

BOOK REVIEWS

Roland S. Barth, IMPROVING SCHOOLS FROM WITHIN. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1990. 190 pages, \$20.95.

Although the topic of this book is improving public schools, it presents some great ideas and strategies that can be used in private schools as well.

Barth believes that schools can be improved from within if principals and teachers develop collegiality. Barth's operational definition of collegiality is adults in schools practicing four specific behaviors: (1) talking about practice; (2) observing one another teach; (3) engaging in work on curriculum planning and development; and (4) teaching one another what they know about learning and teaching. Thus the school becomes a community of learners, young and old.

Any school, large or small, public or private, urban or rural, rich or poor, can become a community of learners. In such a community, the principal is not the "headmaster" or "head teacher" but the head learner, modeling the behavior he or she wants teachers and pupils to adopt.

Barth concludes his book with a "Vision of Good Schools." He contends that "the quality of adult relationships within a school has more to do with the quality and character of the school and with the accomplishments of students than any other factor."

Improving Schools From Within offers practical suggestions for improving schools. Anyone who cares about school quality should read it. —Paul E. Plummer.

Dr. Paul E. Plummer is Professor of Education at Pacific Union College, Angwin, California.

Wess Roberts, LEADERSHIP SECRETS OF ATTILA THE HUN. New York: Warner Books, 1987. Paper, 110 pages, \$8.95.

"Shrewd and sensible." Provocative and worth remembering." "Well written, breezy." "A primer on basic management." "Filled with quotes Christian leaders can use." Foundation for leadership seminars." These brief phrases describe *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun*, but you will have to read this 110-page *New York Times* best-seller to get its full benefit.

Seventeen publishers rejected *Leadership Secrets* before H. Ross Perot received a copy and bought 700 copies of the self-published edition. Four years later, Roberts sent his manuscript to Warner Books. They liked it so well that within two weeks it was on its way to stardom with the *New York Times* best-seller list.

While Attila the Hun seems a dubious candidate upon whom to base a metaphor

on leadership, Roberts performed a major service when he synthesized the relevant concepts in this book. *Leadership Secrets* does not present a leadership model or system. Rather, the author evaluated the leadership principles he discovered in Attila's life-style and then presents them in a clear, readable style. These, he says, are "an effective base upon which to build other skills that may be important to success in specialized fields."

The introduction contains a brief biographical summary of Attila the Hun's life. Each chapter begins with a vignette based on accounts of Attila's experiences. These serve to establish a reference point for the chapter's next section. In the second section, Attila "lectures" on his leadership principles to his chieftains and Huns in a campfire setting. Since these "lectures" are not tied to any particular headline or event of Attila's day, the reader can visualize his or her own circumstances and apply the principles, which transcend age, society, organization, or situation.

Roberts defines 16 principles, one in each chapter. Through the Attila "lectures" Roberts loads each chapter with significant quotations.

On morale and discipline, Attila had this to say, "Discipline is not suppression. It is the teaching of correct ways expected of Huns." "Chieftains never condone a lack of either morale or discipline. They plan for morale and discipline! They cause it to happen."

Concerning decision-making, Attila says, "Noble resolve to do the right thing is characteristic of prudent decision making. Responsible decisions are difficult to improve upon." "Leaders must encourage creativity, freedom of action and innovation among their subordinates, so long as these efforts are consistent with the goals of the tribe or nation."

On success Attila says, "You must remember that success in your office will depend largely upon your sustained willingness to work hard. Sweat rules over inspiration."

One hundred and ten pages of wisdom, *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun* offers reading enjoyment, insights into leadership practices, and relevance for today's education leaders at every level. Go beyond any negative notions you may have had about "Attila, the Scourge of God" and reflect upon his proverbs.

Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun is a handy reference of snappy quotations for speeches or articles. You will find yourself picking it up from time to time to refresh your memory about leadership attributes, morale and discipline, paying and receiving honor, marketing yourself, wise choice of enemies, leading the charge as you carry

out your responsibilities as "chieftain," delegating, rewarding your Huns, or negotiating.

This book would be a good investment for any superintendent, college president, academic dean, or director of education.

—Clarence Dunbebin.

Dr. Clarence Dunbebin is Associate Superintendent of Education at the Potomac Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Staunton, Virginia, and Book Editor for the JOURNAL.

George R. Knight, MY GRIPE WITH GOD. Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1990. 142 pages, \$14.95.

The seven chapters of George Knight's new book, *My Gripe With God*, deal specifically and frankly with God's role toward humanity. It tackles forthrightly some of the problems that humankind has struggled with over the ages.

Knight has done an excellent job of making some difficult biblical subjects more understandable. His opening statements provide an excellent preview of what is to come, such as the problem of sin and the atoning work of Christ.

Knight relates some difficult questions he had as a youth, and describes his struggle to come up with answers. He looked at the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15, and was upset by the seeming injustices. Was the outcome fair for the faithful son? What about Matthew 20, where the workers who were hired at different times got the same pay?

Knight gives numerous examples of seeming injustices in Scripture and in life itself. He makes it clear that not only are we as humans in trouble, but God, too, is in trouble when it comes to sin. Sin is a cosmic dilemma that falls primarily upon God, and only secondarily upon human beings. God allowed Satan to take over the world so that we could see the inevitability of the devil's course of action. Thus the solution to the problem of sin created a voluntary restriction upon God Himself.

Knight begins Chapter 3 with a graphic and startling metaphor about the problem of sacrifice. This provides for modern Christians, far removed in time and culture from the era of Moses, a compelling explanation of the Old Testament sacrificial system. Knight then applies his symbolism to the substitutionary death of Christ.

I could cite many outstanding insights from Knight's book, but what struck me most was his writing style. It was very readable for me, and I feel would be easy to

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Siegel, S. B. Sorenson, A. B. Forsythe, and C. A. Telles, "Sexual Assault and Mental Disorder in a Community Population," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 56 (June 1988), pp. 843-850.

¹⁶ T. K. Edwards, "Providing Reasons for Wanting to Live," *Phi Delta Kappan* (December 1988), pp. 296-298.

¹⁷ Phi Delta Kappan Task Force on Adolescent Suicide, *Responding to Adolescent Suicide* (Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1988).

¹⁸ M. Seibel and J. N. Murray, "Early Prevention of Adolescent Suicide," *Educational Leadership*, 45 (March 1988), pp. 45-51.

¹⁹ M. Csikszentmihalyi and J. McCormack, "The Influence of Teachers," *Phi Delta Kappan* (February 1986), p. 417.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ B. B. Collins, S. Bowden, M. Patterson, J. Snyder, S. Sandall, and P. Wellman, "After the Shooting Stops," *Journal of Counseling Development*, 65 (March 1987), pp. 389, 390.

²² Phi Delta Kappan Task Force, *Responding to Adolescent Suicide*.

²³ J. Sorenson, "Responding to Student or Teacher Death: Preplanning Crisis Intervention," *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 67 (March 1989), pp. 426-442.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ From The New King James Version. Copyright© 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers.

BUILDING FAITH IN THE COLLEGE RELIGION CLASS

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naturally to spiritual sharing.

As we have noted, Western cultures privatize religion. Our youth need to recognize this cultural prohibition. Through skillful teaching and the infusion of the Spirit, they will overcome this prohibition to witnessing.

Not until the goal of outreach becomes paramount in Bible classes will our students achieve God's ultimate purpose for their lives. We fall short if our Bible classes become mired in urbane theoretical discussions of theological and ethical questions. We must inspire our students to translate inner commitment into a shared faith that commends itself to unbelievers and nominal Christians.

