



R

Top 10 Health Tips

found in the Bible ¹³

Leaders call for prayer over
religious freedom ⁶

The Cheerful Giver

**"GOD IS ABLE
TO MAKE ALL
GRACE ABOUND
TOWARD YOU, THAT YOU,
ALWAYS HAVING ALL
SUFFICIENCY IN
ALL THINGS,
MAY HAVE AN
ABUNDANCE FOR
EVERY GOOD WORK."**

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

2 Corinthians 9:6-15



Seventh-day
Adventist Church

South Pacific



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EDITOR'S NOTE:

The Great Resignation

Jarrod Stackelroth
Editor

“
Times of crisis bring out true character in people and organisations.

You may have heard of the Great Resignation, where 4.3 million Americans quit their jobs in the month of August alone. According to research by Microsoft, up to 40 per cent of people globally are considering leaving their current employment (the number is estimated at 3 in 5 Australians), showing that this is a worldwide phenomenon. Social commentators predict we may see similar trends in our part of the globe. According to *Harvard Business Review*, the trend is most prominent among mid-career employees (30–45 years old) at all levels, from senior executives to grassroots workers.

Several important factors have converged to create these conditions and the global pandemic has been the catalyst for change. Time in lockdown has opened more options for remote employment. People are reassessing their priorities and are no longer open to staying at jobs that may not be satisfying or fulfilling, or even jobs they enjoy but in places they don't want to live. Lockdowns may also have produced poor mental health or general dissatisfaction with life that is causing people to seek out a change in their circumstances. Getting out of a regular routine forces reflection and reassessment.

This cultural phenomenon contains lessons for the Church—both challenges and opportunities.

First, the challenges. The same spirit of discontent and searching for more meaning at work has the potential to impact church-goers. Early in the pandemic, some churches were reporting increased numbers of people watching their church services online, but my hunch would be that those numbers are dropping off. And as churches in this part of the world start returning to in-person services, we may find that many people have stopped attending, changed congregations or prefer to worship at home (or not at all).

While some may have anxiety about returning to in-person worship (for a number of reasons), others may feel uncomfortable or have fallen out with their particular congregation's stance on vaccinations, masks, persecution and eschatological interpretations.

One issue employers are facing is people burning out from the high workloads and constant attention demanded when your living space becomes your workspace. This can impact the church as an organisation run by volunteers. If they're feeling burnout in some areas of their lives, it may be harder to continue to "give" to church programs and events. Even though they may not have had to fulfil their church obligations while church wasn't running, they may not be keen to sign up to any responsibility for a while. And some may have been doing more than normal to keep groups and people together during the pandemic. They'll be feeling it too.

Times of crisis bring out true character in people and organisations. The months ahead will show both how the local and global church have been able to respond and adapt to a rapidly changing world.

Times of transition are always times when people seek more answers. They are more open to new experiences and new communities. Times of change and upheaval are particularly fertile soil for people to make big decisions. A new report by McCrindle research shows that three in 10 Australians are praying more during the pandemic and a third have thought more about God. Half of Australians value local community more than they did three years ago.

This is why we see people join (and leave) faith communities at key points in their lives (the transition to adulthood, university, having young families, moving interstate or overseas). The uncertainty caused by the pandemic and the general discontent demonstrated by the Great Resignation provide the perfect conditions for connecting and disciple-making as people look for a renewed sense of meaning and purpose.

The challenges we have all faced during the past two years have been significant. They are causing us to reassess and look for more meaningful experiences. Are we ready to build back stronger? Can the Church rise to meet the challenge and turn adversity into opportunity? With a Spirit-led, Jesus-focused mission, I believe we can.



INSIGHT:

Why Adventist education?

David McClintock
South Pacific Division Adventist
Education director

COVID-19 has impacted our lives today just as much as the Spanish Flu did a century ago, but with far fewer deaths at this point. Adventist education has also been affected. Schools have had to move online for curriculum delivery at times, with some states and countries having to endure longer than others with the “joy” of lockdowns. But the added-value care factor is still there.

Schools have intentionally fostered community within their school family networks, whether it be by regular regular bus runs to drop off learning materials, maintaining contact remotely or simply providing spiritual nurture for families with chapels and worships shared online. Some schools have engaged in service projects in their local communities or verandah type visits to encourage students.

Why Adventist education? Is it worth the investment? Consider this. *Value Genesis* studies reveal that when home, church and school collaborate together, a student’s odds of remaining in church and maintaining a relationship with Jesus moves from 36 per cent (if only one of those three environments is operative) to 71 per cent. Almost double.

Imagine standing at the beach at Kopiu in the Solomon Islands, watching 28 people being baptised—10 students plus community people—and realise that one of those students attended an Adventist school. Her grandfather is the originator of the Moro Movement (a traditional cultural spiritualistic background opposed to Christianity) and she has now just been baptised.

Why Adventist education? We want to reveal Jesus: through our teachers and staff, through the Adventist worldview expressed in our curriculum, in all that we do. Interestingly—and here is the challenge for us as a Church—Adventist education continues to grow even with the impact of COVID. But the growth is from the broader community. They appear to be more appreciative of what Adventist education offers.

Does it work? Here is what one parent wrote: “You are deeply appreciated. Thanks for redeveloping material and platforms for remote learning. Thanks for being like uncles and aunties as our kid’s teachers. You are more than teachers, you love and mentor our young men and women.”



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100 per cent of Weet-Bix packaging can be easily recycled.

Sanitarium strengthens commitment to sustainability

📍 Berkeley Vale, NSW | Record staff

Sanitarium Health Food Company is strengthening its commitment to sustainability by educating millions of Australian households how to recycle 100 per cent of Weet-Bix™ packaging.

Weet-Bix boxes now display the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL), alerting consumers to the fact that 100 per cent of the packaging can be easily recycled.

Sanitarium executive general manager Todd Saunders said displaying the ARL on Weet-Bix boxes was an important step in the company's sustainable packaging efforts, with a 2021 Consumer Insights Report finding the ARL doubled the likelihood of consumers recycling soft plastic.

"If every Weet-Bix consumer recycled the inner plastic liner through a REDCycle bin, 200 tonnes of plastic would be diverted from landfill every year," Mr Saunders said.

"We want every Aussie kid, young and old, to know that Weet-Bix packaging is 100 per cent recyclable and understand how to do it."

Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation (APCO) CEO Brooke Donnelly said it was great to see the ARL on such an iconic brand with the ability to reach millions of consumers.

"This will help give many more

Australians the information they need to make better recycling decisions and help them support a sustainable future," Ms Donnelly said.

"Having Weet-Bix as part of the ARL community will also inspire other manufacturers to join the growing number of members helping Australians to recycle more and correctly.

"The outcomes from this, and other industry-led initiatives aimed at reducing plastic and other materials from landfill, will help us to achieve the 2025 National Packaging Targets."

The ARL will also be displayed on the packaging of Sanitarium Peanut Butter and Marmite spreads in coming months. Sanitarium is also working towards making 100 per cent of packaging across its product portfolio to be reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025.

Soft plastics, including the soft plastic inner bag of a Weet-Bix pack, can be dropped into REDCycle bins at Coles and Woolworths supermarkets around Australia. The soft plastic collected in REDCycle bins is used to create a huge range of products, including fitness circuits, sturdy outdoor furniture, bollards and signage.

San supports COVID-19 response

📍 Wahroonga, NSW | Record staff

Nurses from Sydney Adventist Hospital have been playing a vital role supporting the COVID-19 response efforts in New South Wales.

Fifty-six registered and enrolled nurses served at the NSW Health vaccination hubs at Qudos Bank Arena and Sydney Olympic Park, administering vaccinations over a four-week period.

Three of the San's nurses also helped other hospitals that needed extra support. Among them was Tim Williams, who served at Bourke District Hospital in the state's north-west, about 750km from home.

Mr Williams said when the opportunity came up, he thought to himself "why not!" and was keen for a new experience. And it was quite a different experience to what he is used to: while the San has more than 700 beds, the hospital at Bourke holds just 30 beds.

