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Creation week
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**Dating and sexuality
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EDITORIAL

Standing strong, standing firm

When I became a Seventh-day Adventist years ago, the strongest motivation to cross over from a traditional church to what was then considered a cult was the imminence of the second coming of Christ. The evangelist did a persuasive job. Supported by colorful prophetic charts, his exposition of the parousia left no doubt in my mind that my young life could have meaning only as it faced the reality of the soon-to-unfold drama of the Second Coming. The Voice of Prophecy broadcasts and the correspondence school continued their reinforcement of the point week after week. Even the Sabbath school theme song reminded me, “Jesus is coming again.”

The second coming of Christ, thus, became the motivating force for most of my life activities. My faith, worship, values, study, vocation, and association were all somehow related to an eschatological hope, either as a definer or as a conditioner. This eschatological orientation was particularly prominent in my new-found Adventist ethic and lifestyle. One argument would appeal to the quote: “When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.”¹

The quote, memorized when I was a teenager, was for me a momentous one. Are divine plans so dependent on simple mortals? Is there really a cosmic, universal, and eschatological significance in what I did or what I did not? The thought was awesome and lasted a long time, until one day as a beginning pastor I realized that I knew more about the Lord who is coming again than about the Lord who did come. I knew more about the mysterious beasts of Daniel and Revelation than the mystery of the cross. I found it easier to explain to my friends Daniel 2 and 7 than Romans 5 and 7. My preaching was at home with the magic of history marching toward its teleological climax, but in the process, the Lord of history remained the sovereign of the universe to many of my hearers without becoming their saving Lord.

Suddenly, it dawned on me that I was missing the essential issue of coming to grips with what is central to Christianity. “Give me a place to stand,” said the old philosopher Archimedes, “and I will move the earth.” The question for me as a pastor was: Where is my place to stand, that I may move my parish for my Master’s mission?

The answer came through the study of the momentous discovery of the apostle Paul: “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2, RSV). Paul’s decision (*krino*) was a resolute act of the will, a determination born out of deliberate consideration. Paul had employed a different approach at Athens, that great bastion of intellectual skill, philosophical tools, and historical pride. He met philosophy with philosophy, logic with logic, poetry with poetry, and at the end of the Mars Hill production, the apostle did leave a magnetic spell on his audience—but very few in that city understood the mystery or the meaning of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Out of that experience, when eloquence seemed to bury the essential and when shadows seemed to submerge the substance, the apostle came to the conclusion that Christ of the cross and Him alone constituted the essence of Christian living and preaching.

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Dialogue

12501 Old Columbia Pike

Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.

Telephone 301-680-5073

Fax 301-622-9627

E-mail schulzs@gc.adventist.org

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Editorial

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Christ and the cross! All other claims are secondary. "It is high time," wrote Visser't Hooft, "that Christians should rediscover that the very heart of their faith is that Jesus Christ did not come to make a contribution to the religious storehouse of mankind, but that in him God reconciled the world unto himself."² As I considered this central theme of the New Testament, I made my discovery. The starting point for Christian ministry is the Cross. "He who beholds the Saviour's matchless love will be elevated in thought, purified in heart, transformed in character. He will go forth to be a light to the world, to reflect in some degree this mysterious love."³

The ground of certitude

To say this is to affirm two vital dynamics of Christian life. First, the cross is the Christian's ground of certitude. Any emphasis other than the cross would nullify the Christo-centric nature of the gospel, and lead to the denial of the very essence of Christianity. Any experience, hope, lifestyle, or mission that derives its primary motive from any factor other than God's redemptive activity on the Cross is essentially work-related, accomplishment-oriented, and

self-centered. The preoccupation with all such cross-less endeavors, like that of the rich young ruler, is *what must I do* to enter into the kingdom.

What must I do? The cross strips the human of any pretension for such self-salvation. Non-Christian religions, as Emil Brunner rightly pointed out, may speak of the "self-confident optimism" of the human in the struggle with sin,⁴ but the Bible does not accede to self any such innate potential for redemption. A self that could save itself is a contradiction to the gospel and its Cross.

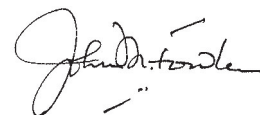
So the Cross is the one and only means of identifying God's way. Even our understanding of the nature of God—His love, His fatherhood, His grace, His justice—flow out of the perspective of the cross. Other religions do talk about a loving, holy, just, omnipotent, omniscient, caring god—but never of a cross. Only Christianity talks of a God who "so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, RSV). In choosing the death of the cross to deal with sin and to vanquish the originator of sin, the Man of the cross became both the defier of death and the definer of life. Through Him, death is a defeated foe; through Him life becomes possible. Therefore, He is the ground of our today and our tomorrow, our faith and our love, our hope and our certitude.

A cross expects death

The second dynamic of the cross-centered life is that it expects a perpetual surrender to the demands of discipleship. When Jesus enunciated that taking up the cross to follow Him is not an option but a necessity of discipleship (Matthew 16:24; Luke 9:23), He was saying that the cross and its claims—both immediate and ultimate—must confront Christian ministry and demand absolute response. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's comment is appropriate: "If our Christianity has ceased to be

serious about discipleship, if we have watered down the gospel into emotional uplift which makes no costly demands and which fails to distinguish between natural and Christian existence, then we cannot help regarding the cross as an ordinary everyday calamity, as one of the trials and tribulations of life... When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die... it is the same death every time—death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at his call."⁵

So the call to Christian life is a call to the Cross—to continually deny self its persistent desire to be its own savior, and to adhere fully to the Man of the Cross. Follow Him, preach Him, live for Him, and await Him for that eschatological exclamation of history. Fifty-three years after I began being a servant of that cross and of that hope, and now stepping into a re-treaded life of a lesser pace, I am as certain of standing strong and standing firm as ever on that Rock. "All other ground is sinking sand."



—John M. Fowler

ENDNOTES

1. Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1901), p. 69.
2. W. A. Visser't Hooft, *No Other Name* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 11.
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Does Genesis really teach a recent, literal, seven-day Creation week and a global flood?

by Richard M. Davidson

We have no information in Scripture as to how long ago God created the universe as a whole. But there is evidence strongly suggesting that the Creation week described in Genesis was recent, some time in the past several thousand years, and not hundreds of thousands.

Does Genesis 1–11 really teach a recent, literal, seven-day creation week and a global flood? In this article, I wish to share a summary of the biblical evidence which leads me to reply with a firm “Yes!” to this question.¹ I will briefly look at the three main parts to this question in turn.

1. Does the Genesis account of origins describe a literal, seven-day week?

Is there any evidence within the text of Genesis itself that would indicate whether the creation account was intended to be taken as literal? Indeed, there is. First, the literary genre of Genesis 1–11 points to the literal historical nature of the creation account. Many scholars have shown that the best genre designation for this part of Scripture is “historical narrative prose.”² The narratives of Genesis 1 and 2 lack any clues that they are to be taken as some kind of non-literal, symbolic/metaphorical, or “meta-historical” literature.

Second, the literary structure of Genesis as a whole indicates the intended literal nature of the creation narratives. It is widely recognized that

the whole book of Genesis is structured by the Hebrew word *toledot* (“generations, history”) in connection with each section of the book (13 times). This word *toledot* elsewhere in Scripture is used in the setting of genealogies concerned with the accurate account of time and history. The use of *toledot* in Genesis 2:4 shows that the author intends the account of Creation to be literal like the rest of the Genesis narratives.

Third, the phrase “evening and morning,” appearing at the conclusion of each of the six days of Creation, is used to define clearly the nature of the “days” as literal 24-hour periods. The references to “evening” and “morning” together outside of Genesis 1, invariably, without exception in the Old Testament (57 times), indicate a literal, 24-hour day.³

Fourth, the occurrences of the Hebrew word *yom* (“day”) at the conclusion of each of the six days of Creation in Genesis 1 are all connected with a numeric adjective (“one [first] day,” “second day,” “third day,” etc.). A comparison with occurrences of the term elsewhere in Scripture (359 times) reveals that such usage

always refers to literal days.

Fifth, in the Sabbath commandment (Exodus 20:8–11), by explicitly equating humankind’s six-day work week with God’s six-day work week at creation, and further equating the Sabbath to be kept by humankind each week with the first Sabbath after Creation week, the divine Lawgiver unequivocally interprets the first week as a literal week, consisting of seven consecutive, contiguous 24-hour days.

Sixth, Jesus and *all* New Testament writers refer to Genesis 1–11, with the underlying assumption that it is literal, reliable history. Every chapter of Genesis 1–11 is referred to somewhere in the New Testament, and Jesus Himself refers to Genesis 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.⁴

Finally, those who accept the inspiration of Ellen White find in her writings unambiguous testimony that Genesis 1 and 2 describe a literal week just like ours today. White writes what she was shown in vision: “I was then carried back to the creation and was shown that the first week, in which God performed the work of creation in six days and rested on the seventh day, was just like every other week....

God gives us the productions of his work at the close of each literal day.”⁵

2. Is the Creation week recent or remote in time?

We have no information in Scripture as to how long ago God created the universe as a whole. But there is evidence strongly suggesting that the Creation week described in Genesis 1:3 to 2:4 was recent, some time in the past several thousand years, and not hundreds of thousands, millions, or billions of years ago. The evidence for this is found primarily in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. These genealogies are unique, with no parallel among the other genealogies of the Bible or other ancient Near Eastern literature.⁶

Unlike the other genealogies, which may (and in fact often do) contain gaps, the “chronogenealogies” of Genesis 5 and 11 have indicators that they are to be taken as complete genealogies without gaps. These unique

interlocking features indicate a specific focus on chronological time and reveal an intention to make clear that there are no gaps between the individual patriarchs mentioned. A patriarch lived x years, and begat a son; after he begat this son, he lived y more years, and begat more sons and daughters; and all the years of this patriarch were z years. These tight interlocking features make it virtually impossible to argue that there are significant generational gaps. Rather, they purport to present the complete time sequence from father to direct biological son throughout the genealogical sequence from Adam to Abraham.

To further substantiate the absence of major gaps in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11, the Hebrew grammatical form of the verb *begat* (*yalad* in the *Hifil*) used throughout these chapters is the special causative form that always elsewhere in the Old Testament refers to actual direct physical offspring, i.e., biological

father-son relationship (Genesis 6:10; Judges 11:1; 1 Chronicles 8:9; 14:3; 2 Chronicles 11:21; 13:21; 24:3). This is in contrast to the use of *yalad* in the simple *Qal* form in many of the other biblical genealogies, in which cases it can refer to other than direct physical fathering of immediately succeeding offspring. In Genesis 5 and 11, there is clearly a concern for completeness, accuracy, and precise length of time.

There are several different textual versions of the chronological data in these two chapters: MT (Masoretic [Hebrew] Text), LXX (Septuagint [Greek translation]), and Samaritan Pentateuch. The scholarly consensus is that the MT has preserved the original figures in their purest form, while the LXX and Samaritan versions have intentionally schematized the figures for theological reasons. But regardless of which text is chosen, it only represents a difference of about 1,000 years or so.

Regarding the chronology from Abraham to the present, there is disagreement among Bible-believing scholars whether the Israelite sojourn in Egypt was 215 years or 430 years, and thus whether to put Abraham in the early second millennium or the late third millennium B.C.; but other than this minor difference, the basic chronology from Abraham to the present is clear from Scripture, and the total is only some 4,000 (+/- 200) years.⁷

Thus the Bible presents a relatively recent creation (of life on this Earth) a few thousand years ago, not hundreds of thousands or millions/billions. While minor ambiguities do not allow us to pin down the exact date, according to Scripture the six-day creation week unambiguously occurred *recently*.