As we seek to accomplish this goal, our Bible classes will become what God really intends them to be—centers where faith is deepened and from which students depart with a sense of urgency to share their joy in Christ. □

Dr. George W. Reid is Director of the Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland. Before assuming his position at BRI, Dr. Reid taught at Southwestern Adventist College, Keene, Texas, and served as Associate Editor of the Adventist Review.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: THE ACCENT IS ON LEARNING

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lum, will ensure an educational environment in which good writing is valued. Correctness will follow as everyone becomes engaged in creating meaning and enhancing learning through writing. □

Dr. Judith Nembhard is Instructional Supervisor of English, District of Columbia Public Schools. She has taught English at the high school level, as well as at Howard University, Washington, D.C., and at Columbia Union College, Takoma Park, Maryland.

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¹ Donald Murray, "Writing as Process: How Writing Finds Its Own Meaning," *Eight Approaches to Teaching Composition*, Timothy R. Donovan and Ben W. McClelland, eds. (Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1980), p. 19.

² See James Britton et al., *The Development of Writing Abilities* (11-18) (London: Macmillan Education, 1975).

³ James Howard, "Recognizing Writing as the Key to Learning," *Education Week* (September 5, 1984), p. 12.

⁴ Janet Emig, "Writing as a Mode of Learning," *College Composition and Communication*, 28 (May 1977), pp. 122-128.

⁵ Robert H. Weiss, "Writing in the Total Curriculum: A Program of Cross-Disciplinary Cooperation," *Eight Approaches to the Training of Composition*, p. 144.

⁶ See Elsa Walsh and Barbara Vobejda, "American Schools Fighting Back," *Washington Post* (September 20, 1984), p. B1, col. 4.

⁷ Howard, p. 12.

⁸ Weiss, p. 138.

A NO-PAPER DAY

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the year, and to make exciting or silly word lists that include proper use of suffixes or prefixes. I say the words and let the children write opposites or homonyms on their lapboards. We also use the boards to identify root words, singular or plural words, and to practice using *a* or *an* properly. (As you can tell, I love those small boards!)

Science: On no-paper day, we do a lot of outdoor and extra-credit activities for science. We are always growing, recording, and researching something in the classroom. We have a creek, trees, and a forest behind the school where we do

bark rubbings and water sampling. At schools where there was less outdoor space available we've used the front lawn of the school. We lie on our backs and study cloud formations, and catch grasshoppers or others of God's creatures to study and examine. We often use a microscope to examine the things we find.

Social Studies: Like science, social studies lends itself nicely to a no-paper day. Whatever the topic, something fun can be planned that does not involve paper. Occasionally, this produces more excitement than we had anticipated. When we made papier-mâché whales, a dog came into the room and ran off with one of them!

We've had great fun using compass directions to make up our own games. I ask, "If it is afternoon and you are facing toward the front of the classroom, which way is west?" The children love this game. (I have to be careful that I know the correct direction!)

I've chosen Thursday as my no-paper day. I even have a name for it—"Thrilling Thursday." Although no-paper day is fun, it is more than that. It develops skills students need. Often, because of the noise and unstructured nature of certain activities, we neglect to teach these skills. It's so much easier to keep children busy with paper and workbooks.

No-paper day gives me some breathing space. It gives me time to plan other activities for the coming week. For a little while, at least, it relieves me of the mountain of papers that always seems to be waiting for me. It's a day to rejuvenate my own enthusiasm for teaching and a time to get to know my students better as we share and create.

Even if you don't devote a whole day to no-paper, try it, I'm sure you'll like it. □

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understand for high school or college students also. Knight's use of illustrative stories clearly explains some very complex theological concepts.

This would be a helpful book for Bible teachers and their students. In fact, I feel everyone should read *My Gripe With God*. I'm looking forward to the sequel, which will deal with what God is willing to do in those who have accepted His offer of grace.

—Dunbar Henri.

Dunbar Henri teaches Bible at Takoma Academy, Takoma Park, Maryland.