Mr Williams described his first few days at Bourke as pretty hectic. "All the staff have been very welcoming. They're all really lovely," he said at the time.

Mr Williams also spent several weeks administering vaccinations at the Qudos Bank Arena vaccination hub with a group of other San nurses.



San nurse Tim Williams has been assisting the team at Bourke District Hospital.



Baptism in Navua, Fiji, in 2020.

Baptisms up despite pandemic

📍 Wairoonga, NSW | Tracey Bridcutt

The South Pacific Division (SPD) was the only division of the world Church to have more accessions (baptisms and professions of faith) in 2020 than in 2019.

General Conference Archives, Statistics and Research director Dr David Trim has shared that the SPD had 58,091 net accessions in 2020, which was 7.25 per cent of the global total of accessions. By comparison, the SPD's membership was just 2.8 per cent of the global total.

The results were largely due to disciple-making activities in the Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) and Papua New Guinea Union Mission (PNGUM), which continued despite the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns. Both unions saw hundreds of people baptized.

In Papua New Guinea, churches were unable to remain open due to the lockdown, but people were still able to meet together in small groups.

"Many had been trained to do Discovery Bible Reading and were able to lead in group discussions," SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend said. "People were able to get to know each other more closely and support each other as they grew in Jesus."

In the Trans Pacific, members faithfully followed the disciple-making model of preparing the soil, sowing the seed, cultivating the plants, harvesting the crop and multiplying the harvest, a model outlined by Jesus in Mark 4. Hundreds were brought to Jesus as a result.



To register for the online event, please visit <bit.ly/SPDprayer>.

Leaders call for prayer over religious freedom

📍 Wairoonga, NSW | Maryellen Hacko

In light of current legislation threatening religious freedoms in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and the Solomon Islands, leaders from the South Pacific Division (SPD) are inviting church members to attend a Religious Freedom Prayer Gathering on Friday, November 12, from 7pm to 8:30pm (AEDT).

SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director Dr Nick Kross, Australian Union Conference (AUC) president Pastor Terry Johnson, AUC secretary and Public Affairs and Religious Liberty coordinator Pastor Michael Worker, and Trans Pacific Union Mission president Pastor Mavani Kaufononga will be attending the event, which will have a special focus on Adventist identity, equal opportunity, Pacific Adventist education and the value of life.

"Coming together to seek God's wisdom and guidance in prayer is our privilege," said Dr Kross. "Like many believers before us, who have had to rely upon God for guidance, we too can come together and combine our prayers asking God for His direction and protection as a church family."

Specifically, Adventist education

in both Australia and the Pacific is experiencing challenges, with proposed and new legislation in some territories making it increasingly difficult for schools to preference the employment of Adventist teachers or staff.

"For our schools to preserve our special character our teachers and staff need to be at the front-line presenting the saving grace of Jesus, the soon return of Jesus and the value of our Adventist message to the world," Dr Kross continued. "Our schools are one of the most precious training opportunities for more than 70,000 students across the Pacific and we need to protect our education system."

"We desperately need to have the freedom to put our own Adventist teachers in our own schools to foster what we believe is the best education—Christian education for the children of our countries. God will hear our united prayers," said Pastor Kaufononga.

"We need corporate prayer as a Church for God's guidance as we negotiate these present times," agreed Dr Kross.

To register for the prayer event, please visit <bit.ly/SPDprayer>.



A disciple is a person who in every way is becoming more like Jesus Christ



From Pastor Wayne Krause's presentation.

Symposium equips Adventists to plant churches in major cities

📍 Wahoonga, NSW | Maryellen Hacko

With a desire to equip and nurture a church planting movement across the South Pacific, more than 250 individuals registered for an online Church Planting Symposium organised by the Avondale Seminary, chaplaincy department and Avondale University Church, in partnership with the Adventist Mission and Mission to the Cities departments at the South Pacific Division on Friday night and Sabbath, October 15 and 16.

The program featured a line-up of expert presenters, including SPD president Pastor Glenn Townend, SPD director of Adventist Mission and Mission to the Cities strategy leader Pastor Wayne Krause, associate professor at Avondale University Dr Kayle de Waal, SPD director of Ministry and Strategy Dr Sven Ostring, associate ministerial director for Evangelism for the North American Division Pastor Jose Cortes, lead pastor of the successful multi-site Adventist congregation Crosswalk Church (USA), Dr Timothy Gillespie, SPD administrative assistant for Adventist Mission Shaylee Walsh, as well as a presentation from church multiplication group Exponential Australia.

"Avondale theology and ministry students, church leaders, church planters, pastors and lay people from all over the SPD met to receive biblical and up-to-date practical ministry ideas," said Pastor Townend. "Seeing such enthusiasm from such a broad range of people who learnt together was encouraging to me."

Throughout the presentations, online attendees learned about the vision for the Church in the South Pacific, the importance of the spiritual life of a church planter, the biblical basis of church planting, and the different models of church planting: house churches, micro-churches, community churches and multi-site churches.

"From the Division's perspective, we encourage any type or model of church planting," said Pastor Krause. "You can plant churches and not make disciples, but if you make disciples you will eventually have to plant churches."

"We want everyone from every institution knowing how to make disciples, plant churches and look at our cities as our greatest mission field. We would like there to be a movement of volunteers across our Division, and for us to truly become a disciple-making movement."

making headlines

Adventist heritage

The Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research (ASTR) at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists recently released the first volume of its newest publication, the *Journal of Adventist Archives*. According to ASTR director David Trim, the journal was produced in the hope of revitalising "Adventist archival practice and historical scholarship".—**Adventist Review**



Decoding the Bible

Looking for an innovative way to present the Bible to young people, Youth Ministries in Argentina launched the web app "Decoding the Bible". The initiative teaches the Bible through engaging videos and questionnaires and has reached more than 6000 people from all over the world.—**ANN**

Exercise motivation

Fitness apps that emphasise illness- or death-related messaging are more likely to be effective in motivating participation than those using social stigma, obesity or financial cost messaging. Previous studies, especially on smoking cessation, found that messages related to mortality could be a barrier to acknowledging health risks, but the study found this is the opposite for fitness apps.—**University of Waterloo**

Churches unite

More than 110 places of worship across Australia rang their bells, displayed banners or held events on October 17 as part of a global faith day of action. The actions called on Prime Minister Scott Morrison to take much stronger emissions reduction targets for 2030 to the COP26 United Nations climate summit.—**Eternity News**



Sharing a meal

Adventists in Fiji served around 200 people with a healthy breakfast on Sabbath, September 18. The meal, facilitated by HopeBooks Fiji and Fiji Mission, was part of evangelistic efforts at Nabua Settlement in Waikete. "The climax of this visitation was when three adults told us that they will come and join us for Sabbath worship when it is open," said Pastor Joape Naroba on a Facebook post. —**Record staff**



New place

Hope FM Fiji has been broadcasting from a new studio since September 16. The station was previously based at Hope Studios, sharing the space with Hope Channel Fiji and Hope Bible Schools. The new facility, based at the Fiji Mission office, will also include a studio for Asha FM—a recently launched Hindi station that shares Jesus with the Indian community in Fiji, which makes up the second-largest ethnic group in the country. —**Wyse Bete**



Showcasing good

ADRA Vanuatu participated in the International Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Day in Luganville from October 11 to 13. At the stall, the team showcased ADRA's work in communities before, during and after disasters. Government officials and many curious students visited the booth, where the team demonstrated how a filter unit helps provide clean water immediately after a disaster and how ADRA assists in constructing a house after a disaster. —**ADRA Vanuatu Facebook**



Centenarian!