3. Does Genesis 6–9 describe a local or global flood?

Only a global flood does full justice to all the biblical data, and this position is consistent with a growing body of scientific evidence.⁸ Here I sum-

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marize 20 lines of biblical evidence for a worldwide flood: (1) all the major themes in Genesis 1-11—Creation, Fall, plan of redemption, spread of sin—are universal in scope and call for a matching universal judgment in the Flood; (2) the genealogical lines from both Adam (Genesis 4:17-26; 5:1-31) and Noah (Genesis 10:1-32; 11:10-29) are exclusive in nature, indicating that as Adam was father of all pre-Flood humanity, so Noah was father of all post-Flood humanity, thus clearly implying that all humanity on the globe outside of the ark perished in the Flood; (3) the same inclusive divine blessing “Be fruitful and multiply” is given to both Adam and Noah (Genesis 1:28; 9:1), indicating that Noah is a “new Adam,” repopulating the world as did the first Adam; (4) God’s covenant and rainbow sign (Genesis 9:9-17) are linked with the extent of the Flood; if there was only a local flood, then the covenant would be only a limited covenant; (5) the viability of God’s promise (Genesis 9:15; cf. Isaiah 54:9) is at stake in the worldwide extent of the Flood; if only a local flood occurred, then God has broken His promise every time another local flood has happened; (6) the universality of the Flood is underscored by the enormous size of the ark (Genesis 6:14-15) and the stated necessity for saving all the species of air-breathing terrestrial animals in the ark (Genesis 6:16-21; 7:2-3); a massive ark filled with representatives of humanity and all non-aquatic animal species would be unnecessary if this were only a local flood; Noah and his family and the animals could have simply escaped to another region of the Earth; (7) the covering of “all the high mountains” of pre-Flood Earth (which were not as high as today’s post-Flood uplifted mountain ranges) by at least 15 cubits (Genesis 7:19-20) could not involve simply a local flood, since water seeks its own level across the surface of the globe; (8) the long duration of the Flood (Noah in the

ark over a year, Genesis 7:11-8:14) makes sense only with a global flood; (9) the New Testament passages concerning the Flood all employ universal language (e.g., “swept them *all* away” [Matthew 24:39]; “destroyed them *all*” [Luke 17:27]; “he did not spare the ancient *world*,...when he brought a flood upon the *world* of the ungodly” [2 Peter 2:5]; Noah “condemned the *world*” [Hebrews 11:7]); and (10) the New Testament Flood typology assumes and *depends upon* the global extent of the Flood; just as there was a global Flood in the time of Noah, so there will be a global judgment by fire at the end of time (2 Peter 3:6, 7).

Ten additional lines of biblical evidence for a global Flood are found in the numerous universal terms or expressions in Genesis 6-9 indicating the global scope of the Flood: (11) the *mabbul* (“Flood/Deluge”), occurring 12 times in Genesis and once in Psalm 29:10, is reserved exclusively in the Hebrew Bible for reference to the Genesis flood, thus setting the Genesis flood apart from all local floods and giving it a global context; (12) “the Earth” (Genesis 6:12, 13, 17), without any limiting descriptor, harks back to the same expression in the global creation (Genesis 1:1, 2, 10); (13) “the face of all the Earth” (Genesis 7:3; 8:9) echoes the same phrase in the global context of creation (Genesis 1:29); (14) “face of the ground” (Genesis 7:4, 23; 8:8) in parallel with “face of all the Earth” (Genesis 8:9) links with its usage in the context of global creation (Genesis 2:6); (15) “all flesh” (13 times in Genesis 6-9) is accompanied by additional phrases that recall the global creation of animals and humankind (Genesis 1:24, 30; 2:7); (16) “every living thing” of all flesh (Genesis 6:19; 9:16), and the similar expression “all living things that I have made” (Genesis 7:4), the latter specifically referring back to Creation; (17) “all existence [*kol hayqum*]” (Genesis 7:4,23) is one of the most inclusive

terms available to the Hebrew writer to express totality of life; (18) “all on the dry” (Genesis 7:22) indicates the global extent of the Flood, and clarifies that this worldwide destruction is limited to terrestrial creatures; (19) “under the whole heaven” (Genesis 7:19), a phrase always universal elsewhere in Scripture (see e.g., Exodus 17:14, Deuteronomy 4:19); and (20) “all the fountains of the Great Deep [*tehom*]” (Genesis 7:11; 8:2), harks back to the same expression in Genesis 1:2. The many links with the global creation in Genesis 1-2 show that the Flood is an eschatological, step-by-step, global “uncreation,” followed by a step-by-step global “re-creation.” It is difficult to imagine how the biblical writer could have used more forceful and explicit expressions than these to indicate the global extent of the Genesis flood.

4. Conclusion

Based upon the testimony of the Genesis account and later biblical allusions to this account, I must join the host of scholars, ancient and modern—both critical and evangeli-

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cal—who affirm the literal, historical nature of Genesis 1–11, describing a literal, recent creation week consisting of seven historical, contiguous, creative, natural 24-hour days, and a global, worldwide Flood.

A few years ago I summarized some of this evidence in a paper which I read at an annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society (attended by evangelical scholars from many countries). After the presentation, Harvard-trained Gleason Archer, arguably the “dean” of Old Testament scholars until his recent death, came up to me and remarked privately: “You Seventh-day Adventists are just about the only denomination which still unabashedly and officially affirms the biblical truths concerning Earth’s origins. Please, do not give up your strong stand for a literal seven-day creation week and a global Flood.” I have taken his counsel to heart, and pray that the reader of this article, as well as the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a whole, will do so as well!

Richard M. Davidson (Ph.D., Andrews University), is Professor of Old Testament Interpretation and Chair of the Old Testament Department at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, U.S.A. E-mail: davidson@andrews.edu.

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1. I have dealt with the major biblical issues regarding Earth’s origins and the extent of the Genesis Flood in more detail in several previously published articles. See especially: “In the Beginning: How to Interpret Genesis 1,” *Dialogue* 6:3 (1994):9-12; “Biblical Evidence for the Universality of the Genesis Flood,” *Origins* 22:2 (1995):58-73; “The Biblical Account of Origins,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 14:1 (Spring 2003):4-43; and “The Genesis Flood Narrative: Crucial Issues in the Current Debate,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 42:1 (2004):49-77. These articles may be accessed on my Website: <http://www.andrews.edu/~davidson>.
2. See, e.g. Walter Kaiser, “The Literary Form of Genesis 1-11,” in *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, J. Barton Payne, ed. (Waco, Texas: Word, 1970), pp. 48-65; cf. John

- Sailhamer, *Genesis Unbound* (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah, 1996), pp. 227-245.
3. Even in Daniel 8:14, the reference is to a literal 24-hour day which stands for a day.
 4. See Henry Morris, *The Remarkable Birth of Planet Earth* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1972), Appendix B: “New Testament References to Genesis 1-11” (pp. 99-101).
 5. Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1945), 3:90.
 6. For other biblical genealogies, see especially Genesis 4:16-24; 22:20-24; 25:1-4, 12-18; 29:31-30:24; 35:16-20, 23-26; 39:9-14, 40-43; 46:8-27; 1 Samuel 14:50-51; 1 Chronicles 1-9; Ruth 4:18-22; Matthew 1:1-17; and Luke 3:23-38. For comparison with non-biblical ancient Near Eastern genealogies, see, e.g., Gerhard F. Hasel, “The Genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 and their Alleged Babylonian Background,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 16 (1978): 361-374.
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Pontius' Puddle



Dating and sexuality: Guiding the young

by Marlon Robinson

The question is thus not whether young people should date but rather how they should do so.

Relationship is a fundamental human need,¹ and thus all people crave a sense of belonging. In the case of young adults, relationship is one of their highly-ranked needs. Youth are big fans of sexuality. It can be seen in the way they dress and in the manner they carry themselves. On the one hand, many young people turn to dating relationships in order to embrace their sexuality. On the other, Christian parents in some parts of the world view dating as a non-acceptable way of socializing with the opposite sex. Despite the challenges that dating entails, it can be a wonderful way to affirm one's sexuality, if governed by realistic guidelines.

Issues in dating

Dating is a social relationship between a male and a female who have not yet committed themselves to each other in marriage.² It can be very taxing for the young adult because the adolescent years bring a lot of worries and anxiety,³ which influence interactions with others. Adolescence is also the time when young people are trying to find their identity and purpose in life. Thus dating is one of the means that a young person uses to suggest that he or she has entered into the adult arena. Young people can be motivated to start dating relationships in order to convey precisely this impression, so that their peers will know they are "mature" and "normal."⁴

One of the many negative things that can result from dating relationships is premarital sex. Recent surveys of Adventist youth suggest that 10 percent or more of 14-years-old have lost

their virginity or have had sex.⁵ "Not only is it [sex] on the minds of most youth, but some indeed are practicing it. Maybe it's time adults start to talk about it as well."⁶ In the 1980s, the general estimate of public high-school teenagers showed that 43 percent of girls and 47 percent of boys had sexual intercourse before graduation.⁷ The evidence is compelling: young people are having sex.

The premarital sex affects young adults in a variety of undesirable ways: sexually transmitted diseases (STD), AIDS/HIV, unwanted pregnancy, and depreciated self-worth. Gane shares some empirical data on this issue: "In 1991, the Girlfriend survey found that 78 percent of girls did not discuss the risk of AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases with their partners before having sex. In addition to these problems, premature sex can disrupt the normal process of gradual self-discovery and social growth that takes place in early adolescence."⁸

One does not need to look through a telescope to recognize that premarital sex⁹ can be devastating to the young adult. Certainly, premarital sex is one of the major challenges that dating relationships pose.

Successful dating relationships

It is God's design for people to interact with each other and to develop friendships. Indeed, it was God who took the initiative to fill the vacuum in Adam by giving him a helpmate. Some people would rather have young people ignore the need to belong because of the negative effects that result from many dating relationships. But should we throw

out something that was given by God because it has been used in a distorted way by the enemy? Ellen White wrote: "Christian sociability is altogether too little cultivated by God's people. Those who shut themselves up within themselves, who are unwilling to be drawn upon to bless others by friendly associations, lose many blessings; for by mutual contact minds receive polish and refinement; by social intercourse [interaction] acquaintances are formed and friendships contracted which result in a unity of heart and an atmosphere of love which is pleasing in the sight of heaven."¹⁰

The question is thus not whether young people should date but rather how they should do so. Humans were created with the need to interact with each other, and thus young adults should not be forbidden to develop relationships with the opposite sex. But while socializing with the opposite sex is normal and appropriate, young people should be taught on how to develop healthy friendships that will be pleasing to God. Such a relationship does not come by chance; it is one that is developed with a great degree of intentionality. The boundaries that will govern the relationship should be set from day one, because without boundaries the relationship is more likely to become too physical. Boundaries or guidelines are very essential to the success of dating relationships.

Gane proposes some guidelines that can be extremely helpful in developing healthy dating relationships:

1. Establish friendships.
2. Avoid isolation.
3. Plan fun and enjoyable dates.

4. See dating as preparation for marriage.
5. Avoid getting too close too soon.
6. Avoid dating persons not of your faith.¹¹

In addition, parents and counselors should suggest to young people certain guidelines that set physical and conversational boundaries, such as: have an accountability partner outside of the relationship, exercise self-control, establish God's presence and existence within the relationship, and have a support group of friends. These guidelines are not an exhaustive list, but if followed will help to produce healthy dating relationships.

Biblical guidelines

Sex before marriage poses several challenges to young people. Here are six biblical guidelines taken from 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 that will be helpful in stemming the problem of premarital sex.

1. *Commit your ways to God.* Use your sexuality to honor God and abstain from practices like premarital sex that would dishonor Him. After taking such a stance, pledge to uphold your commitment in public or private life. This decision is made in order to preserve your sexual purity, as a part of the sanctification process.

2. *Exercise self-control.* The process of sanctification includes self-control over sexual urges. Self-control can only be achieved as you allow the Holy Spirit to carry out His work of sanctification in your life. Self-control is a fruit produced by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:23).

3. *Keep your life distinct from that of unbelievers.* Life of the believer must be different from that of the unconverted in respect to sexuality. Those in Christ have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts (1 Peter 4:3; Galatians 2:20).

4. *Respect every human being as the property of God.* Taking advantage of the Lord's purchased possession by

fulfilling unsanctified sexual desires is unacceptable to God. Instead, embrace sexuality within the will of God.

5. *Remember that every action has its consequence.* Every action has a just reward, whether it is good or bad (Ecclesiastes 12:14; Revelation 22:12). When you understand that every wrongful act carries a just penalty and that nothing is hidden from the One who knows everything, and that you have to give account to Him, you will be more likely to embrace God's will for your sexuality.

6. *Live within the call of God.*¹² God has not called you to live unholy lives, but lives that are consecrated by His Spirit. He who has called is also the One who enables. Transformed by the Holy Spirit, you will walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, and will understand that it is Christ who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13; Ephesians 4:1).

If young people can follow the above mentioned guidelines, they can truly overcome the temptations to indulge in sex before marriage. Challenges that can result from dating relationships do not mean that young people should refrain from developing friendships because of the negative outcomes that could result from dating. Rather, young people should be guided on how to establish this special type of friendship. They should be encouraged to set boundaries that will help them to develop healthy friendships. Indubitably, social interaction between a male and a female is normal, and such relationships can be a blessing when they are controlled by set boundaries.

Marlon Robinson (M.Div., Andrews University) is chaplain resident at Valley Baptist Hospital, Harlingen, Texas, U.S.A. E-mail: marlonrobinson@hotmail.com.

