Chan host group table game nights, building friendships with students. Through recreation, Seventh-day Adventist members and students witness to the joy of their relationship with Christ.

Lectures are another effective way to share Christ on campus. Doug Clark, Ph.D., of Walla Walla College, presented Biblical archaeology lectures. Sirrel Maldonado, WSU graduate student, and Jennifer Douglass, UI law student, organized a religious liberty lecture series presented by Gregory Hamilton, president of the Northwest Religious Liberty Association. His lectures entitled, "Church State Relations in Crisis: The Debate Over Neutrality", and "Freedom of Religion Versus Freedom From Religion" were well received by WSU and UI students and faculty.

Adventist students at WSU and UI have seized a unique opportunity in sharing their most precious possession with their fellow students. The experience has been rewarding and satisfying.

—Ernesto Douglas Venn, *ACF chaplain*. E-mail: venner@gocougs.swu.edu

Attention, Adventist Professionals

If you hold a degree in any field, we encourage you to join the Adventist Professionals' Network (APN). Sponsored by the Adventist Church, this global electronic registry assists participating institutions and agencies in locating consultants with expertise, volunteers for mission assignments, and candidates for positions in teaching, administration, or research. Enter your professional information directly in the APN website:

<http://apn.adventist.org>

Encourage other Adventist professionals to register!



Thank God It's Friday (TGIF) is our weekly Friday night Bible study for university students and young adults. Pastor Clarence Schilt presented the Bible study at Pastor Venn's home.

Kenyatta University: Once again a first in Kenya

It came as a pleasant surprise. The vice chancellor of Kenyatta University, Professor George Eshiwani, advertised in the local press the post of an Adventist chaplain for Kenyatta University Adventist students. Dr. Enock Okari Omosa landed the job and is now the spiritual leader of more than 400 active Adventist students and faculty at Kenyatta University, an institution with a difference.

That appointment was made in 2001—the first time any university in Kenya (and there are five public universities with 15 campuses) has appointed a chaplain exclusively to care for students from one denomination. And on March 23, 2002, Kenyatta University also became the first to allow the formal organization of a church on the campus. Elder Muasya, president of East African Union Mission, inducted and installed Dr. Omosa as the chaplain of Kenyatta University Seventh-day Adventist Church. The institution is also the first public university in Kenya to set aside land for the construction of a sanctuary in which Adventist students and faculty can worship. Central Kenya Conference and East African Union Executive Committees have voted to appreciate and accept the timely gift.

The university again took the kudos in hosting the first Eastern Africa Division conference on campus chaplains, drawn from all the unions. The conference was inaugurated by the university vice-chancellor. The university has periodically involved church leaders in the public events of the institution, such as the invitation to Mrs. Jerusha Muga, a

secretary in the East Africa Union, to lead in the devotion at the university's thanksgiving service attended by His Excellency President Daniel Arap Moi.

One other university—Moi University in Western Kenya—now has a full-time resident chaplain—Pastor Albert Sang, whose responsibility extends to all three campuses of the university.

Challenges

In spite of these advances, Adventist students do face some serious challenges, ranging from social to spiritual.

1. *Peer pressure.* Fresh from high school, many Adventist students find life in a public university difficult to manage, especially in view of extreme pressures from peers in lifestyle issues, such as smoking, drinking, drugs, and sex. They depend on role models from senior students, and the chaplain's office attempts to fill the gap somewhat.

2. *Financial pressure.* Students not only face financial problems in meeting their university obligations, but they hardly have sufficient funds to maintain facilities and equipment for their spiritual and social programs. A decent public address system is their most urgent need to carry out their outreach and evangelistic programs.

3. *Sabbath examinations.* Teaching and examinations commonly fall on Sabbath, and not all Adventist students are ready like Daniel and his three friends to stand for principles. The church in Kenya has represented its views to the constitution review commission with regard to freedom of worship and Sabbath observance.

4. *Insufficient chaplaincy services.* With so many university campuses in the union and with few chaplains, who are also loaded with other departments, chaplaincy services are at best minimal. The students are busy in the day and can only have evenings and weekends for guidance and counseling. Chaplains are not available in the evenings except weekends. This calls for resident chaplains on campuses for effectiveness but conferences and fields do not have budgets. Our goal and prayer is to have one chaplain per university.

5. *Backsliding.* Of the 10,000 students of Kenyatta University, 1,000 declare themselves to be Adventists, but only about half are active ones. Reaching the backsliding ones through friendship evangelism, weeks of prayer, social activities, and group studies are our current priority. But this takes time, money, and willing hands. This year we have had 19 baptisms, six outreach endeavors, nine "inreach" efforts on the campus, two music Sabbaths, and two interfaith services.