Tauranga Adventist church (New Zealand) member Dennis Gillard celebrated his 100th birthday in August with a special lunch organised by church members. Mr Gillard became an Adventist two years ago through profession of faith. After his wife passed away, he turned to the internet in search of the truth and discovered the biblical Sabbath after listening to Adventist speakers. Mr Gillard has appreciated the fellowship of the church family and enjoyed the warmth and hospitality. According to his daughter Christine, he is still very active, cooks his own meals, takes a walk most days, plays bowls up to three afternoons a week and is pleased to be allowed to drive for another two years. When asked for his secret to living a long life, he says to "keep breathing", but adds it's also essential to keep your mind and body active. —**Raewyn Otto**



For a good cause

Adventist Record editor Jarrod Stackelroth ran a writing workshop in support of ADRA's annual appeal, raising more than \$A400. During the month of October, ADRA Australia/New Zealand ran a number of masterclasses that people could sign up for at the cost of a \$15 donation. The events were well attended and included presenters such as nutritionist Sue Radd, Signs book editor Nathan Brown interviewing humanitarian Tim Costello, and lifestyle researcher Dr Darren Moreton. —**Record staff**



Raising awareness

Hilliard Christian School (Tasmania) took part in R U OK? Day on September 9 alongside many other Australians around the country.

With a staggering 45 per cent of people in Australia having at some point struggled with mental health, Hilliard students and staff thought this was a brilliant idea to help spread awareness about this often taboo subject.

Students and staff dressed in yellow which is the designated colour for the event. The high school joined together for a barbecue lunch where head of secondary Katy Matteo shared some information with students about identifying signs that someone might be struggling and how to be a good mate to them.

Mrs Matteo also stressed the importance of ensuring students are okay first before trying to help someone else. Each student received a bookmark with contact details of where to go for help. Students played card games and R U OK? bingo, which set the tone to have conversations about mental health together.

"The atmosphere was very relaxed and gave students the option if they needed to talk about some of our struggles," year 8 student Grace Matteo said.

"It was a fantastic event and we hope to continue this at Hilliard each year to create awareness and as a reminder to check in on one another as a conversation could change a life."—**Grace Matteo/Record Staff**

have news to share?

Send info and photos to <news@record.net.au>



Pathfinders serve the homeless

Caboolture (Qld) Pathfinders chose to donate care packs to the Caboolture Family Haven as their service project for 2021. The Haven is a not-for-profit entity that provides accommodation support to the homeless and assistance to re-establish themselves within the community. With a history of supporting the Haven through various projects, the Caboolture Adventist Church was alerted by volunteer manager Gail Torrens about the urgent need for basic personal care items. To meet the need, the Pathfinders, their families and church members collected a generous supply of toiletry items over a few months, packed into 45 colourful drawstring bags. According to Ms Torrens, the packs will be distributed to people at risk of homelessness and even to families who might be living in a car.—**Lyn Ashby**



Health message goes national

Requested by Nauruan government officials, Trans Pacific Union Mission (TPUM) field pastor Joe Navakaloma recorded a 10-part health series to be aired on Nauru TV—the only free-to-air TV channel that reaches the entire island with its coverage. Titled "God's Will First", the series focuses on God's master health plan for humanity to live abundant, happy and healthy lives. This is reportedly the first time Nauru's national TV station has recorded and aired this type of health series. Pastor Navakaloma is grateful to God for the opportunity and has requested prayer as he shares these health messages with the people of Nauru.—**TPUM Facebook page**



Freedom
of choice
or
choice of
freedom?

In 40 years of medical and surgical practice, on occasions I was challenged by conscientious patients who refused the possibility of blood transfusion, even to save their lives. These were good people who, in their acquiescence to Jehovah's Witness teaching, had accepted the misapplication of Deuteronomy 12:23. Their teachers had taught them that blood transfusion was the same as eating blood and therefore they could not accept a transfusion of blood. This was a moral quandary for me, as my own conscientious belief was that, if I could save a life by transfusion, God required that I should do so. Otherwise, I would be breaking the sixth commandment by omission.

In the current pandemic-dominated climate, the topic of freedom of choice has again arisen when considering vaccination against COVID-19. Much has been made by some of the idea that compulsion to be vaccinated, whether mandated by government or certain industries, is contrary to our belief in individual freedom of choice. Some believe that we have a God-given right to resist such actions, as they somehow conflict with God's Word. Others are even teaching that such compulsion is the beginning of the Mark of the Beast. So, in the interests of correct exegesis, I believe this topic needs to be carefully unpacked, using the Bible alone.

It comes down to what should be rendered to Caesar, and what should not. The Bible is quite clear on this distinction. As we all know, when it came to taxes, despite the occupation of Palestine by a foreign power, Christ advised that His followers should pay whatever taxes were owing, whilst not neglecting what we owe to God (Matthew 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25).

When arrested on false charges, Christ offered no resistance. He even corrected Peter's violent response by healing the severed ear of Malchus. When arraigned before three separate authorities, the Sanhedrin, Pilate and Herod, Jesus offered no resistance. On no occasion did Jesus suggest His followers should offer resistance against arrest, no matter how unfair or illegal.

Following Pentecost, Peter and John were arrested; they offered no resistance (Acts 4:1-3). Stephen was taken by the mob and stoned; he offered no resistance (Acts 7:57). Paul was jailed numerous times, and never offered resistance, nor did he encourage other Christians to do so (2 Corinthians 11:24, 25). He appealed to the justice of Caesar and spent two years in Rome under house arrest, without protest (Acts 25:11,12; 28:30).

Paul even went so far as to warn Christians against resisting civil authority, despite the fact that Rome was under the despotic rule of Nero. It is instructive for us to read that passage in Romans:

"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgement on themselves" (Romans 13:1,2 NKJV).

So how do we interpret this advice, when we read Peter's

testimony before the Jewish Council, "We ought to obey God, rather than men" (Acts 5:29)? Peter continued to preach the gospel boldly, in spite of warnings about its supposed illegality. Was that blanket defiance of authority?

The answer to this conundrum is really all about context. When, and under what circumstances, should we resist authority? When is it OK (or is it ever) to defy the law of the land?

Whenever we see the apostles defying what appeared to be the authority of the state, it was always in the context of preaching the gospel and sharing the truth of God, never anything else. Not once did they break Roman law in any other jurisdiction. Only when prohibited from preaching did they take a stand. That's where the principle of "We ought to obey God, rather than men" applies, and only there.

So how does that relate to us as Christians in 2021, who have genuine concerns about where increasingly prohibitive government laws and restrictions are taking us? Yes, during COVID lockdowns, there is some restriction of assembly. But we have to ask, "Why?" If it was clearly an attempt to restrict religious liberty for religious reasons, we would have a valid argument to defy the law. But even if demands were being made of us that contradicted the law of God, should we protest and resist? According to the advice of Paul and the experience of the apostles, even then, violent resistance is to be avoided. Legal protest, and defence of our position is certainly not prohibited by Scripture, but any form of active resistance is condemned.

So, what about compulsory vaccination? Is that against the law of God?

It is very hard to make a valid argument that laws, enacted by the state for the preservation of life, should be perceived by Christians as defying God's law. Where then, does this "freedom of conscience" come from? Is this just worldly self-centredness, which says, "It's my body, I'll do with it as I like?"

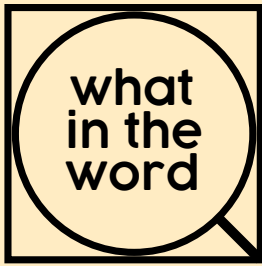
There is the argument that we defile our bodies when partaking of unclean foods (1 Corinthians 3:17), but when stretched to such things as vaccination, we are using the same invalid arguments put forward by our JW friends against blood transfusion. Jesus dealt with such arguments in Matthew 15:11,20.

If we as individuals decide not to be vaccinated against the most highly contagious virus yet encountered in the developed world, we should take a long look at the reasons. In not doing so, we are taking not only a risk with our own health, but in the context of the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31), aren't we more likely to spread illness to others, even to the point of death?