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2. Furman Wyndal, *The Development of Romantic Relationships in Adolescence* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University, 1999), p. 184. See also Harry A. Van Belle, *Reflections on Dating, Courtship & Marriage*, (Burlington, Ontario: Welch, 1991). Belle suggests three steps between dating and marriage: attraction, commitment, and intimacy. He shows how these qualities develop between a young man and a young woman as they date and court on the way toward marriage.
3. Puberty brings with it a host of worries and anxieties. These worries are symptoms of a constructive form of growth and are therefore healthy in the long run, even though they may be painful in the short run. Even in times of social stability, the stresses associated with the perils of puberty are considerable. They are clear evidence of teenagers' need for a special place and protected time in society to cope with the transformations of their bodies and the social consequences those transformations entail. See David Elkind, *All Grown Up and No Place to Go* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1984), p. 67.
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5. *Valuegenesis* trial study, 1992; Of those who reported they had not had sexual intercourse during their high-school years, almost one-third fell into the category of "technical virgins," a term attributed to those who experience intensive petting to the point of orgasm without having intercourse. See Steve Case, *Valuegenesis: Shall We Dance, Rediscovering Christ-Centered Standards* (Riverside, California: La Sierra University Press, 1996), p.144.
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7. Tony Campolo, *Christian Ethics in The Sexual Wilderness in Youth Worker*, Vol. 1, No. IV (El Cajon, California: Youth Specialties, Winter 1985), p. 13.
8. Barry Gane, *Building Youth Ministry* (Riverside, California: Hancock Center, 2005), p. 291.
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10. Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1980), p. 457.
11. Gane, p. 294.
12. See Esther Ramharacksingh Knott, "If You Really Love Me" in *Valuegenesis: Shall We Dance, Rediscovering Christ-Centered Standards*, pp. 150-165.

It's still a fight

by Ellen G. White

Christian integrity must be sought with resistless energy and maintained with a resolute fixedness of purpose.

What sin has done

More clearly than we do, we need to understand the issues at stake in the great conflict in which we are engaged. We need to understand more fully the value of the truths of the word of God and the danger of allowing our minds to be diverted from them by the great deceiver.

The infinite value of the sacrifice required for our redemption reveals the fact that sin is a tremendous evil. Through sin the whole human organism is deranged, the mind is perverted, the imagination corrupted. Sin has degraded the faculties of the soul. Temptations from without find an answering chord within the heart, and the feet turn imperceptibly toward evil.

As the sacrifice in our behalf was complete, so our restoration from the defilement of sin is to be complete. No act of wickedness will the law of God excuse; no unrighteousness can escape its condemnation. The ethics of the gospel acknowledge no standard but the perfection of the divine character....

It takes perseverance

Wrongs cannot be righted, nor can reformations in conduct be made by a few feeble, intermittent efforts. Character building is the work, not of a day, nor of a year, but of a lifetime. The struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and heaven, is a lifelong struggle. Without continual effort and constant activity, there can be no advancement in the divine life, no attainment of the victor's crown.

The strongest evidence of man's fall from a higher state is the fact that it costs so much to return. The way of return can be gained only by hard fighting, inch by inch, hour by hour.

In one moment, by a hasty, unguarded act, we may place ourselves in the power of evil; but it requires more than a moment to break the fetters and attain to a holier life. The purpose may be formed, the work begun; but its accomplishment will require toil, time, perseverance, patience, and sacrifice.

We cannot allow ourselves to act from impulse. We cannot be off guard for a moment. Beset with temptations without number, we must resist firmly or be conquered. Should we come to the close of life with our work undone, it would be an eternal loss.

The life of the apostle Paul was a constant conflict with self. He said, "I die daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31). His will and his desires every day conflicted with duty and the will of God. Instead of following inclination, he did God's will, however crucifying to his nature.

At the close of his life of conflict, looking back over its struggles and triumphs, he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Timothy 4:7, 8).

The Christian life is a battle and a march. In this warfare there is no release; the effort must be continuous and persevering. It is by unceasing endeavor that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. Christian integrity must be sought with resistless energy and maintained with a resolute fixedness of purpose.

No one will be borne upward without stern, persevering effort in his own behalf. All must engage in this warfare for themselves; no one else can fight our battles...

There's a science to it

There is a science of Christianity to be mastered—a science as much deeper, broader, higher than any human science as the heavens are higher than the earth. The mind is to be disciplined, educated, trained; for we are to do service for God in ways that are not in harmony with inborn inclination. Hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil must be overcome. Often the education and training of a lifetime must be discarded, that one may become a learner in the school of Christ. Our hearts must be educated to become steadfast in God. We are to form habits of thought that will enable us to resist temptation. We must learn to look upward. The principles of the word of God—principles that are as high as heaven, and that compass eternity—we are to understand in their bearing upon our daily life. Every act, every word, every thought, is to be in accord with these principles. All must be brought into harmony with, and subject to, Christ.

The precious graces of the Holy Spirit are not developed in a moment. Courage, fortitude, meekness, faith, unwavering trust in God's power to save, are acquired by the experience of years. By a life of holy endeavor and firm adherence to the right the children of God are to seal their destiny.

No time to lose

We have no time to lose. We know not how soon our probation may close. At the longest, we have but a brief lifetime here, and we know not how soon the arrow of death may strike our hearts. We know not how soon we may be called to give up the world and all its interests. Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be

lifted. But a few short years, and for everyone now numbered with the living the mandate will go forth: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: . . . and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11).

Are we prepared? Have we become acquainted with God, the Governor of heaven, the Lawgiver, and with Jesus Christ whom He sent into the world as his representative? When our lifework is ended, shall we be able to say, as did Christ our example: “I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. . . . I have manifested Thy name”? (John 17:4-6).

The angels of God are seeking to attract us from ourselves and from earthly things. Let them not labor in vain.

Minds that have been given up to loose thought need to change. “Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you in holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1.13-16).

The thoughts must be centered upon God. We must put forth earnest effort to overcome the evil tendencies of the natural heart. Our efforts, our self-denial and perseverance, must be proportionate to the infinite value of the object of which we are in pursuit. Only by overcoming as Christ overcame shall we win the crown of life.

Constant dependence

Man’s great danger is in being self-deceived, indulging self-sufficiency, and thus separating from God, the source of his strength. Our natural tendencies, unless corrected by the Holy Spirit of God, have in them the seed of moral death. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we cannot resist the

unhallowed effects of self-indulgence, self-love, and temptation to sin.

In order to receive help from Christ, we must realize our need. We must have a true knowledge of ourselves. It is only he who knows himself to be a sinner that Christ can save. Only as we see our utter helplessness and renounce all self-trust, shall we lay hold on divine power.

It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed. All our good works are dependent on a power outside of ourselves; therefore there needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a constant, earnest confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. Perils surround us; and we are safe only as we feel our weakness and cling with the grasp of faith to our mighty Deliverer.

Truth or trivia

We must turn away from a thousand topics that invite attention. There are matters that consume time and arouse inquiry, but end in nothing. The highest interests demand the close attention and energy that are so often given to comparatively insignificant things.

Accepting new theories does not in itself bring new life to the soul. Even an acquaintance with facts and theories important in themselves is of little value unless put to a practical use. We need to feel our responsibility to give our souls food that will nourish and stimulate spiritual life. . . .

The question for us to study is, “What is truth—the truth that is to be cherished, loved, honored, and obeyed?” The devotees of science have been defeated and disheartened in their efforts to find our God. What they need to inquire at this time is, “What is the truth that will enable us to win the salvation of our souls?”

Do I have the answer?

“What think ye of Christ?”—this is the all-important question. Do you

receive Him as a personal Saviour? To all who receive Him He gives power to become sons of God.

Christ revealed God to His disciples in a way that performed in their hearts a special work, such as He desires to do in our hearts. There are many who, in dwelling too largely upon theory, have lost sight of the living power of the Saviour’s example. They have lost sight of Him as the humble, self-denying worker. What they need is to behold Jesus. Daily we need the fresh revealing of His presence. We need to follow more closely His example of self-renunciation and self-sacrifice.

We need the experience that Paul had when he wrote: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

The knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ expressed in character is an exaltation above everything else that is esteemed on earth or in heaven. It is the very highest education. It is the key that opens the portals of the heavenly city. This knowledge it is God’s purpose that all who put on Christ shall possess.

Reprinted from *True Revival* by Ellen G. White (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 2010) pp. 65-70.

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely-translated American author. Her works have been published in approximately 150 languages. Although her formal schooling ended at age 9, she wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to Scripture as the basis for her faith.

Revival, reformation, discipleship, and evangelism

An urgent appeal to the world church from Annual Council 2010

At its first Annual Council of world leaders of the church in October 2010, after the 85th General Conference Session in Atlanta, Georgia in July 2000, the world church prayed and planned together for the speedy finishing of God's work to hasten the fulfillment of the promise made long ago that the Lord of the church would return the second time soon to establish His kingdom of righteousness. With that promise as the driving force of life and action for each Seventh-day Adventist, the Annual Council issued the following appeal, challenging each believer to a rededication to four priorities: revival, reformation, discipleship and evangelism. We invite *Dialogue* readers and the millions of Adventist young people in Adventist educational institutions to read this statement and prayerfully adopt it as their life imperative and commitment. For more information, resources for meditation, devotion, and prayer, go to www.revivalandreformation.org

—The Editors

God has uniquely called the Seventh-day Adventist Church both to live and to proclaim His last-day message of love and truth to the world (Revelation 14:6-12). The challenge of reaching the more than 6 billion people on planet Earth with His end-time message seems impossible. The task is overwhelming. From a human perspective, the rapid fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission anytime soon appears unlikely (Matthew 28:19, 20).

The Church's growth rate is simply not keeping pace with the world's burgeoning population. An honest evaluation of our current evangelistic impact on the world leads to the conclusion that unless there is a dramatic change we will not complete Heaven's assignment in this generation. In spite of our best efforts, all our plans, strategies, and resources are incapable of finishing God's mission for His glory on earth.

Christ's promise to His New Testament church

The challenge of taking the gospel to the world is not new. The disciples faced this challenge in the first century. We face it in the twenty-first century. The New Testament Church was seemingly confronted with an impossible task. But empowered by the Holy Spirit the Church exploded in growth (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:7; 9:31). These early Christians shared their faith everywhere (Acts 5:42).

The grace of God overflowed from their hearts to their families, friends, and working associates. Just a few decades after the Crucifixion, the apostle Paul could report that the gospel is "preached to every creature under heaven" (Colossians 1:23).^{*} How was it possible for an obscure group of relatively insignificant believers to impact the world in such a short amount of time? How could so few Christians be used of God to change

the world forever?

Christ's Great Commission was accompanied by His great promise. The Savior commanded His disciples "not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4). The Savior promised, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The love of Christ controlled every aspect of the lives of the disciples and moved them to a passionate commitment to His service. They sought God for the promised power of the Holy Spirit and knelt before Him in heartfelt confession and earnest repentance. They placed priority on seeking Heaven's blessing. They set aside times for prayer and searching the Scriptures. Their petty differences were swallowed up in their all-consuming desire to share Christ's love with everyone they met. They were absorbed in reaching the world with the gospel. Nothing was more important. They recognized that they were powerless to accomplish the mission without the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Describing the experience of the disciples, Ellen White wrote, "Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.... Sadness filled their hearts as they thought of how many times they had grieved Him by their slowness of comprehension, their failure to understand the lessons that, for their good, He was trying to teach them.... The disciples felt their spiri-

tual need and cried to the Lord for the Holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls. They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world, and they claimed the power that Christ promised" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 37).

Christ fulfilled His Word. The Holy Spirit was poured out in Pentecostal power. Thousands were converted in a day. The message of Christ's love impacted the world. In a short time the name of Jesus Christ was on the lips of men and women everywhere. "By the co-operation of the divine Spirit, the apostles did a work that shook the world. To every nation was the gospel carried in a single generation" (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 593).

Christ's promise to His end-time church

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost in the early rain was only a prelude of what is to come. God has promised to pour out His Holy Spirit in abundance in the last days (Joel 2:23; Zechariah 10:1). The earth will be "illuminated with his glory" (Revelation 18:1). The work of God on earth will be finished rapidly (Matthew 24:14; Romans 9:28). The Church will experience a spiritual revival and the fullness of the Holy Spirit's power like never before in its history. Speaking of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Peter gives us this assurance: "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39). Ellen White adds, "Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth, there will be, among the people of the Lord, such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon his children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of

this world has supplanted love for God and his Word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 464).

Hundreds of thousands of people will accept God's last-day message through the teaching and preaching of His word. Prayer, Bible study and witness are the elements of all true revival. The manifestation of the Holy Spirit will intensify as the end approaches. "Near the close of earth's harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare

There is nothing that Jesus desires more than a people who are passionate about personally knowing His love and sharing that love with others.

the church for the coming of the Son of Man," (*The Faith I Live By*, p. 333) and "By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 612).