Another university that has reported a vigorous evangelistic program is Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, with 93 baptisms in the past three years.

— Dan M'masi serves as
campus ministries director
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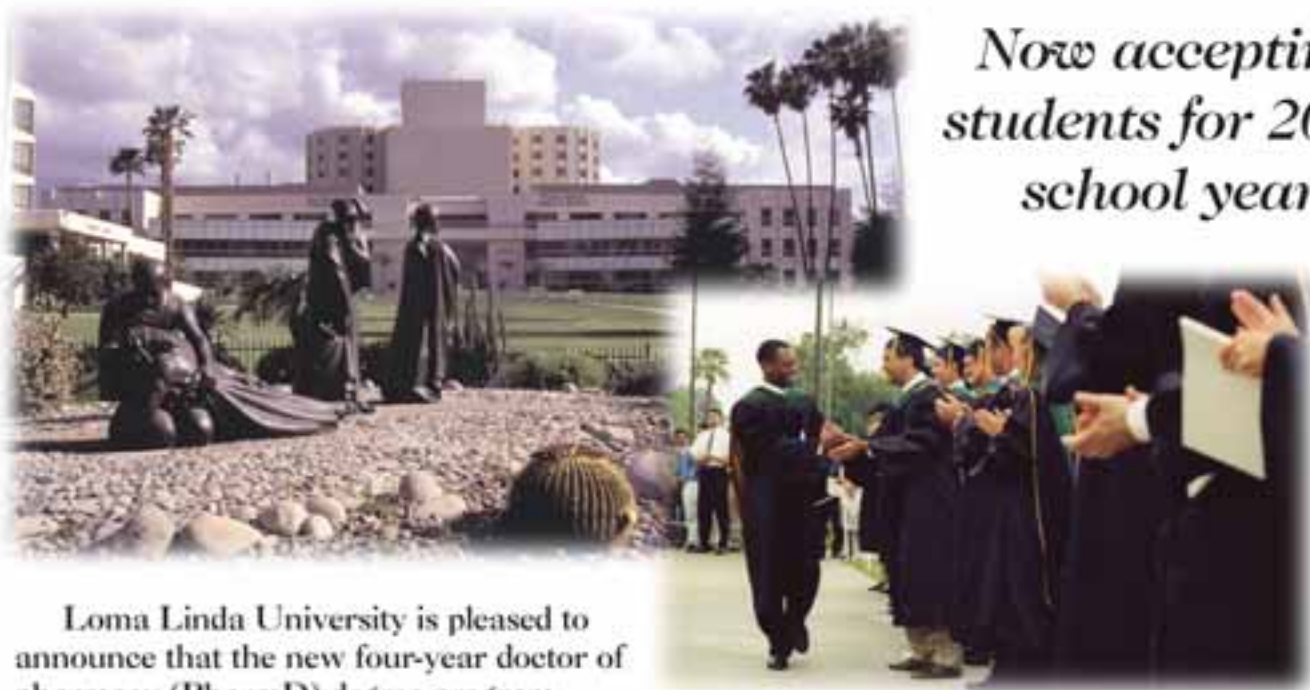
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LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY

School of Pharmacy

*Now accepting
students for 2003
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Loma Linda University is pleased to announce that the new four-year doctor of pharmacy (PharmD) degree program began its inaugural class in September of 2002. Students for 2003 are now being accepted. Entering students are expected to have completed all prerequisites prior to entry; preference is given to those who already hold a bachelor's degree in the sciences or other related fields. Applications for the class entering in 2003 are welcome. Please visit our website <www.llu.edu/llu/sps/> for details on the program and proposed curriculum. Application materials may also be accessed online, or contact us by phone at (909) 558-1300 or (800) 422-4558; fax (909) 558-4859; or e-mail <pharmacy@univ.llu.edu>.

Loma Linda University has applied for precandidate accreditation status, the first of two steps in the preaccreditation process set forth by the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE), the national accrediting agency of pharmacy. In accord with ACPE's procedures, the LLU School of Pharmacy's doctor of pharmacy program has been evaluated during the fall of 2002, and the granting of precandidate accreditation may be considered in early 2003.

The School of Pharmacy also welcomes contact from scientists and pharmacy practitioners interested in serving as faculty within the program. Please forward a letter of interest and curriculum vitae to <pharmacy@univ.llu.edu> or send to: School of Pharmacy; Loma Linda University, West Hall #1318; Loma Linda, California 92350; U.S.A.



www.llu.edu/llu/sps/

Interchange

Expand Your Friendship Network

Adventist college/university students and professionals, readers of *Dialogue*, interested in exchanging correspondence with colleagues in other parts of the world.

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Invitation

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