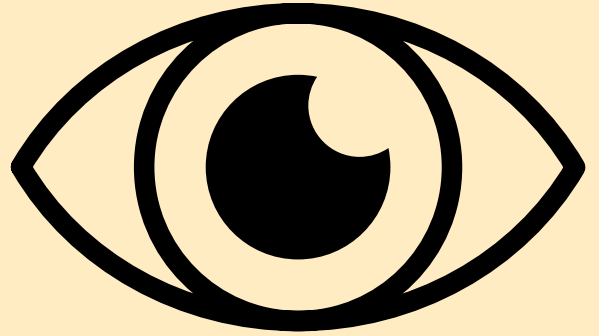
Finally, brothers and sisters, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5).

Dr David Pennington

retired plastic surgeon living in Lindfield, NSW.



presented by
Avondale Seminary



keep watch/stay awake

verb: γρηγορέω | *grēgoreō* (Greek)

Ever been “caught napping”? The expression is more than 400 years old. By Shakespeare’s day it was being used to refer to someone who should have been ready for a situation but was caught unprepared. In sports it is associated with embarrassment. Think of the distracted goalie who lets the ball through. Militarily it can only mean total disaster. Think of Pearl Harbor; the 1940 Ardennes Offensive into France; Israel’s destruction of the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian Air forces during the 1967 Six-Day war; and who can forget 9/11!

Jesus makes it clear that the same kind of high-stakes, all-or-nothing risk is associated with our own lives. We are all at risk of our own Pearl Harbor. This risk is spiritual, moral and especially eschatological. We are in danger of being unready for history’s goal and climax—the return of Jesus Himself. “Stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming” (Matthew 24:42).

But you say “I’ve heard that all before”, “We’ve been saying that for 180 years”, and the idea of watchfulness and expectancy is wearing thin. We’re just crying wolf. Have we misread this? Sometimes we have. A major earthquake, a false prophet or another war is not a sign that the second coming is about to take place. It’s a sign of fallen reality this side of the second coming. A disturbing reality that suddenly escalates and peaks at terrible moments in history (such as the Fall of Jerusalem, Luke 21:5-7,20,21) and will escalate beyond all others before the Second Coming. In view of this Jesus helpfully tells His disciples how to stay grounded and connected to Him amid deception, political or military conflict, natural disaster, persecution and social chaos. And what Jesus emphasises is we need to be morally and spiritually watchful, awake or alert.

This alertness is not only vital to be ready for the second coming but for life’s many crises and challenges. Peter outlines the challenges of enduring suffering, taking up

leadership, being humble, dealing with anxiety, and counsels us to be watchful amid all these things because the devil is a prowling lion always seeking a victim (1 Peter 5:8). If he can’t devour us, he is seeking to knock us over. In any code of football, being tackled on the blindside is devastating.

You can’t prepare for what you can’t see. Spiritually, there are many potential blindsides. That’s why only the watchful are able to stand firm in the faith (1 Corinthians 16:13). Being watchful is relational as well. When Jesus was about to go through the anguish of Gethsemane He asked His disciples to “watch with me” (Matthew 26:38). Sadly, the disciples fell asleep. Jesus had to face His eschatological trail alone. What a missed opportunity. Watchfulness is not just about ourselves, it also involves being aware of the suffering of others.

Interestingly, Scripture likens being watchful with being sober-minded (1 Thessalonians 5:6). Unwatchful disciples are more like groggy, sleepy drunks. They are incapable of clear, firm decisions in the religious, ethical or spiritual realm.

Don’t, however, think watchfulness is all about your mental agility. It is most closely connected to prayer. We are to “continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2). That is the essence of watchfulness—constant, thankful prayer.

Lastly, all the talk of watching and praying does not imply inactivity. Watchful disciples are not stationary meerkats, simply scanning the heavens and earth for signs of eagles or snakes. Jesus makes clear that the watchful one is an active servant who serves God and others (Matthew 24:36-25:1-46; Luke 12:35-49).

Anthony MacPherson

Theology lecturer, Avondale
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The 10

top health tips from the Bible



Take care of our earthly bodies

Why should we care for our health? Paul reminds us of the importance of why we were created: for God to dwell with us. "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19,20). He goes on to say "whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Mental health matters as much as physical health

King Solomon, the wisest man on earth, understood the connection of mind and health: "A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones" (Proverbs 17:22) and "A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot" (Proverbs 14:30).

Keep a positive attitude

"A bright look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the body." (Proverbs 15:30)

Stay away from alcohol

While the Bible does include examples of alcohol usage, it is also clear that it is a dangerous substance. "Those who are champions at drinking wine are as good as dead, who display great courage when mixing strong drinks" (Isaiah 5:22). Strong words from Isaiah and Proverbs doesn't hold back either. "Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper" (Proverbs 23:31,32).

Balance hard work with rest

God encourages hard work but always balanced out by rest. His gift of the Sabbath has so many benefits. "Better is a handful of rest than a double handful of hard work and striving after the wind" (Ecclesiastes 4:6). The Ten Commandments put it this way: "Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work" (Exodus 20:9,10). According to the Bible, the work must be enjoyed. Make meal time a happy time. "Every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labour—it is the gift of God" (Ecclesiastes 3:13).

Sleep is important

"The sleep of a labouring man is sweet" (Ecclesiastes 5:12) and "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late" (Psalm 127:2). Better start prioritising those ZZZs.

Eat in moderation

While some church lunches may contradict this principle, it is important to exercise moderation in our lives and diets. "Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, lest you be filled with it and vomit" (Proverbs 25:16) and "do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags" (Proverbs 23:20,21).

A plant-based diet is what God intended for us

From the very start God said "Behold, I give you every plant that produces seeds upon the earth and every tree that has fruit with its seed inside of it: these shall be your food" (Genesis 1:29). Daniel provides a later biblical example of the benefits of a plant-based diet. "Daniel resolved he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine . . . 'Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink' . . . At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations" (Daniel 1:8,11,12,15).

Put full trust in God

Studies have shown that a healthy prayer life, faith in a higher being and strong belief can all enhance the quality and length of your life. The Bible backs that up. "The fear of the Lord leads to life, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction" (Proverbs 19:23) and "give attention to my words . . . for they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh" (Proverbs 4:20,22).

Obey God's Word to live longer

"My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you" (Proverbs 3:1,2). Bonus time for honouring your parents as well (see the fifth commandment in Exodus 20:12).



LIVING KINGDOM

Surprising treasure

Matthew 13:45-46

The Pearl of Great Price

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matthew 13:45,46).

An African slave found a pearl named *La Peregrina* in 1579 in Panama. It is one of the largest, perfectly symmetrical pear-shaped pearls ever found. It became a Spanish crown jewel for more than 200 years, adorned a variety of European queens, became a treasured possession of US actress Elizabeth Taylor, and in December 2011, the pearl was sold for more than \$US11 million.¹

The Pearl of Puerto is the largest-known pearl in the world, owned by a Filipino fisherman and weighing in at 34 kilograms!²

The ancient story of Cleopatra crushing one large pearl from a pair of earrings and dissolving it in a goblet of wine (or vinegar) before gulping it down in a display of wanton extravagance³ just adds to the mystique about these wonders of nature we call pearls.

And so, we come to Jesus’ parable as told in Matthew 13:45,46. We know this parable as the Parable of the Pearl, also called The Pearl of Great Price. When I think of buying something for a “great price”, I mean that I was able to

purchase a camera lens, or a car, or some piece of clothing, at a price that is less than its actual value. In other words, I have purchased a bargain.

But in this parable, it is clear that a “great price” means something entirely different. It means that the cost was enormous, exorbitant, stellar. The merchant went and sold all that he had and bought the pearl.⁴

In ancient history, pearls held pride of place for value and expense. As Pliny states, “The first place and the top-most rank among all things of price is held by pearls . . .

Their whole value lies in their brilliance, size, roundness, smoothness and weight.”⁵

So, the pearl in this parable represents something of great beauty, unique character and, understandably, immense value. What could that “something” be?

The memory I hold from sermons and talks about this parable is that Jesus is the pearl of great price. Such an understanding is not uncommon. According to Wikipedia, the pearl in “this parable is generally interpreted as illustrating the great value of the kingdom of heaven.”⁶

However, rather than this understanding being inspirational and joyful to me, it has been a source of tremendous pressure and frustration. You see, if Jesus and the kingdom of heaven is so valuable, as represented by the pearl, then surely my only sensible response should be to do whatever I can to procure it? But herein lies a problem. Have I pursued the kingdom of heaven with such enthusiasm?