There is nothing more important than knowing Jesus, studying His word, understanding His truth and seeking His promise for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter-rain power for the fulfilling of the gospel commission. God's last-day prophet to the remnant wrote in words too plain to be misunderstood, "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work" (*Selected Messages, Book 1*, p. 121).

If a genuine spiritual revival is the greatest and most urgent of all our

needs, should we not as leaders place priority on seeking Heaven's promised blessing with all our hearts?

Our great need: Revival and reformation

When we seek Jesus, He fills us with His presence and power through the gift of the Holy Spirit. We long to know Him better. The Holy Spirit reawakens the dormant spiritual faculties of the soul. There is nothing we desire more than to have a deep and life-changing relationship with Jesus. The revived heart experiences a vital connection to Jesus through prayer and the Word. Reformation is the corresponding change that comes in our lives as the result of revival.

"A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend" (*Selected Messages, Book 1*, p. 128). Reformation does not manifest itself in a self-righteous attitude that condemns others. It is the transformation of character that reveals the fruits of the Spirit in the life (Galatians 5:22-24). Obedience to God's will is the evidence of all true revival. Our Lord longs for a revived people whose lives reflect the loveliness of His character. There is nothing that Jesus desires more than a people who are passionate about personally knowing His love and sharing that love with others.

Commitment and appeal

As leaders and representatives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

assembled at the world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, for the 2010 Annual Council, we give thanks to our great and awesome God for His faithfulness and abundant blessings to His Church since its inception. The rapid worldwide expansion of His Church in both its membership and institutions is nothing short of a miracle of God. Although we praise Him for marvelously working to fulfill His purposes through His church, and thank Him for the godly leaders who have guided His people in the past, we humbly acknowledge that because of our human frailties even our best efforts are tainted by sin and in need of cleansing through the grace of Christ. We recognize that we have not always placed priority on seeking God through prayer and His Word for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter-rain power. We humbly confess that in our personal lives, our administrative practices, and committee meetings we too often have labored in our own strength. Too often God's mission of saving a lost world has not taken first place in our hearts. At times in our busyness doing good things we have neglected the most important thing—knowing Him. Too often petty jealousies, ambitions, and fractured personal relationships have crowded out our longing for revival and reformation and caused us to labor in our human strength rather than in His divine power.

We accept the clear instruction of our Lord that “the lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ’s parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50).

We are confident that all heaven is

waiting to pour out the Holy Spirit in infinite power for the finishing of God’s work on earth. We acknowledge that the coming of Jesus has been delayed and that our Lord longed to come decades ago. We repent of our lukewarmness, our worldliness, and our limited passion for Christ and His mission. We sense Christ calling us to a deeper relationship with Him in prayer and Bible study and a more passionate commitment to share His

Recognizing that our Lord will only pour out His Spirit in its fullness on a Church that has a passion for lost people, we determine to place and maintain revival, reformation, discipleship, and evangelism at the top of all our church business agendas.

last-day message with the world. We rejoice that “it is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of the Saviour” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 600).

Therefore, as representatives of the world church and on behalf of our entire membership, we commit ourselves:

1. To personally place priority on seeking God for spiritual revival and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter-rain power in our own lives, our families, and our ministries.
2. To individually set aside significant amounts of time daily to fellowship with Christ through prayer and the study of God’s Word.
3. To examine our own hearts and

ask the Holy Spirit to convict us of anything that may keep us from revealing the character of Jesus. We desire willing hearts so that nothing in our lives hinders the fullness of the Holy Spirit’s power.

4. To encourage the ministries of the Church to spend time praying, studying God’s Word, and seeking God’s heart to understand His plans for His Church.
5. To encourage each of our church organizations to set aside time for administrators, pastors, health-care workers, publishing-house workers, educators, students, and all employees to seek Jesus and the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit together through a study of God’s Word and prayer.
6. To use every available media outlet, conference, and workshop to appeal to church members to seek a deeper relationship with Jesus for the promised revival and reformation.
7. To urgently appeal to and invite our entire church membership to join us in opening our hearts to the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit, which will transform our lives, our families, our organizations and our communities.

We especially recognize that God is going to use children and youth in this last mighty revival and encourage all of our young people to participate in seeking God for spiritual revival in their own lives and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to share their faith with others.

We appeal to each church member to unite with church leaders and mil-

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PROFILE



Rebecca Oyindamola Olomojobi

Dialogue with a Nigerian Adventist Judge

Interview by Olubunmi A. Idowu

Rebecca Oyindamola Olomojobi is a housewife, mother, and Federal High Court judge in Nigeria. She is married to Professor Zac Olomojobi, provost of the School of Law and Security Studies at Babcock University in Nigeria. They are blessed with four children—three boys and a girl—and she is a second-generation Seventh-day Adventist, born into the family of an Adventist pastor. Justice Olomojobi's tertiary education took her to the University of London, where in 1972 she completed a bachelor of laws honors degree. On returning to Nigeria, she attended the Nigeria Law School and graduated with a new bachelor degree (in practical practice). After serving as a state counsel in the Federal Ministry of Justice, which required her to appear in various courts up to the Supreme Court, she rose to the post of legal adviser in the Federal Ministry of Justice and later joined the Federal High Court of Nigeria as chief registrar, overseeing the administration of the court throughout the federation. Subsequently, Justice Olomojobi was appointed a judge of the same court.

Even as she continued her professional service, Justice Olomojobi remained an active church member, serving the local church in various capacities: Sabbath school superintendent, children's Sabbath school teacher, Women's Ministry leader, Master Guide, patron of Adventist Youth Ministry, and a sought-out speaker and prayer ministry leader. She takes active part in national

Women's Ministry conventions. Her involvement in ministering to women includes giving free legal advice to women on various issues. She is a member of the Nigeria Association of Adventist Lawyers and has presented professional papers before that body.

■ *Justice Olomojobi, who motivated you to study law?*

My sister and my husband were instrumental in my studying law. After my mother died when I was 12, my sister took care of me and became my mentor and role model. She is a trained teacher, and I decided that I would be like her and take to teaching. After my husband left for the United Kingdom, I left Nigeria to join him. Upon completion of the first degree in law, he continued to work on a master's degree. I had just entered the bachelor's program in education, when my husband persuaded me to change course. I enrolled in law.

■ *Was being an Adventist an advantage to your career in any way?*

If not in my career, certainly in being a witness at my workplace. My career started as a state counsel in the Federal Ministry of Justice in Nigeria. My co-workers knew that I was a Seventh-day Sabbath keeper. Some of them asked questions about my faith, opening doors to sharing my faith through many avenues.

■ *You are a second-generation Adventist and a professional. Are you active in the church?*

Yes, very much so. The church had a formative role from my childhood up. I remember fondly the time when I was a Junior Missionary Volunteer. I enjoyed those progressive classes and rose through the rank of achieving the Master Guide pin. I still participate in youth programs, and am convinced that Adventist Youth Ministry, if properly executed at the local church, can have a tremendous influence on young people in their difficult years of growing up. At present, I am the matron of the youth organization in my local church, which involves working closely with young people, making myself available for counseling, giving encouragement and support to young people as and when necessary. I have also served the Sabbath school in many ways, and am an active member of the church choir. I enjoy my work with the Adventist Women's Ministry in Nigeria, and this involves presenting motivational talks and papers in my local church and in national and international conferences of Adventist women. Whatever one does, the central point is to be involved in the church—be it a Revelation seminar or children's Sabbath school. That's what defines one's role as an Adventist.

■ *Do you think it is easier for younger Adventist lawyers to succeed now than it was for you during your early years in the profession?*

Not really, but perhaps there are more opportunities, especially for women. Success in any field depends so much on one's determination, self-denial, and trust in God. If one invites God to take command of everything one does, that person will have the guidance and assurance of the Holy Spirit.

■ *What are some challenges that you as an Adventist faced in practicing law?*

During my early years—between 1973 and 1975—when I was a state counsel I was expected to attend work on Saturdays. That was quite trying,

but I prayed and worked hard with my immediate supervisors, and God opened a way. I was given permission to make up for Sabbath work on Sundays. I give glory to God, who made this possible, and for the government's subsequent change to longer working hours each day so the weekends can be free.

■ *Do you as a practicing Adventist ever have to face the dilemma of defending a self-confessed criminal client, which will give you professional prominence?*

Our God is a God of justice, who has given us rules and laws to guide our conduct. Both the laws of God and the secular laws are to be obeyed. A practicing lawyer has a duty to represent his or her client once he or she accepts the brief, even in respect to a self-confessed criminal. A judge also has a duty to uphold the law and do justice without fear or favor. Any practicing Adventist legal professional has a duty to see that justice is not only done, but it must also be seen to be done. The question of professional prominence does not arise.

■ *How have you coped with some frustrations of your profession?*

I will not say that I have any frustration in my profession; but rather I, have challenges. There have been the challenges of being a mother, a wife, and a Federal High Court judge who had to sit in court for long hours and write judgments late into the night. Under these circumstances I planned my daily routine so that none of them would suffer. I pray a lot and meditate on God's words, committing my family and my work to God's hands. And He has been sustaining me.

■ *How do you cope with the pressures of a career and family life?*

Fortunately, I have a very supportive family. My husband has always been very understanding, and, being a lawyer himself, he knows the pressures of the job. Our children also cooper-

ated well and did their share of chores around the house. Now they are grown and have their own careers.

■ *Would you advise Adventist lawyers to go into politics? How do you think they can make a unique difference in terms of good governance and transparency?*

I do not see anything wrong in young Adventists going into politics. My advice would be: "Don't compromise your faith, and don't fail to uphold your faith. Whatever the profession you choose, there is no substitute for transparency, fear of God, honesty and dedication. Let your colleagues see Jesus in what you do. Reflect His character in all your endeavors. Make a difference where you are, and allow God to use you for His glory."

■ *As a successful and highly-respected legal professional, what advice do you have for young Adventist legal practitioners of today?*

I'd say, keep focused. Put God first in everything you do. The world is not your model, but God is. Leave an example for others to follow. Keep service your paramount motive.

Interviewed by Olubunmi A. Idowu (Ph.D., University of Ibadan, Nigeria), who teaches in the Languages and Literary Studies Department at Babcock University, Nigeria. E-mail: oaidowu03@yahoo.co.uk.

Justice Rebecca Oyindamola Olomjobi can be contacted at olomjobij@yahoo.com.

PROFILE



Sir Patrick L. Allen

Dialogue with the Governor General of Jamaica

Interviewed by David S. Penner

His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen, ON, GCMG, CD, was appointed governor general of Jamaica on February 26, 2009. He is the sixth person, and fifth Jamaican, to hold this position since Jamaica became independent in 1962 and serves as the representative in Jamaica of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Sir Patrick is a lifelong Christian and has served the Seventh-day Adventist Church for more than 28 years.

Born February 7, 1951, in the farming community of Fruitful Vale, Portland, he graduated from Moneague College, and held positions as teacher and later as school principal. During the 1980s, he attended Andrews University, where he received a bachelor's degree in history and religion and a master's degree in systematic theology. Returning to Jamaica, he served as a pastor in several churches in the Central Jamaica Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He later held the offices of Education and Communications director of that Conference, and also served as director of Education and Family Life of the West Indies Union of Seventh-day Adventists.

In 1998, he earned a Ph.D. degree in educational administration and supervision from Andrews University and returned to Jamaica, where he was elected president of the Central Jamaica Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and two years later, as president of the West Indies Union of Seventh-day Adventists. As such, he

also served as chairman of the board of governors of Northern Caribbean University, the board of directors of Andrews Memorial Hospital, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, the Book and Nutrition Centre Ltd., and the West Indies Union Investment Management Ltd. He also served on several public boards.

He was appointed by Her Majesty Queen, Elizabeth II, as Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George (GCMG), and was knighted at Buckingham Palace on June 12, 2009. He is also a member of the Order of the Nation (ON), Commander of the Order of Distinction (CD), holds a doctor degree of Public Service (honorary), and two doctors degrees of Law (honorary). Currently he serves as the governor general of Jamaica.

He and his wife, the Most Hon. Lady Allen have been married for 35 years, are parents of three children, and have three grandchildren.

■ *Your title hints at what must be a very exciting and challenging responsibility. Tell us a little about your major leadership responsibilities as governor general.*

My responsibilities are rather comprehensive in scope, but can be categorized briefly as constitutional, ceremonial and community. Most of my constitutional duties are done privately in the appointment of public officials and commissions, swearing-in where necessary, signing of bills,

approving recommendations from the Public Service, the Police Service and the Judicial Services Commissions, among others.