No. Have I been willing to sell everything to procure Jesus? Sadly, my answer to this question is often a “no”. And even when I say I am eager to give everything, my lived reality is always something well short of my commitment.

The thoughts and questions that quickly take root in my mind are: I am defective. I must be broken in some way. I do not act according to what I say about the priority and place of Jesus in my life. What is wrong with me? There is a long answer to this question, but that is not the focus of this article. What is most important is what comes next in the story.

Just two sentences tell the story of this parable, yet it holds a strikingly clear and surprisingly wonderful truth.

It begins: “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like . . .” Again? Yes, this parable follows on from other stories that are also talking about the kingdom of heaven. Jesus is sitting in a boat just off the shoreline so that the crowd who came to be with Him that day could all hear what He had to say. So, how does this parable describe the kingdom of heaven? We continue. “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant . . .” What? I thought that the kingdom of heaven was like a pearl? No. This parable says that the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant. And for what is this merchant looking? It seems that this merchant, representing the kingdom of heaven, is looking for fine pearls.

Does the merchant find any fine pearls? Oh yes. He finds one of great value. It is so valuable that it will cost the merchant everything he owns.

The merchant has no hesitation in participating in the purchase negotiations. He knows the price is high, but he can see the value of the pearl. It will cost him everything, but in his eyes, this exchange will be worth every cent. There is no second-guessing this trade. The merchant acts willingly and decisively and sells everything, and buys the pearl.

What a stunning picture of the kingdom of heaven! Who gives all? Why Jesus does. God does. So, if Jesus is not the pearl of great price, who is? This is not too difficult to figure out. Several parables share this same theme of the kingdom of heaven seeking out lost items—parables such as the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Prodigal Son.

At the risk of repeating myself, in these parables, the kingdom of heaven is not portrayed as the treasure; instead, the kingdom of heaven is seeking a treasure. The kingdom of heaven is seeking what is lost—dangerously lost in the case of the lost sheep, ignorantly lost in the case of the lost coin, rebelliously lost in the case of the prodigal son. And in this Parable of the Pearl, we learn that what is lost is regarded as a unique and special treasure by God. And not just any “special”; a treasure that is so special it cost everything the merchant had.

Ellen White writes, “In the parable [of the lost sheep], the shepherd goes out to search for one sheep—the very least that can be numbered. So if there had been but one lost soul, Christ would have died for that one.”⁷

I can hardly believe what I am reading.

I am that fine pearl! You are that fine pearl! Our fallen world is that fine pearl. What a surprising treasure! Who

would have thought that God values me so much? Not me! God values you too!

Why is a pearl used to represent what the merchant seeks? Could it be that the merchant of heaven knows that the beauty in every pearl has been hard-won? You see, every pearl is seeded by damage or is seeded by something that does not belong: a flaw, an irritation or an imperfection. But the pearl does not make itself perfect. It cannot make itself beautiful. It plays no part in making itself valuable. Processes unknown and not understood by the pearl itself are at work, over time, to create something unique, beautiful and treasured.

I think of that time when I betrayed trust and broke a heart; that time when I protected my reputation rather than being transparent, open and honest; that time when I lost someone special through death, estrangement, suicide or sickness, and thought my world would end; that time when . . . This list could keep going for pages. The good news is that whatever is on my list—the heartache, the wrong, the hurt, whatever the flaw—all is covered by the nacre of God’s goodness. God the Father cares so much that He applies the mother of pearl—the nacre—over everything and grows a beautiful new treasure.

How glad I am to learn that I am not the merchant.

Why? Well, I get excited when I make the buy of a lifetime only to discover that I’ve purchased glitter—not gold. These “best purchases” of mine inevitably turn into embarrassment and shame. I want to hide these parts of myself, but this parable helps me understand that I no longer need to hide my flaws. To be found by the merchant of heaven is the best thing that could ever happen to me. My defects can be covered in spiritual nacre and be grown into a special treasure for the kingdom of heaven.

How amazing to learn that I am the object of heaven’s attention—attention that makes a judgement about me—not to catch me out, but rather to declare my great value to the kingdom of heaven.

That fills me with joy! How about you?

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Peregrina_pearl>.
2. <<https://largest.org/nature/pearls/>>.
3. <grantsjewelry.com/the-real-story-about-cleopatras-banquet-and-that-pearl/>.
4. Matthew 13:46 NIV
5. Pliny, *Natural History*, Loeb Edition, vol. III, pp. 235, 243. As quoted at URL: <ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/cleopatra-pearls-and-extravagance-tiepo-los-banquet-of-cleopatra/>.
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable_of_the_Pearl>.
7. Ellen White, *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 187.

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the new covenant: then and now

Part two of our covenant series



When US Democrat leader Franklin D Roosevelt came to power in March 1933 he offered a “New Deal” to counter the Great Depression (1930–1939). The “New Deal” was not entirely new. Raymond Moley (a member in Roosevelt’s brains trust) wrote that it “was . . . a loose collection of many ideas—some new, most borrowed from the past—with plenty of improvisations and compromises”.¹

God’s new covenant with Israel was also by no means entirely new and it too was in response to a national catastrophe. That disaster had its roots in the dividing of Israel after the death of Solomon into two separate kingdoms, with Jeroboam becoming the king of the northern tribes and Rehoboam reigning over Judah and Benjamin (1 Kings 12:1–33).² The division came to a tragic end about 200 years later when Samaria fell (722 BCE) to Sargon II, who then deported the people to Assyria and Babylonia (2 Kings 17:1–18).

The same fate befell Judah almost 150 years later when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians (586 BCE) and its people went into captivity (2 Kings 24:1–25:21). “So Judah went into exile out of its land” (2 Kings 25:21); the land that God had promised Abraham as a possession of his descendants forever (Genesis 17:8). Furthermore, the tangible evidence of God’s special relationship with Israel, the temple—“I will place my dwelling in your midst, and I shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people” (Leviticus 26:12)—was in ruins.

Possibly the worst humiliation of all was the apparent failure of the covenant-promise to David: “Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever” (2 Samuel 7:16 NLT). The Babylonian captivity saw the denigration of the final kings of Judah: Jehoiakim was probably assassinated and buried in shame (Jeremiah 22:18,19; 36:30); Jehoiachin

lived out his days at the table of a Babylonian king eating food from a royal-pagan kitchen (2 Kings 25:29,30); and Zedekiah, having watched the Babylonians butcher his sons, then had his eyes poked out (2 Kings 25:7). Blinded and wretched, he died in prison (Jeremiah 52:9–11). God’s promises of Israel’s possessing the land forever, being His people without end and having an everlasting Davidic kingdom seemed to have ended in despair.

The Hope of a New Covenant

The God that scattered them promised to gather them to the land of Israel as a united nation (Jeremiah 30:3; 31:10; Ezekiel 37:21,22). This second exodus would be in the context of a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31–33); it is still about multiplying their population (Jeremiah 23:3; Ezekiel 36:10, 37,38); it is still concerned with the promised land (Jeremiah 32:43,44; 33:11; Ezekiel 36:34,35); and God is still Israel’s God and they are still His people (Jeremiah 30:22; 31:33; Ezekiel 36:28; 37:23,27).

So how is the new covenant different from the earlier covenants? First, the law is more personal; it is of the heart (Jeremiah 31:33a). This was always God’s intention (Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; Romans 2:29). Second, “one king will rule them all; no longer will they be divided into two nations or into two kingdoms” (Ezekiel 37:22). Third, God now promises to forgive the sins that caused the Israelites to go into exile in the first place: “I am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins” (Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:34; 33:8; Ezekiel 16:63). Those sins were not a trivial matter, for both kingdoms were enticed by the surrounding nations’ idolatry and their immoral lifestyles.³ Fourth, the Davidic dynasty will be restored: “For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel” (Jeremiah 33:17,21).

So the new covenant in the post-exilic promises is part renewal and part restoration, but not without precedent in the previous covenants. Sadly for the renewed Israel, what was realised fell short of what was anticipated. The “old people who had seen the first house [of Solomon] on its foundations, wept with a loud voice when they saw this house (Ezra 3:12). The restored Israel remained under foreign powers from the Persians to the Greeks and beyond. The hope of a restoration of the Davidic kingship died with Zerubbabel.

The New Covenant in Christ

“For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems . . .” (Hebrews 9:15). The opening conjunction, “for this reason”, refers to the preceding reference to “the blood of Christ, who . . . offered himself without blemish to God” (v 14). Thus, the death of Christ is the means for establishing the new covenant (see vv 23,25,26,28).

The New Covenant in Christ: Forgiveness

In 1 Corinthians 11:25,26 (see also Luke 22:20) Paul provides the earliest witness for the new covenant being established by the death of Jesus: “This cup is the *new covenant* in my blood . . . for as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (italics added). Matthew 26:28 adds the purpose of Jesus’s new-covenant death, that is, “for the forgiveness of sins.” This is the same truth that Jeremiah 31:35 emphasised but also Hebrews 10:17,18: “he also adds, ‘I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.’ Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.” For this He did once for all time when He gave or offered Himself for us all (Mark 10:45; Galatians 1:4; 2:20; Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 7:27; 10:10).

The New Covenant in Christ: David

The promise of a Davidic king forever on the throne is fulfilled in Jesus, the Messiah: “He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David” (Luke 1:32). Given that the relationship between God and the Davidic king was expressed in personal terms of Father and son (2 Samuel 7:14) we should read Nathaniah’s confession as Messianic: “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Indeed he is “the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David” (John 1:49; Revelation 5:5). Paul daringly re-applies God’s promise to David (2 Samuel 7:13–14) to the people of Christ: “and I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:18)

The New Covenant in Christ: the Gentiles

The promise to Abraham and his seed after him that they were to be a blessing to the Gentiles came to pass in its fullest sense with the death of Christ: Gentiles in Christ are now referred to as “God’s own people” (Ephesians 1:14; 1 Peter 2:9). Hence, “in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith [in Christ] (Galatians 3:26). In Christ the very heart of the covenants becomes inclusive: “For we are

the temple of the living God; as God said, ‘I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people’ (2 Corinthians 6:16 quoting Leviticus 26:12). Through the Spirit neither a tent nor a temple are the dwelling places of God, but God now resides in the household of faith.

The New Covenant in Christ: the Law

The law is not contrary to the covenant-promises (Galatians 3:21); nevertheless, since its role is to reveal sin as transgression (v 19), it is unable to fulfil God’s promises. Indeed, certain aspects of the Mosaic Law prevent it from fulfilling such promises as the inclusion of the Gentiles. Whenever the New Testament quotes the last six commandments of the Decalogue, it does so approvingly. However, it transposes the law into a new key and sees the whole of the Law and the Prophets issuing from the golden rule (Matthew 7:12).

Likewise, the love commandment (Matthew 22:36–40; Mark 12:30,31; Luke 10:25–37; Romans 13:8–10; James 2:8) widens the ethical implications of the law. Thus “the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’” (Galatians 5:14). Notice how Jesus defines “the weightier matters of the law” in broad terms of “justice and mercy and faith” (Matthew 23:23).

Yet Paul can agree with the law without quoting it: “there is one God and Father of all people, who is Lord of all” (Ephesians 4:6, first commandment); by “putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbours” (v 25, ninth commandment); “thieves must give up stealing . . . and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy” (v 28, eighth commandment); “but fornication and impurity of any kind, or greed, must not even be mentioned among you, as is proper among saints”, and “no fornicator or impure person, or one who is greedy (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Ephesians 5:3–5, seventh, tenth and second Commandments). The New Testament upholds the Old Testament’s common injunction “be holy, for I am holy” (Leviticus 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:26; 21:8; 1 Peter 1:15,16).

So the new covenant is centred in Christ, especially His death. It’s the ultimate means of God’s forgiveness. It unites not only the divided kingdoms of Israel, but also all of the world’s social and ethnic divisions. It bases morality not on a written code but on the love of Christ spread abroad in human hearts by the Spirit. “There is no law against such things” (Galatians 5:23): “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision [Jew] nor uncircumcision [Gentile] counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith [in Christ] working through love [of the neighbour] (5:6 NRSV expanded).

1. PV Fishback and JJ Wallis, “What Was New about the New Deal?” <nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w18271/w18271.pdf>, p4 (italics added).

2. Unless stated otherwise, references are from the NRSV.

3. This included even the atrocity of sacrificing their children to the gods (Ezekiel 23:37,38).

Dr Norman Young
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Portion control for a healthy weight

The pandemic has upended many aspects of our lives – and our diets and waistlines have not been immune. But there's an easy way to manage healthy portions and it's as simple as getting a bit hands-on.

Time to take control

Watching portion sizes is important for weight management, and essential for weight loss. Portion control simply means working out just how much food you should be putting on your plate. It doesn't mean saying no to any food group or keeping track of points.

Looking at portions is a simple way to manage your weight – certainly better than counting calories. There's no need to overfocus on measuring down to the gram. It's more about finding a healthy way to load up your plate with nutritious foods you love, and that love you back. An easy way to get your portion sizes right is using your palms and fists.

Gotta hand it to you . . .

Pretty much every part of your hand can work when it comes to calculating portion size.

A fist—represents about ½-1 cup, which is the perfect portion size when it comes to fruit, wholegrains, pasta or rice. So, what about spuds? For starchy veggies, a fist or half a medium potato is a portion.

Two handfuls—gives you a great guide to add plenty of fresh salad or non-starchy veggies. Always load your plate with these.

A cupped hand—the ideal 30g snack size for nuts, dried fruit or trail mix. It's also a portion of soft cheese, such as cottage or ricotta cheeses.

Two cupped hands—perfect for legumes like chickpeas, beans and lentils. It's around 150g.



A palm—it's the size to aim for when serving up plant proteins like tofu and tempeh, as well as meat alternatives (100-150g).

Fingers—yes even your thumb and fingers can help you measure. A thumb is about 2 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil and your fingertip is a teaspoon for other oils and spreads.

Always go for more extra virgin olive oil as the research shows big benefits for this healthy plant-based oil, including better brain health and reduced risk of stroke and type 2 diabetes.

Extra tips about portion control

Using a small plate—It's all mind over matter. A standard-size portion will look small on a larger plate, making you feel less satisfied. A smaller plate will make your meal look more generous.

Go big on veggies—Fill half your plate with colourful, non-starchy veggies, such as dark, leafy greens, green beans, broccoli, mushrooms and other salad veggies.

Say no to seconds—Put those leftovers in the fridge or freezer before you sit down to eat. That will reduce the temptation to go back for seconds.

The 20-minute rule—Eat slowly so you have the chance to feel full. Eating slower is good for us because it takes time for mechanical and hormonal signals to reach the brain from the stomach to tell us we're full.

A sweet treat—For those who crave a sweet treat after a meal, cut up fresh fruit before you sit down to eat, so you have something healthy ready to go.



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Disappointed With Love

It all started when they were 17.

She said it was an accident; he said it was deliberate. They were a couple of college students at a Saturday night social, when she slipped over in front of him. Whatever the truth of the matter, when he—a tall, handsome young man from England—gallantly bent down to help her up, and she—the shy beauty from Scandinavia—smiled sweetly, something was kindled which, by the end of the year, felt to her very much like love. So when it came time for her to return home to Sweden, she suggested one last meeting. He never turned up.

The journey home was heavy with disappointment. High atop the Eiffel Tower, she looked longingly toward London, bought a post card and wrote “Missing you”. It worked. The dying embers were fanned into flame and letters began to flow.

But then the war broke out. Correspondence was censored and travel between countries became impossible.