Ceremonially, I officiate at the installation of the prime minister and other ministers of government, and custodies in the parishes, who represent the governor general, and present national honors and awards. I also participate in the Independence Day ceremony, present the Throne Speech in Parliament to start the new financial year, and receive credentials from ambassadors, who are assigned to the country.

The community aspect of my job is largely traditional but can consume the major portion of my time. Primarily, I serve as patron of many organizations, and quite frequently serve as the speaker for functions and opening of buildings as well as bringing greetings at religious and social functions. The job is quite exciting and, of course, I meet so many different people on a regular basis that I have to find ways of recalling previous meetings. Everyone expects to be remembered! The job is very time-consuming, especially with the massive amount of reading that has to be done before anything is signed, which when signed is final. I have to utilize the help of my assistants to schedule community activities and courtesy calls because these could consume a significant amount of my time.

■ *With that list I cannot imagine that you have a dull moment. But of everything you do, what is the most exciting part of your job?*

Of all the aspects of my job, the most exciting part would be perhaps the ceremonial functions. It is awesome to see the parade of soldiers that is drawn up for ceremonial functions and the amazing length of time that they stand still awaiting the inspection of the guard. The Jamaica Military Band that supports them is wonderful. On an equal footing are the

presentations of awards to recipients of national honors and the governor general's Achievement Awards. For many of these persons, this is the finest moment of their lives, which they will cherish for a long time, and I am privileged to be associated with that moment to share in each one's happiness. These deserve young people and adults who have had significant impact on their community, have made outstanding contributions to national life, have excelled personally, or are being awarded for gallantry.

■ *You have practiced leadership and held many positions of leadership in your career. How did you first become interested in leadership?*

I think it just grew on me from the time I was a youngster in school. I was inquisitive, had a natural thirst for knowledge, and invariably caught the attention of my teachers and classmates, who had expectations of me, and which propelled me into leadership roles. After a time it came naturally. I tried to do assigned tasks well, and so I was always being invited by a board or colleagues to be in charge of some function, club, or office in church, at work, or in the community. It never dawned on me then that I was intentionally leading; I saw myself as being a part of a process, collaborating with others, and coordinating activities. But as I "visioned" things that could be done and actually saw them coming to reality, I suppose the idea of leading out began to sink in, even though the way in which it is now clearly defined was still pretty loose in its concept at that time.

■ *What do you think prepared you for this role as governor general?*

The two most fundamental entities that featured in my formation are my home and the church. My parents instilled in me the moral compass, and invested time and resources in my training. They provided a safe environment in which all their children

could thrive, and a structured routine that has become a part of my lifestyle to this day. The church was more than a worship center; it was an educational center that dealt with the aspects of one's education that were not necessarily addressed at school. It was a stage for learning, performing, and understanding the meaning of service and humility. Fortunately for me, all of my life has been spent there (in the church), and I am still learning from the experience how to function in this role. My training as a teacher, pastor, and administrator, with the blessing of a good education, further exposed me to a variety of community experiences, which have been helpful in relating to all my publics.

Every path on which I journeyed throughout my life and every task that I did culminated in this position. It is the *summum bonum* (Latin for "highest good") of my experiences from which I now draw to relate to the activities of the office. My professional past involved service to people at different levels and with different groups, now I am the governor general for all Jamaica. I think my path was providentially carved out, and I can clearly see how beneficial some experiences, though difficult then, are useful now.

■ *Are there any specific persons who inspired you along the way? Of their characteristics, which do you most admire?*

I would be seriously restricting myself if I were to name any one person, because I have drawn so much from different individuals, even those who I would not necessarily choose as role models. I think what I am inspired mostly by is a person's integrity, trust in God, love, compassion, giving unsparingly to serve others, creativity, and brilliance of the mind.

■ *In your inaugural address, you said something that has become a refrain in your speeches, "There is nothing wrong with Jamaica that cannot be fixed by*

what is right with Jamaica.” What would you like to inspire Jamaicans to achieve, both in the near and long-term future?

In that speech I also outlined the answer to your question, which is serving as the guiding principle for my tenure. It is “I believe.” By this I have committed myself to inspiring Jamaicans to believe in themselves and their country, achieving their potential, and then to make intentionally their contribution to building a better “place to live, work, and raise their families.” I would like to see more young people involved in public service as a lifelong calling. There are many areas of public life that are starved for competent workers who are not just working for a salary, but who believe in building a better country. We need more individuals who can impact and change the ethos of public service, making it desirable for youngsters leaving school to enter with pride and a sense of what they are entering to do.

■ *What are the greatest challenges facing leaders in the world today?*

I think people have become cynical and distrustful of leaders, and it is very difficult to earn their trust. It appears that once leaders are perceived in a particular way, the opportunity to influence people is limited, and the task becomes more difficult. Leadership brings with it influence and powers that are quite tempting, and leaders have to constantly remind themselves that the bar is higher for them than others. They have to remain focused or fall. There is a sense in which people are becoming hopeless, and require proof before responding to appeals from leaders. The leader today has to be a miracle worker. I do think, however, that if the leader is able to effectively communicate a vision, people will be moved, and despite the skepticism, they would

want to “give it a try.” But the execution of that vision is critical to make the reality acceptable.

■ *How do you manage both a very busy public life and a more private reflective role as a husband, father, and grandfather?*

Family is fundamental to any individual’s success and well-being. Managing both public and private life is difficult without allowing either to suffer. Because my wife is involved with me in most of my activities, we are almost always together, but we could do with some more quiet time. Technology and family visits help me keep up with my role as a father and grandfather. They help me maintain a close relationship. My children are grown adults and need less of that close attention, and seem quite comfortable sharing us with the nation. However, there is no question that the demand of public life does take its toll on the family.

■ *Do you have any advice for others who find themselves called upon to take up responsibilities serving the church, community, and government?*

Yes, whatever you are asked to do, do it well. Ultimately, the standard by which anyone will be assessed is the quality of service rendered to people. In serving people, one serves God.

■ *Thank you, Sir Patrick. Your conclusion, reflected in your life of service to others, is a great inspiration and motto for us all. We wish you every blessing.*

David S Penner, Ph.D., is director of the Doctoral Leadership Program at the Loma Linda University School of Public Health in Loma Linda, California. E-mail: dspenner@llu.edu.

Revival

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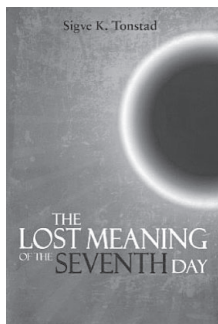
lions of other Seventh-day Adventists seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at 7:00 each morning or evening, seven days a week. This is an urgent call to circle the globe with earnest intercession. This is a call to total commitment to Jesus and to experience the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit that our Lord is longing to give now.

We believe that the purpose of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter-rain power is to finish Christ’s mission on earth so He can come quickly. Recognizing that our Lord will only pour out His Spirit in its fullness on a Church that has a passion for lost people, we determine to place and maintain revival, reformation, discipleship, and evangelism at the top of all our church business agendas. More than anything else we long for Jesus to come.

We urge every church administrator, departmental leader, institutional worker, health worker, literature evangelist, chaplain, educator, pastor, and church member to join us in making revival, reformation, discipleship, and evangelism the most important and urgent priorities of our personal lives and our areas of ministry. We are confident that as we seek Him together, God will pour out His Holy Spirit in abundant measure, the work of God on earth will be finished, and Jesus will come. With the aged apostle John on the Isle of Patmos we cry out, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

* All Bible texts are taken from the New King James Version.

BOOKS



The Lost Meaning of the Seventh Day

by Sigve K. Tonstad (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 2010; 570 pages; hardback)

Review by Boxter Kharbteng

The Lost Meaning of the Seventh Day is a timely and scholarly book by a well-qualified author who holds twin academic ranks: assistant professor of religion and associate professor of medicine at Loma Linda University. Although the book is 570 pages long, its organization into 27 chapters and its simplicity of language afford relief and breathing space as the reader soldiers on. Tonstad definitely has a gift for creative, pictorial, and graphic expressions. They provide refreshing breaks and keep the reader delightfully engaged.

The author begins with God's role in placing the Sabbath as part of His creative work, emphasizing His commitment to and fellowship with humans, thus signifying His personhood on the one hand, and humans' special value and need on the other. Though Genesis makes no further mention of the seventh day, Tonstad argues that if Abraham was the "paradigmatic imitator of God," then he, too, would have kept the Sabbath, because God testified of him as one who "obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Genesis 26:5, NKJV; p. 76).

As the author turns to the book of Exodus, he points out Moses's unique approach to the Sabbath. First comes the story-telling process. Exodus 16 places the importance of the Sabbath in the story of manna and how it did not fall on the Sabbath for 40 years. By not giving manna on the seventh day, God not only underscored the importance of the Sabbath, but He also made it as a "boundary marker" against the forces of oppression and human devaluation suffered under Egypt, as well as a marker of the experience of freedom and of God's presence in their midst. After the narrative comes the imperative of the Sabbath as part of the law in Exodus 20. The narrative and the imperative stress the importance of the Sabbath in sacred history.

The author also points to the Sabbath as a divinely-ordained sign (Exodus 31:13, 17), much in the manner of a flag being a sign of the country it represents. Just as we dishonor the country when we dishonor its flag, we likewise

dishonor God when we dishonor the Sabbath. The prohibition of regular work on the Sabbath shows the personal, social, and economic freedom the Sabbath brings, not only to every member of the family, but also to those attached to it—whether they be slaves and servants, or animals, or foreigners (Exodus 20:10).

From Exodus, the author zips over to Isaiah's vision of the new earth (Isaiah 65, 66), where the redeemed from all nations were seen worshipping God on the Sabbath day. The vision points to the perpetual and universal application of Sabbath observance. Tonstad ends his survey of the Sabbath in the Old Testament with Nehemiah's heroic attempts at restoring Sabbath observance among the returning exiles.

Sabbath in the New Testament

When it comes to the Sabbath in the New Testament, the first consideration is that of Jesus' theology of the Sabbath gathered through his Sabbath healings, where Tonstad sees Jesus using the Sabbath to reflect God as one who is compassionate and a deliverer. From the relationship of Jesus and Paul to the Sabbath, the seventh-day emerges as a reflection of God's love.

The author then examines some passages which seem to present a problem. Tonstad's meticulous exegesis and arguments of each passage in its literary and historical context show that these texts do not in any way minimize the seventh day or introduce the observance of Sunday. Adventist evangelists will find this approach useful.

Tonstad then shifts to factors and circumstances that led to the marginalization of the Sabbath and the rise of Sunday observance by the early Christians. He classifies the investigation into two categories: "above ground" and "below ground" (chapters 16-18). The "above ground" factors refer to the historically-recorded evidences for the Christian observance of Sunday in lieu of the Sabbath, which dates back to the first decade of the second century (pp. 301, 302), when Sunday was called the "Lord's day." Anti-Semitism and the Roman government's attempt to destroy the Jews led to a Jew-Gentile divide and hostility and to the Gentile Christian treatment of the Sabbath as belonging to the old order which should be left behind. The relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians was worsened by Chrysostom's invectives, slanders, and inflammatory preachings against Jews. The cause of Sunday was further strengthened by Emperor Constantine, who legislated its observance in the fourth century (p. 309).

The "below ground" factors have to do with the powerful and all-embracing influence of Greek culture (Hellenism) in the first century, particularly Platonism. Plato's body-soul dichotomy led to the downgrading of the body and the exclusive valuing of the soul as the object of salvation. The serious consequences of this antimateriality

led not only to a massive ignorance of the body, health, and diseases, but also the marginalization of the Sabbath as it affirms physical reality and celebrates Creation. The author continues on this trajectory (chapters 19 and 20) by pointing to the long shadow of the body-soul dichotomy that reached all the way to the Reformers (16th century) who upheld it, including the influential 17th century philosopher René Descartes. This trend toward marginalization of the Sabbath was also indirectly perpetuated by famous scientist Isaac Newton; the celebrated philosopher Immanuel Kant; and the influential New Testament theologian Rudolf Bultmann.

With the exception of chapters 24 and 25, the rest of the book has to do with showing from Scripture three things: the perpetuity of the Sabbath; the Sabbath as a last-day sign of being God's people in the context of the great and final showdown between God and Satan; and the Sabbath as a sign of God's faithfulness to His people.