Well-meaning friends in England encouraged him to forget his Scandinavian love and notice the eligible girls at home. Swedish friends urged her to settle for a local beau rather than wait for a foreigner she may never see again.

But true love waits; and when, after seven long years, a cease-fire was declared, she booked a berth on the first ship to cross the Baltic to London.

It was a cold November morning, the day her ship was due in Southampton. He was early at the dockside, peering through the thick London fog for some glimpse of his beloved. Finally, the outline of a steamer appeared in the mist. His heart began to race, as his eyes eagerly scanned the decks. Sure enough, a waving hand. He waved back; and the harder he waved, the more eager the response. But as the ship grew closer, he saw that the person he was waving at was dressed, not in a skirt but a suit. He was waving at the wrong person!

Most of us spend our lives waving at one thing or another—an ideal relationship, a dream home, a grand overseas holiday, a brilliant career—believing that what we are waving at is what we’re really looking for. But something happens that suggests it is not.

CS Lewis puts it well: “The longings that arise in us when we first fall in love, or first think of some foreign country, or first take up some subject that excites us, are longings that no marriage, no travel, no learning can really satisfy. I am not now speaking of what would ordinarily be called unsuccessful marriages or holiday or learned careers. I am speaking of the best possible ones. There was something we grasped at, in that first moment of longing, that just fades away in the reality.”

Many people miss the point and blame the things them-



selves. It was the wrong relationship; the holiday was falsely advertised; the dream home was in the wrong location. And so they spend their lives wandering from one partner to another, from continent to continent, from house to house, always thinking that the latest is “the real thing” at last, and always disappointed.

Others say it’s all a mirage, and one should learn to settle down and repress that part of oneself which “cries for the moon”.

But for others, the longings are real and should be taken seriously. Reasons Lewis: “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that . . . earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing.

“King Solomon put his finger on the heart of the matter. ‘God . . . has planted eternity in the human heart’ (Ecclesiastes 3:11). If that is so, I must take care, on the one hand, never to despise, or be unthankful for, these earthly blessings, and on the other, never to mistake them for the something else of which they are only a kind of copy, or echo or mirage” (*Mere Christianity*, p118).

How tragic it would be to spend all our lives waving at the wrong thing, and miss what it was all about.

It did end well at the dockside, that early morning in the London fog. The love of my father’s life was on that ship; she was below deck in her cabin, prettifying herself for the long-awaited reunion. And yes, they did live happily ever after and they had four children.

Roger Vince

Pastor, Norfolk Island Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Hi Kids!



As I do my best in learning, I can serve others.



THE BOY WHO DID HIS BEST

Jesus is a home-schooled child. He faithfully and diligently works with Joseph in the carpenter's shop and becomes an able carpenter. His mother teaches Him to read and understand the Scriptures. He studies nature and is often in communion with His heavenly Father. Jesus learns so much that in later years people wonder how He became such a learned person without going to the rabbinical schools (See John 7:15).

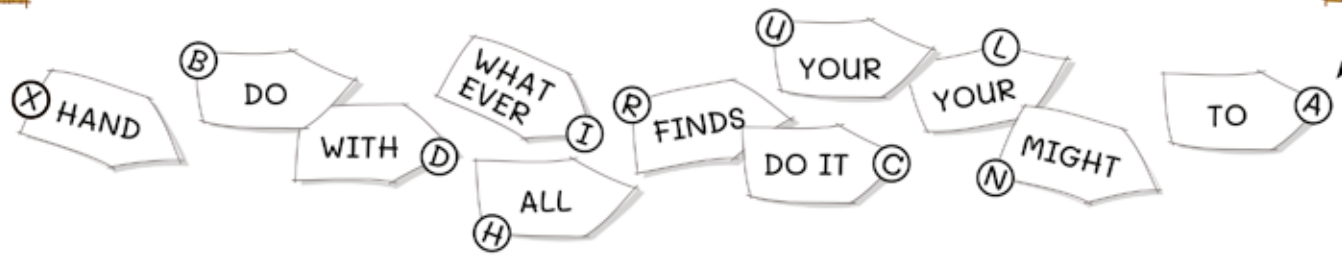
SOLVE THE PUZZLE

FILL IN THE BLANKS - WHAT ARE THE TOOL NAMES?



Match the letters in the circles with the words below to find out the memory verse.

(Ecclesiastes 9:10).





Conversations

Apostasy rife

I want to say how lovely and how refreshing it was to again read a comment “Muddied waters” (Conversations, August 7) by a faithful Seventh-day Adventist who, as far as I remember, has always upheld the truths we were given in trust by our Lord.

Years ago our teachings and views were united on God’s truth alone, and upheld in all our publications as well as our pulpits—and I hadn’t picked up an *Adventist Record* for many years due to the escalating division and sad apostate views now permitted to be printed and encouraged, which of course are going to cause souls to be misled and lost. Thank you and may God bless [the letter writer] for remaining firm amidst the apostasy and unfaithfulness now among our people, and thank the Lord we don’t have long to go.

Diane Styles, *via email*

Pride in freedom

As a Church we have always prided ourselves on our strong stance on religious liberty. I note that the General Conference Working Policy for Public Affairs and Religious Liberty states, “The use of force and coercion is inimical to life, to dignity and to authentic religion.” With that in mind should we not be defending the personal con-

victions of Seventh-day Adventist employees who are exercising their personal convictions and choosing not to be vaccinated?

As Ellen White said, “God never forces the will or the conscience” (GC 591). I am saddened to discover that many of our church employees working in education will probably lose their jobs and careers because they have a personal conviction. Isn’t this the time for our Church to fearlessly stand for liberty and truth and let our God work for us?

Andrew Kingston, *NSW*

Climate crisis

If climate change was such a big issue why is it not mentioned in the Bible? Well it is! Turn to Isaiah 51:6: “Lift up your eyes to the heavens, look at the earth beneath; the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies.”

So the earth is going to wax old like a garment. Does this mean we can do something about it? No, it means whatever we do is not going to make any difference. We can close all the coal fields, shut down the troublesome agriculture, close all the chimneys belching smoke and our automotive industry and all for nothing! Our scientists have been wrong before. They don’t believe in Creation; they believe that we evolved over millions of

years. When I left school in 1954 the cry went out that by the year 2000 we would not have enough food for a growing population. I had an atlas that highlighted the fact that the whole eastern seaboard of Australia was gradually sinking. We were to have a cold period of time when they believed that we were going to freeze to death and then by the turn of the century we would have standing room only because of population growth. They have been wrong before and they will be proved wrong again.

The Pope says we should believe in climate change but adds that we should have a day of rest, a day he believes should be Sunday, not the seventh-day Sabbath as God ordained in Genesis 2 and 3.

By waxing old I believe that we will have more fires, more floods, more cyclones, more earthquakes; we can do nothing to stop it. We are also nearing the end of time so these terrible disasters will come upon us.

Quite frankly, I believe a person should not call themselves a Christian if they believe in climate change. We cannot stop the world from growing old. We know the world is reserved for a fiery end (2 Peter 3:7). So let us pray more and be faithful worshippers on the Sabbath and pray that we will soon see Christ coming in the clouds of glory.

Pat, *Qld*

Anniversary



GILLIS, Des and Sharon (nee Tasker) have celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. They were married in Coffs Harbour church (NSW) on 22.10.1961. They lived in Pennant Hills where Michelle was born, then moved to Singleton and on to Taree where Bernard, Shona, Belinda (dec) and Craig joined the family. Des and Sharon were active members of Taree and Wingham churches. After a short time in Lismore, they moved to Cooranbong to work at Sanitarium Health Foods and became involved at Avondale Memorial church. They now have nine grandchildren and have celebrated with four of them as they married in the past few years. They've enjoyed retirement, travelling and helping others wherever opportunity arises.