Those familiar with the Sabbath material in the Bible will realize that Tonstad's strength lies in bringing out some fresh insights to what is otherwise familiar and common—for example, his argument from Genesis 2:1-3 that the Sabbath is a symbol of God's presence in a world that experiences His absence. The author also needs to be commended for helping us gain a greater appreciation and value of the Sabbath by drawing our attention to the striking parallels between the first two chapters of Genesis (paradise created) and the last two chapters of Revelation (paradise re-created). In both cases, he shows the presence of the Sabbath as a "capstone" (pp. 20, 155). Equally appreciative is his stress on the pressing relevance of the Sabbath on all of creation, particularly the need for the preservation of the earth from exploitation and degradation.

Equally impressive is his clear showing of the "below ground" factors that contributed to the neglect of and hostility to the Sabbath. Tonstad's reminder of love as the basis of the giving and keeping of the commandments is just as significant, because it changes one's picture of God from a mere stringent, supreme lawgiver to a caring and compassionate heavenly Father. It transforms the nature of the dynamics of the God-human relationship into something that pulsates with life and beauty.

Finally, the author deserves our gratitude for showing the importance of the Sabbath in the final and climactic showdown between God and Satan (chapters 26 and 27). For these and other reasons, the book is no doubt a major contribution to the study of the Sabbath, written with scholarly thoroughness and evangelical conviction. It's hard to be unmoved by the author's competent and compelling showing of the significance of the Sabbath for a Christian. However, should there be a second edition, the author may well consider adding Romans 14:5, 6 to the problem passages on Sabbath observance and to strengthen his deal-

ing of Sabbath healings against the context of numerous petty rules and regulations of the Pharisees that turned the Sabbath from a delight to a burden. Minor editorial blemishes and inconsistencies (such as B.C., B.C.E.) will no doubt be corrected.

Boxter Kharbteng (Ph.D., Andrews University) is associate professor of theology and acting dean of the School of Theology and Religion, University of the Southern Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago. E-mail: kharbtgb@gmail.com.

A livable community

by Marilyn Scott

On my way home a few weeks ago, something caught my attention. I had seen it many times before, but it had not made an impression on me until that day. It was a sign that had a simple message: “Welcome to Prince George’s County—a livable community.” A what? All of a sudden, that phrase caught my attention. I don’t know why I had not noticed it before. A livable community? As opposed to what? A non-livable community? I suppose I am blessed to live in a livable community. I cannot imagine what it would be like to live in a non-livable community.

I arrived home with a newfound mission. My discovery that morning sparked my curiosity. Clearly, it must have something to do with the way people live in their community, and the quality of their lives. What body evaluates communities? How do those who evaluate communities arrive at the determination of a livable community? I thought of a few possible answers, but I decided to look a little deeper. I began researching the topic of livability and community. I started by going to Prince George’s County’s Website to see how it defined a livable community.

I discovered that “livability is a concept that conveys an image of a future that is enduring, vibrant, responsible (as in civil), and offers a desirable quality of life. Livability, in this context, is the sum of the factors that add up to a community’s quality of life—including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational

opportunity, and cultural, entertainment and recreation possibilities.”

As I thought about the deliberate planning and developing that goes into creating livable communities, I could not help but think about our church community. Our church did not come about randomly. For centuries, God has been very involved and active in developing and growing His people, the fellowship of believers, into a living and thriving community. The church is one body that is representative of a deep and united fellowship with Christ. In Ephesians 3:6, Paul writes: “Through the gospel, the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”* We are a community of disciples and part of God’s family. Therefore, we are a small community here in our local church, and part of a larger community within the worldwide church.

One of the best ways to understand livability in our distinct and unique community—our church—is by looking at the model of the church in the first century.

In Acts, chapter 2, the Holy Spirit comes upon the apostles. The multitudes witness the apostles speaking in different languages, and they are amazed. Some admire it, others criticize it, and they all want to know what it means. Peter, with the other apostles, shares the words from Joel 2 and reveals that these events are the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy. Further, Peter includes his audience among those guilty of crucifying the Messiah

whom God had testified to be His Son.

The people are pierced by what they have heard. They ask Peter and the apostles what they should do. Peter responds: “Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and for your children, and for all who are afar off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:38, 39). Peter further says in verse 40, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” In other words, “Be saved.” The responsibility has been placed upon the multitudes to decide whom they will follow and serve. Will they accept the words, which Peter preached, or will they reject his admonitions?

Let us look at some of the characteristics that made up the first Christian community.

1. Hearing the Word. The first characteristic of these early Christians is their willingness to hear the word of the Lord. Not only hear it, but also to receive it unto themselves. Other translations of Acts 2:37 use the words “pricked,” or “cut to the heart,” referring to hearing the word of the Lord. This describes the deep inner sorrow that accompanies true repentance. The word of the Lord sunk in and was allowed to affect their hearts. These people did not hear the words and afterward go up to Peter and tell him that was a nice sermon. They allowed the words to be life changing. They did not sit with wandering minds and closed hearts.

2. Acting on the Word. The new believers were motivated by the words they heard to act upon what they heard. They put the words into deeds by becoming baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. Peter preached that forgiveness of sins would only come through repentance and baptism. Peter allows no exemption from baptism. It is the outward sign of the death of the old life and the beginning of the

new, and it is required of all. What did it mean if someone was not baptized? The answer is clear: The person rejected the message and rejected the word of God.

3. Obeying the doctrines. Thirdly, the newly-baptized Christians devoted themselves, persevered, gave constant attention to the learning and keeping of the doctrines they were taught. Jesus promised His apostles they would be guided in all truth. As God's truths were being revealed by the Holy Spirit to the apostles, the apostles taught that message to other disciples.

True disciples do not want to miss an opportunity to learn more about God and are devoted to the doctrines found in the Scriptures. We need to have the same fervor and zeal for studying the Bible. It is a shame how often Christians allow themselves to remain ignorant concerning the word of God. Like those of the first century, true disciples will always want to be filled with the knowledge of God.

4. Fellowship. The early Christians devoted themselves to fellowship. Fellowship is not just having a meal together. Acts 2:44 defines true fellowship: "All of the believers were together and had everything in common." This is a direct reference to the common brotherhood that developed between the apostles and their converts for a common goal and purpose. First, the believers were joined and knit together. These Christians did not declare themselves to be in fellowship simply because they had been baptized or merely attended worship services. Verse 45 describes the extent of their fellowship: "They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had a need." These disciples had all things in common, and that is true Christianity. If all that we have is truly the Lord's, as we say it is, then we must be willing to share what God has given us with others who may be in need.

True fellowship means having all things in common with one another.

We see this same love for each other emphasized in 2 Corinthians 8:2-5. They who had nothing to give were still giving what scraps they did have for others who were in need. This is the level of fellowship we should set as our goal.

Acts 2:46 tells us that the disciples were devoted to meeting together every day in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. The disciples were unified through fervent prayer. *The SDA Commentary* on this passage describes their unity this way: "This is the unity that must characterize the people of God whenever they aspire to a special experience with the Lord, or expect of Him a manifestation of power. Whatever interferes with such unity must be removed, or it will obstruct the Spirit, who does the work of God for His people."¹

Think about this concept of worship. How many of us would be willing to meet every day with other Christians? Probably not many, as it would consume too much of our time. We certainly seem to balk when too many meetings or committees are scheduled. Instead of joy and anticipation, too often we exhibit disappointment or even anger for being expected to show up on a regular basis. It seems that today many of us have lost the love that would draw Christians together on a daily basis. I know that we have demanding jobs, children in school, and families that take much of our time. But when a congregation comes together for a common purpose, especially for worship and prayer, we should be overjoyed for the opportunity.

5. Evangelism. The disciples were devoted to evangelism: "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). Day by day, people were turning their lives to Jesus and being baptized. It was not enough for these disciples to congregate together, study the word of God, and help the needy. These new Christians had an overwhelm-

ing desire to share the good news with others—a theme we see repeated throughout the Book of Acts.

Can you imagine your church conducting baptisms on a daily basis? This is exactly what happened in Jerusalem. Do we have a spirit for evangelism? Do we feel compelled to share the gospel with others? We must obey the command of God to take the gospel to all people. How many of us actually know our neighbors, much less share the gospel with them? We have the opportunity to invite our friends and neighbors to church. How many of us actually do it?

6. Joyful living. Finally, the early Christians continually experienced joy and gladness in their newfound faith. They ate their food together with a glad and sincere heart. They praised God in everything. They rejoiced in sharing their faith. In other words, they rejoiced at the privilege of being Christians.

Is this real?

I know what you are thinking. You are probably saying to yourselves, "This is all nice and sweet. Thank you for sharing, but this does not apply in today's reality." Well, all I can say is that it is easy for us to dismiss Acts 2 as not being relevant in our lives. But Luke recorded it for our understanding of what Christians ought to be like. If we truly believe God's Word and follow its counsel, then this message is still valid.

Why is authentic biblical community so rare? Perhaps it is because most of us would rather appear impressively intact than broken. We must understand, though, that it is only when we admit that we are broken, that we are ready for community. Living in this sinful world will, in effect, bring brokenness. None of us is immune to it. Some of us have been broken by the loss of a loved one. Some may be dealing with addictions, adultery, divorce, or betrayal. Some are broken by disease. But the one thing we all have in

common is that we are all broken.

Barb's life is a mess. Her drinking problem is out of control, and her husband, Ken, refuses to cover for her anymore. Everyone around her sees Barb's problem, but they all pretend like everything's just fine, a classic case of denial.

Sitting in the row behind Barb at church each Sabbath morning is Joe. Everyone likes Joe, especially all the guys, because he is a man's man. Joe played football in college, and he's filled with stories of athletic accomplishments. But when Joe's all alone, his heart is filled with emptiness because of his inability to sustain a long-term relationship. His marriage lasted only six months, and over the years, he's driven away everyone close to him with his short fuse.

But that Sabbath, when a friend asks Joe how things are going, he quickly says, "Great... never been better." Joe and Barb have both learned that church is a place for plastic people, a place for perfect people. So Barb has become Barbie, complete with her husband, Ken, and her perfect plastic children. And Joe has become G. I. Joe, a plastic action hero everyone admires but no one really knows. But inside, Barb and Joe are dying, because they're not made of plastic.

Our churches today are filled with Barbies and Joes. We've learned that image is everything, that what counts is how you look, the impressions you make, the groups you belong to, and the friends you have. As a result, in the Christian community, we have perfected the fine art of faking it.

Are there any Barbies and Joes in our church? What are we doing as a community, as individuals, to reach out to them? Are we sensitive to their needs and aware of the pain they are experiencing? Can we ever have a livable community in our church?

Yes, we can. Only through a deep personal relationship with Jesus, and hearts filled with genuine love and compassion, will we be willing to

accept people the way they are and refrain from casting judgment. There is no greater joy than being used by the Holy Spirit to extend a helping hand to those who are broken, lonely, and in need of a friend. By devoting ourselves daily to studying the Scriptures, by developing a personal relationship with God, by sharing the joy of real fellowship with one another, we can experience God's version of a livable community.

Marilyn Scott is an associate pastor of Spencerville Seventh-day Adventist Church, Spencerville, Maryland. E-mail: m.scott@spencervillesda.org.

1. *Seventh-day Adventist Commentary*, (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1957) vol. 6, p. 135.

* All Scripture references are taken from the New International Version.

Guidelines for contributors

College and University Dialogue, published three times a year in four parallel language editions, is addressed to Seventh-day Adventists involved in post-secondary education, either as students or teachers, and also to Adventist professionals and campus chaplains around the world.

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.
4. To offer ideas and models of Christian service and outreach.

Dialogue usually assigns articles, interviews, and reports to specific authors for publication. Prospective authors are urged: (a) to examine previous issues of our journal, (b) to carefully consider these guidelines, and (c) to submit an abstract and personal background before developing a proposed article. Unsolicited submissions will not be returned.

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VIEWPOINT

Organ donor: To be or not to be

by Creriane Nunes Lima

Since the first successful organ transplantation in the 1960s, many questions have been raised about this subject. While physicians have had to deal with medical and scientific issues, others have raised philosophical concerns, ethical challenges, moral questions, and issues of fairness. While such debates keep the professionals occupied, an important question concerns the prospective donors: "Should I be a donor after my death? Will my organs go to those who are in real need? How is organ donation related to my practice of ethics?" These and other controversial issues demand that we give careful consideration to organ donation.

After years of struggling with organ rejection and related issues, medical researchers have found settled procedures for successful transplanting of organs. In most cases, such procedures are found to be safe and routine. But why are so few people willing to be a donor after death? Maybe they are afraid about this issue? Despite the real answer to these questions, the truth is that an increasing number of patients must wait for months or sometimes years, for an opportunity for treatment, leading to a normal life again.

According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, more than 110,000 people in the United States are waitlisted transplants. Consider the need for the rest of the world: you have an enormous number of people seeking for that gift that will lengthen their lives. Without transplants in time, hundreds are deprived of life and inevitably face death. Is that death

necessary? The question stares with all seriousness when the person involved is young, with a whole life ahead, but is suddenly cut off without any hope.

After some reflection on these facts, when someone wonders whether to be an organ donor, the simplest possible answer is: yes! People need to become organ donors after death. Of course, there is a great difference between being a living donor, and signing up for organ donation after death. Talking about being a living donor, we must consider each situation itself. It's necessary to think about risks, especially for the live donor. Each situation is unique and has to be solved with good sense, after having professional help. But talking about being an organ donor after death, we think that there should be explicit reasons to help people to allow organ donation after death. Why are so few people willing? This question makes the subject even more complicated.

We live in a globalized economy, with all parts of the world trying to live with each other, market each other's products, and contribute to the growth of all. With such inter-linked existence, is it possible for a noble cause such as organ donation fall into the clutches of greed and manipulation? Are some lives worthier than others? Is that worth defined by what that individual possesses in terms of money, power, and influence? Would such extraneous weightage lead to unworthy practices in organ donations? Is it possible to kill a person in order to get an organ that can be sold? The answer, unfortunately, is

not at all pleasant. Indeed, the rise of illegal markets that sell organs and the unethical practice of harvesting organs in some parts of the world, particularly targeting underprivileged and economically deprived sectors of populations, have placed a cloud of suspicion over organ donation and transplantation. What should be an altruistic and humane activity of sharing the gift of life has the danger of being hijacked by a vicious market. This is a challenge that requires attention.

We cannot solve this problem unless we accept a higher, spiritual way. That way is found in an attitude of altruism, love and trust. Where can we find that way except as we learn to place our trust in God? God's way demands that we love our neighbors as we love ourselves. If we have that way, we will care for our neighbors and come to their rescue in their hour of need. It is that kind of unselfish and caring love that should be at the basis of the discussion of being an organ donor. When that altruistic love defines our thinking, and out of that experience we become an organ donor, our charity may save a life. That saving act has no price at all.

There, we have something to think about. Think of being an organ donor. Talk with your family about it. Sign up for organ donation after death, if this is necessary in your country. Never mind all the controversial questions. Think of it as an act of love, love at any cost, and love without a price tag. Who knows, I may be the one who will be on a waiting list someday. Meanwhile, I know there are hundreds who need an organ, and love propels me to be and to become a donor.

Creriane Lima, a graduate of UNASP (Adventist University in Brazil), is a language teacher, translator, writer and also a pastor's wife. E-mail: creriane.lima@unaspedu.br.

ACTION REPORT

Shine on until Jesus comes: The motto becomes a reality at Mountain View College

by Don Leo Garilva and Criscel Leo Garilva

Mountain View College (MVC) Church, set up on the top of the high Valentia Mountains in the southern Philippines, is indeed a light set up on the mountains. It has a beautiful building with a seating capacity of more than 2,500. The church is the heart of a college that has structured all its functions—academic, social, ethical, spiritual—around what takes

place within and outside the church. The church is usually full—for Friday vespers, Sabbath evening meetings, mid-week prayer meetings, and chapel exercises. But visitors often note an anomaly: When the college family assembles for the Sabbath school, not all the seats are filled. Is it because the Sabbath school is a neglected dimension of the college family?



Jeepneys carry students to mission centers within a radius of 50 miles.

No, not at all. Take a look at the main entrance to the campus, and you will see the reason. Hundreds of students, faculty and staff are rushing into jeepneys—the most common Philippine transportation medium, donated for the day by lay members who own them—off to scores of villages within a radius of 50 miles or so. These MVC volunteers are on a weekly mission to celebrate Sabbath, to study the Sabbath school lessons, and to preach the Word to scores of churches and companies that have been established by volunteers themselves. Witness is the lifeblood of the MVC.

It all began in 1953, when the ministerial students of the college organized themselves as the Ministerial Seminar (MS) with a special focus on in-service training and outreach programs. That initial effort, charged by the empowering of the Holy Spirit, has resulted in the establishment of 73 churches in Bukidnon province, where MVC is located. Every semester, student officers are elected to lead this youth-fueled movement. Under the guidance of Pastor Jose Manuel Espero, the present director, the Ministerial Seminar has continued to expand and grow.

Every Friday afternoon, at around 4 o'clock, a song service starts at Jubilee Park—beautiful grounds overlooking the valley below MVC. This is where the weekly devotional is held for MS “outers” (those who are going out for MS outreach). The devotional service allows fellow students to share experiences, testimonies, and insights from God’s word. This is also the time for weekly announcements and updates.

On Friday evenings, a separate worship is held for the branch Sabbath school teachers. Songs, stories, and strategies are taught to these volunteer teachers. The student church pastors and evangelists have ample preparation as well. After Friday vespers, MS “outers” have a separate Sabbath school lesson review, usually conduct-



Singing groups form an important part of witnessing.



Ministerial students led in the baptism of 180 new converts.
(All photos provided by the author.)

ed by a pastor or a teacher.

Second- and third-year theology students are assigned to the surrounding churches, two to a church. Each church team is usually composed of three core members: a student pastor, a student evangelist, and a branch Sabbath school teacher. The students

assigned to churches within hiking distance are accompanied by volunteer faculty members who serve as chaperones.

MS is built into the social framework of MVC. John Echavez, a third-year theology student from Canada, says, “MS is one of the main reasons

I stayed in MVC. My fellow MS ‘outers’ became like a family to me.” One of the branch Sabbath school teachers, September Jane Rañarez, says that joining the MS outreach has made her realize that “no matter who I am, or what I am doing, God is using me to share His gospel of salvation.”

During the school year ending 2009, the MS outreach produced 180 baptisms—a stirring example of the transforming power of God’s grace. Truly the Ministerial Seminar lives up to the motto of Mountain View College: “*Shine on Until Jesus Comes!*”

Don Leo Garilva is dean of the School of Theology at Mountain View College (MVC) in the South Philippines. E-mail: garilvadl@yahoo.com.

Criscel Leo Garilva is an April 2010 graduate of theology from Mountain View College. E-mail: cgarilva@gmail.com.

Send us your group’s report

Leaders of Adventist university student associations are invited to send a brief report of their group’s activities and one or two digital photos for publication in *Dialogue*. Include all relevant information about the student group; describe its main activities, challenges, and plans; and list the name, position, and e-mail address of the report’s author. Send them to Susana Schulz at schulzs@gc.adventist.org. Thank you!

FIRST PERSON

An attitude: Which one would you like?

by Rae Lee Cooper

I stood in front of the closed door and drew a deep breath. I knew what was behind that door: an elderly patient confined to a hospital bed. Also in the room were several members of his family seated around the bed, keeping a careful, guarded watch over the sick man.

It's not that the patient was critically ill—the issue was the atmosphere in the room. I knew that as soon as I entered the room, any ongoing conversation would cease and all eyes would turn toward me. The faces

would be unsmiling, and there would be anxiety, suspicion, and challenge. One of the relatives would reach for the large pad of paper, and the questions would start: “What is your name? What are you going to do for my father and why? Did you wash your hands?” Et cetera. Every answer I might give would be written down. Whatever I did for the patient would be carefully watched, analyzed, and recorded.

As I took a moment to prepare myself outside the door, another

nurse approached and handed me an IV fluid bag. “Would you please hang this for me in that room?” she asked apologetically, nodding toward the closed door. As I took the IV bag from her, I considered my attitude options. I could enter the room briskly, make no eye contact, do my work quickly, and exit just as soon as possible. Or I could assume an air of authority—after all, I was the professional! I would then be ready to confront any challenge they might give, in a most professional manner, of course. Or I could just delay entering the room altogether and possibly pass off my responsibility to someone else, as my coworkers had just done.

Attitudes in training

We are born with the potential for a great variety of attitude responses, which we usually begin to demonstrate at a very tender age. Parents, teachers, Sabbath school leaders, and others all attempt to guide us as we grow, encouraging us to develop acceptable response behavior even if we don't feel like it.

Our two-year-old granddaughter, Ava, came out of her bedroom one morning this past Christmas season in a very grumpy mood. Nothing would suit her, not hugs, not any of the foods available for breakfast, not even her favorite stuffed animal. She pushed everything and everyone away and continued with her sour, defiant attitude. Finally her father, in exasperation, ordered her to go back to



Image from Microsoft Office

her bedroom and stay there until she could come out a happy little girl.

At first there was loud, angry crying from behind the closed bedroom door. The crying finally died away, and all was silent for a while. Then we could hear singing, softly at first, gradually increasing in volume and energy—a favorite little Sabbath school song. It wasn't too long after that before the door burst opened, and totally a different little girl emerged—all smiles and warmth.

Life can be hazardous to your attitude

Recently, en route to an appointment, I found myself enjoying a quiet, relaxing flight. As we traveled along, I was conscious of the pleasant, congenial conversation going on between the businessmen in the seats behind me. We approached our destination, and after a smooth landing, the flight attendant announced we could use our cell phones, which many of the other passengers proceeded to do, including one of the men behind me.

Suddenly it became apparent to many of us that there was a problem. The man's voice became loud as he demonstrated obvious frustration and anger by words such as "I told him NOT to do that! He clearly understood my instructions! I don't care what the problem is; he should have followed my direction!" While waiting to exit the plane, I chanced to glance at the man's face and saw deep lines of stress and worry. Whatever enjoyment the day may have held for this gentleman was now destroyed.

The fish philosophy

In one of the big shopping areas in Seattle, Washington, there is an area containing a number of stalls with fresh seafood for sale. Fishmongers in Seattle work long hours in the cold, damp atmosphere, handling ice and smelly fish. It's job that would certainly qualify near the top of a list of

"Worst Jobs Ever."

One day several years ago, the group of men working at one particular fish stall decided to have a special meeting and discuss ways in which they could improve their work conditions and increase their business success too. During the meeting, the boss asked each one to make suggestions—any suggestion, just think of the wildest ideas possible. One young man responded with "I think we should become world famous." The rest burst into laughter, but then as the discussion continued, that idea became less and less outrageous, and finally the consensus was "Well, why not become world famous?"

But how could this happen? The product couldn't be changed. The location couldn't be changed. The hours and work conditions couldn't be changed. The only changes, then, would have to be within those who worked there—their perception of and response to their work, their interaction with one another and their customers, and their individual attitudes. As a result, four hallmark principles were established: namely, "Play"—make the job fun, "Make Their Day"—draw the customers into the fun, "Be There"—keep the focus on the job and those being served, and "Choose Your Attitude."

From this meeting and the initial concepts that were developed there, what is now known as "The Fish Philosophy" eventually emerged. That little fish stall is even now a lively, happy place where customers gather to laugh at the cheerful, funny antics of the people who work there—and they buy fish. They ultimately did become world famous. (See www.fishphilosophy.com.)

It's a matter of choice

When one of the young fishmongers was asked in an interview about the principle of "Choose Your Attitude," he stated that every morning before getting out of bed, he

consciously makes a choice to have a good day, to enjoy his job, and to brighten the moment of every visitor or customer who may happen by. It doesn't matter if he awakes tired or bothered with problems. Based on that deliberate choice at the beginning of the day, he says he finds himself going into the day's hours happier and enjoying finding ways to help others be happy too, even in a fish market. He further said his time on the job now passes by more quickly and pleasantly.

It's encouraging to know that we don't have to be victims of circumstance. We have a choice of our attitude responses, and it truly is a benefit to us that we do. A negative attitude causes stress on our bodies, resulting in increased blood pressure and heart rate. Our immune response is compromised, digestion disrupted, and logical thinking hindered. We may say or do something irrational, leading to further complications.

Making a conscious decision to remain calm, to see positive possibilities and explore alternatives, and to maintain a cheerful, optimistic attitude will produce many benefits—to our work situations, to our families, to our church, and to our own well-being. We can't change the experiences of life that come to us, and most of the time we can't change our circumstances, but we can be in charge of our response to them.

There may be times when, like little Ava, we need to retreat to "our rooms" for a while, to work out a better attitude response. There may be times, like the businessman in the airplane, when we need to stop and evaluate our predicament and decide on the best positive reaction to a negative situation. Taking charge of our response is empowering. When we focus on being who we want to be, it influences everything we are doing. We are free to deal with difficult people and situations more calmly.

Secrets to success

Here are five steps in developing a positive attitude:

1. As the Fish Philosophy suggests, choose a happy, positive attitude first thing each morning. This choice may need to be reinforced several times throughout the day as situations arise. Committing the day to God, asking for His presence and guidance will ensure success. We don't have to go it alone. He will be an "ever-present help" as promised in Psalm 46:1, 2 (NIV). His promises are sure—we have but to ask.

2. Look for the positive points and things to be thankful for in every situation. Gratitude can help keep things in perspective. Says Ellen White: "God scatters blessings all along our path to brighten our journey and lead our hearts out to love and praise Him, and He wants us to draw water from the well of salvation that our hearts may be refreshed. We may sing the songs of Zion, we may cheer our own hearts, and we may cheer the hearts of others; hope may be strengthened, darkness turned to light."¹

3. Always keep a sense of humor. Learn to laugh, and you will be more positive, especially if you can learn to laugh at yourself. Nothing works like laughter to relieve stress, pain, and conflict. Elevated blood pressures, stress, and worry can be decreased or avoided altogether, and balance restored as mind and body benefit health-wise under the positive influence of humor. Burdens don't seem as heavy; problems and conflicts are put in perspective, and relationships improved. All in all, laughter truly is good medicine and a powerful antidote.

Bob Newhart, who made millions laugh and brought cheer in the most trying situations, once said: "Laughter gives us distance. It allows us to step back from an event, deal with it, and then move on."

"A happy heart," indeed, "makes

the face cheerful" (Proverbs 15:13, NIV).

4. Believe that you are in charge of your destiny. Life is not something that is going on around you. It is what you make of it. Our choices of reactions, words, deeds—indeed the very way we live our lives—is all up to us. We don't have to be victims of situations and complexities. And the best news of all is that with our lives committed to God, we have promises of direction, wisdom, and His guiding presence for any and all of life's experiences. We have a sure thing in heaven's GPS system (Global Positioning System).

"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously without finding fault, and it shall be given to him" (James 1:5, NIV).

5. Take time for breaks. It can happen during our busy days that we are confronted with seeming impossible situations. The demands and problems of life seem unrelenting and monumental. We become tired and frustrated. Nothing is going right. We can find ourselves impatient and even short-tempered.

At such times, it would be good to take a break. Step back from the situation. Retreat literally or figuratively to a quiet room or change of activity. Quiet reflective reading, prayer, exercise, a walk in the fresh air, engaging in a favorite hobby, visiting with friends, or helping with a volunteer project—all of these can promote a change of focus. Our spirits become calmer, and things fall into perspective. Jesus gave us a good example of doing this in His habit of periodically taking His disciples apart from their busy work to a quiet place where they could rest, be refreshed and re-energized. Taking a break relaxes the mind, so that it can become calm and able to think more clearly. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28, KJV).

As I paused outside the door to

breathe a quick prayer and check my supplies and approach, I suddenly felt a wave of sympathy for the folks inside. Perhaps they previously had been affected by some negative treatment incidents that resulted in their general mistrust of medical personnel. Or perhaps they were just uncertain and fearful of the prognosis of their sick father. Whatever the situation, it was a condition I most likely *could* do much to change... with my attitude. I could possibly brighten their day a little by a cheerful spirit, and a bit of helpful, comforting treatment to the sick patient. This was my opportunity—my moment. So with that attitude, a smile, and a feeling of calm assurance, I opened the door and entered the room.

Rae Lee Cooper, R.N., is the official nurse of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A. E-mail: cooperr@gc.adventist.org.

1. Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1961) p. 10.

INTERCHANGE

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

James Abawa: 21; male; single; studying geospatial engineering at the University of Nairobi; correspondence in English. E-mail: abawajames@yahoo.com. KENYA.

Emmanuel Zubah Flomo Beavogui: 27; male; single; already has a degree in informatics from Institut de Formation Professionnelle Aicha Kaba and is working his master's in development at ISFAD; interests: soccer, reading and travel; correspondence in French, English or Spanish. E-mail: zubahflomo@gmail.com. GUINEA.

Simaura P. de Carvalho: 36; female; single; studying administration at Centro Universitario Adventista de São Paulo (UNASP); interests: meeting people; correspondence in Portuguese. E-mail: vinibot2009@hotmail.com. Address: Alameda Mogno 165, Condominio Lagoa Bonita, São Paulo, BRAZIL.

Nwoke Chikadibia: 28; male; single; holds a degree in environmental engineering from Rivers State University of Science and Technology; interests: teaching and travel; correspondence in English or Igbo. E-mail: dibia45nc@yahoo.com. NIGERIA.

Lisa Christopherson: 43; female; single; holds a master's degree in education from Texas Women's University; interests: listening to music, playing guitar, volleyball, and sewing; correspondence in English or Spanish. E-mail: lchrist217@aol.com. Address: P.O. Box 2505, Corrales, NM 87048, U.S.A.

Sylvain Eba'a: 38; male; married; holds a degree in modern languages—French, and is pursuing a master's at Université de Yaoundé; works as national coordinator for GED and journalist for SDA radio; correspondence in French. E-mail: ebaapleg@yahoo.fr. CAMEROON.

Glenn Edwards-Guishard: 47; female; widowed; holds a B.A. in biology, B.S. physician assistant studies, family medicine, and licensure in microbiology, immuno-serology, microbacteriology, and mycology from University of Nebraska and City University of New York; interests: reading the Bible and travel; correspondence in English. E-mail: gguishard@aol.com. Address: 964 E. 179th St., Private Box 7, Bronx, NY 10460, U.S.A.

Eduardo Foster Eli: 23; male; single; studying theology at Centro Universitario Adventista de São Paulo; interests: reading, listening to music, and making friends; correspondence in Portuguese or English. E-mail: foster.eli@gmail.com. Address: Caixa Postal 11, Estrada Municipal Pr. Walter Boger s/n, Lagoa Bonita, Engenheiro Coelho, SP 13165-970. BRAZIL.

Milcah Jane M. Galvez: 21; female; single; pursuing a degree in English at West Visayas State University; interests: organizing youth programs, meeting new friends, and reading novels; correspondence in English. E-mail: milcaz_8900@yahoo.com. PHILIPPINES.

Ruth Sauza Gomez: 19; female; single; pursuing a bachelor's degree in elementary education at Adventist University of the Philippines; interests: playing the guitar, reading religious books and making new friends; correspondence in English. E-mail: ruth_gomez31@yahoo.com. PHILIPPINES.

Jennifer James Gordon: 27; female; single; holds a diploma in environmental engineering from Universidad Uniciencia; interests: outdoor activities, travel, and environment; correspondence in Spanish, English or Creole. E-mail: pujolcita25@hotmail.com. COLOMBIA.

Gloria Maritza Huayna H.: 20; female; single; studying accounting at Universidad José Carlos Mariategui; interests: making new friends, reading the Bible, telling people about God, and travel around the world; correspondence in Spanish. E-mail: lucypan2@hotmail.com. PERU.

Kennedy Eugene Ouma Jabuya: 21; male; single; pursuing a degree in education science (physics and chemistry) at Western University; interests: listening to religious music, watching soccer, travel, and photo exchange; correspondence in English. E-mail: jabuyak160@gmail.com. KENYA.

Reagan Kaluluma: 31; male; single; studying for a master's degree in sustainable international development at Brandeis University (Boston); interests: listening to gospel songs, travel, meeting new people, nature walks, chatting, and reading; correspondence in English. E-mail: reagank@brandeis.edu. He is from Malawi, but studying in the U.S.A.

Goote Koobari: 23; male; single; studying biological science at Rivers State University; interests: singing, soccer, and reading; correspondence in English. E-mail: kobis4reallove@yahoo.co.uk. NIGERIA.

Iverson dos Passos Martins: 37; male; single; holds a degree in theol-

ogy and also in English from IAENE and UPE; interests: reading, listening to music, and travel; correspondence in Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, Catalan, or English. E-mail: passmarts@ig.com.br. BRAZIL.

Juliano Ribeiro Mendes: 26; male; single; studying for a master's degree in language (Portuguese) at UNASP; interests: reading classical literature, writing poems, making new friends; correspondence in Portuguese or Spanish. E-mail: julianopoetamendes@hotmail.com. BRAZIL.

María Eugenia Moroso P.: 36; female; single; holds a diploma in psychology from Universidad del Mar, campus La Serena; interests: camping, travel, and reading; correspondence in Spanish or Portuguese. E-mail: mempjasum@hotmail.com. CHILE.

Yaw Opoku-Adarkwa: 26; male; single; holds a bachelor of science in geomatic engineering from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Kumasi); interests: reading, making new friends, and soccer; correspondence in English. E-mail: ayopoku@yahoo.com. P.O. Box KS 15571, Kumai, GHANA.

Margarita Alesandra Recalde P.: 21; female; single; studying nursing at Escuela Superior Politécnica Ecológica Amazónica; interests: reading, writing poems, and singing; correspondence in Spanish or English. E-mail: magita13@yahoo.es. ECUADOR.

Elias Samuel Rodriguez M.: 33; male; single; holds a diploma in business administration from Instituto Central Vicente Cáceres; interests: camping, reading and numismatics; correspondence in Spanish. E-mail: eliasmolina@yahoo.com. Address: Residencial Lomas de Jacalepa, Peatonal 3 Bloque Q casa 2 11, Tegucigalpa, HONDURAS.

Leila Goreti Ferreira da Silva: 38, female, single; holds a degree in education psychology; interests: God, photography, flowers, books, knowing

about other cultures, travel, music, sports, and making new friends; correspondence in Portuguese, Spanish or English. Address: Conjunto Médico II, Travessa Portel Nº 35, Bairro Marambaia, Belem, PA 66620-160, BRAZIL.

Nabi Nait Slimane: 36; male; single; interests: reading and spending time with friends; correspondence in French or Arabic. E-mail: contact.direct@voila.fr. Address: Fethouen, Chellata, 06205, ALGERIA.

José Antonio Valdés V.: 43; male; single; holds a degree in physical education; interests: God, travel, singing, and making friends; correspondence in Spanish, German, English, or Portuguese. E-mail: Antoniobes@correodecuba.cu. Address: Calle 34 Nº 109 entre 19 y 21, Rbto. Ciro Redondo, Bayamo Granma, 85100 CUBA.

Daniela Weichhold: 38; female; single; working as a secretary at the European Union headquarters; interests: travel, cooking, and medical missionary work; correspondence in English or German. E-mail: sprueche31.30@gmail.com. Address: 14 Avenue Charles Brassine, 1160 Brussels, BELGIUM.

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Isaac Newton: scientist, theologian

by Susana Schulz

Isaac Newton (1642-1727), one of history's foremost scientists was also a noted theologian.

As a teenager, Isaac Newton, dropped out of school and was not sure what he should do. His mother wanted him to become a farmer. But Henry Stokes—master at the King's School in Grantham (England)—persuaded Isaac's mother to send him back to school so that he might complete his education. He did, but every day he had to face a schoolyard bully, and he couldn't stand his torture. There was only way he could beat this bully, and that was to outsmart him in his studies. Eventually Newton became the top-ranked student in the class.

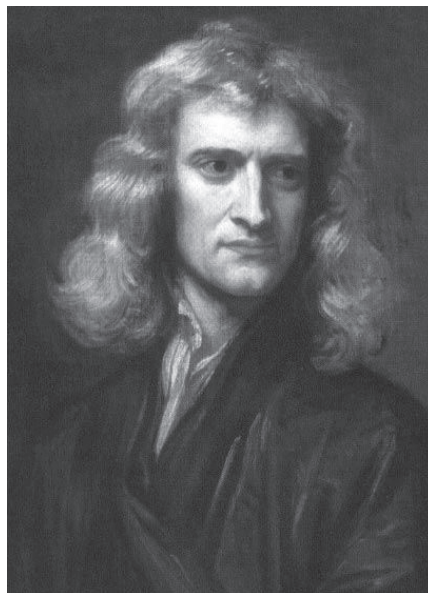
This teenage dropout excelled in everything he did, particularly in mathematics and science. Before long, he established his name in the world of science for three fundamental discoveries: the method of calculus (which is the basis for much of modern mathematics); the spectral composition of light (and some other fundamentals of optics); and the law of universal gravitation (a fundamental law for the field of physics). All this he accomplished by the time he was 23 years old. When asked how he achieved so much, he replied: "*Nocte dieque incubando*" ("By thinking about it night and day").

Besides being a physicist, mathematician, astronomer, natural philosopher, inventor, and alchemist, Newton also was a respected theologian of his times. Even though he became a world-renowned scientist, particularly for his law of gravity, his legacy left more writings on theology than on science. Once he testified: "I have a fundamental belief in the Bible as the Word of God, written by those who were inspired. I study the Bible daily."

Newton added a new dimension to the study of science and set it in a unique worldview. "Gravity," he believed, "explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done."

He further added: "This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent Being... This Being governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all; and on account of his dominion He is wont to be called 'Lord God' or 'Universal Ruler'... The Supreme God is a Being eternal, infinite, [and] absolutely perfect."

Of the many sayings attributed to Newton, one of my favorite is this: "Opposition to godliness is atheism in profession, and idolatry in practice."



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