Wedding



CORKER—BRIDCUTT. Matthew Leonard Corker, son of Jamann and Zofia Corker (Perth, WA), and Jessica Leigh Bridcutt, daughter of Kevin and Tracey Bridcutt (Sydney, NSW), were married on 2.5.21 at Chapel Hill Retreat in the Blue Mountains. Matthew and Jessica met at the 2018 Converge youth camp at Stuarts Point, and their love continued to blossom over long distance. They are now living in Perth, where Matthew is a mechanical engineer and Jessica a school chaplain.

Nick Kross, Richie Reid

Obituaries



CURRIE, Pastor Alan David Conrad, born 1.1.1935 in Taumarunui, NZ; died 20.9.21 in Newcastle,

NSW. On 1.2.1956 he married Gaya Wilton. David is survived by his wife; children, Delphine, Kelvin, Adelle and Althea; granddaughter, Sabrina; and siblings, Alex, Jean McDonald and Colleen Porter. Pastor Currie served in Tasmania, Western Australia and South New Zealand before lecturing in Practical Theology at Avondale College. He served as the ministerial secretary in the British Union as well as an evangelist. He returned to Australia to serve as North NSW Conference president and then in the South Pacific Division as ministerial secretary. He was called overseas again to the Trans European Division as ministerial secretary and was responsible for evangelistic programs in Zagreb and Albania. Pastor Currie returned to Australia as the Trans-Australian Union Conference president. In retirement he continued to pastor churches, teach in universities and work with 3ABN. Pastor Currie will be remembered as a mighty warrior for God.

Harold Harker



FOOK, Denis, born 23.8.1926 in Sydney, NSW; died 15.9.21 in Erina. On 26.12.1949 he married Maisie,

who predeceased him in 2002. Denis is survived by his children, Barry, Janis and Jeffrey and their families; his brother, Malcolm and sister-in-law, Eva. Denis was instrumental in helping to establish the first Chinese church in Sydney at Marrickville in 1966. In the mid-'60s Denis and Maisie founded Asian Aid, a charity which still supports families in Asia. Denis was a much-loved, kind and caring Christian gentleman.

Neil Watts



GANE, Dr Erwin Roy, born 18.3.1931 in Oakleigh, Vic; died 26.9.21 in Fort Collins, Colorado,

USA. On 7.1.1953 he married Winsome Baron, who predeceased him in 2017. Erwin is survived by his sons, Roy and Connie (Berrien Springs, Michigan, US) and Calvin and Amy (Johnstown, Colorado); and his sisters, Marie Munro (NSW) and Ruth Irvine (WA). He studied theology and served as a Bible teacher, religion professor and pastor throughout his career. Prior to moving to the United States in 1962, Erwin taught at Sydney Seventh-day Adventist

High School and Avondale College and pastored in Cessnock, NSW.



HAMPTON, George, born 7.4.1937 in Bathurst, NSW; died 9.9.21 in St Catherine's Nursing

Home, Bathurst. On 1.2.1960 he married Barbara. George is survived by his wife (Bathurst); sons, Phillip (Bathurst) and David (Davidson); grandchildren, Alisha, Kristelle, Brendon (all of Bathurst) and Natasha (Newcastle); and great-grandson Riley (Bathurst). Though sick for three or four years, George will be remembered as one who never complained at his lot. He and Barbara often spoke of their hope in the resurrection when they will meet again.

Errol Webster



HARRIS, Tui-Rose (nee Hopkins), born 13.12.1943 in Hauraki Plains, NZ; died 30.11.20 in

Oxenford, Qld. She is survived by her husband of 59 years, Reginald; sons, Garry, Ashley and Alastair (all of Qld); grandchildren, Levi, Tyler, Caleb, Blake, Sienna, Ben, Daniel and Luke. She was the fourth child of seven. Early in her marriage she helped look after dairy farms and later worked in quality control at Auckland's Sanitarium Health Food factory and as a nurse in nursing homes in both New Zealand and Queensland, where her loving care endeared her to many residents. The churches she attended were blessed by her faithful deaconess duties over many years. In retirement years, Tui-Rose and Reg enjoyed a number of Pacific cruises, often accompanied by granddaughter Sienna. A Sheltie dog was also a great comfort. Tui-Rose knew with confidence that her name was written in God's Book of Life. We remember our sister as a loving, caring, person who never said a bad word about anyone; a sweetheart in every way.

David Riley

HEAD, Kevin, born 14.10.1941 in Wanganui, NZ; died 13.3.21 in Wanganui. On 28.1.1963 he married Doris Rippingale. Kevin is survived by his wife (Wanganui); and children, Maree (Auckland), Warrick (Auckland), Vernon (Hamilton) and Laurelle (Auckland); their spouses; and six grandchildren. Kevin was a

lifelong member of Wanganui church and well known for his service to his church and community. His faith in God and the love of his family added to his courage as he fought a long illness with his characteristic humour and strength.

Tafu Sione, Ben Timothy



JORDAN, Dorothy Ruth (nee Teschner), born 26.1.1945 in Toowoomba, Qld; died 16.9.21 in

Toowoomba. In 1978 she married Trevor. Dorothy is survived by her husband (Cambooya, Qld); sisters-in-law; and nieces and nephews. Dorothy and Trevor enjoyed travel and interacting with birds around their rural home. Dorothy worked at Toowoomba Grammar School for 22 years and loved feeding the boys. She was courageous, uncomplaining and a loved member of Toowoomba Central church.

Keith Miller



KANE, Meg (nee Saunders), born 10.4.1926 in Guyra, NSW; died 13.8.21 in Glen Park, Ben

Lomond. On 10.4.1945 she married Gordon, who predeceased her. She was also predeceased by her daughter, Barbara in 1946. Meg is survived by her children, Geoffrey (Guyra), Marlene Cantrill (Robertson), Julie Jackson (Lismore), Rhonda Ward (Thornton) and Sandie Salmond (Bowral). Meg was a wonderful wife and mother, kept a magnificent garden and was a very conscientious senior deaconess for the Glen Innes church. Having lost her first daughter, Barbara to leukemia at 18 months, Meg and Gordon embraced the Adventist faith as taught to them by Pastor JW Kent. She had a strong personal faith in Jesus and talked to Him all the time.

Keith Jackson, John Lang

MANNERS, Raymond Roy, born 16.1.1924 in Adelaide, SA; died 12.8.21 in Coffs Harbour, NSW. On 7.8.1944 he married Joyce Olive Parker, who predeceased him in 2010. Raymond is survived by his children, Don and Robin (Perth, WA), Hector and Robin (Murwillumbah, NSW), Bob and Merrilyn (Coffs Harbour), Kevin (Lilydale, Vic), Raelene and Brian Abrahams (Narangba Qld), and Lynette and Paul Wright, (Adelaide, SA); 21 grandchildren;

and 34 great-grandchildren. Ray was laid to rest alongside his wife of 66 years at the Beerwah Cemetery, Sunshine Coast, Qld, where they both await the resurrection trumpet call at the second coming of Jesus.

Brian Abrahams



SEEBER, Mena (nee Penny), born 26.11.1935 in Gnowangerup, WA; died 13.9.21 in

Adventist Care, Rossmoynce. On 17.11.1955 she married Mick. Mena is survived by her husband (Perth); children, Johanne Leslie (Perth), Kim (Northam), Marylou Björåsen (Sweden), Gaye Eacott (Manjimup, WA), Trudy Murray (Brisbane, Qld), Sherrylee Evans (Houston, Texas, US); 16 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; and siblings, Winston Penny and Roma (both of Perth, WA). Mena grew up in two cultures during the years of the "stolen generation". Protected by their father, the family settled on the Corker farm in Kulikup. Here Mena grew to know and love God, and was supported to attend WA Missionary College and later Sydney Adventist Hospital, NSW. Mena spent her life teaching and educating her children, and telling everyone she met about her best Friend Jesus.

Roger Millist

SUMMERSELL, Rex Hayward, born 5.3.1934 in Melbourne, Vic; died 24.9.21 in Merrimac, Qld. On 7.3.1959 he married Dawn, who predeceased him. Rex is survived by his children, Ross and Cath, Rosalie and Kym Sullivan, Peter and Cathy, and Lorraine and Peter Miller and their families; 10 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. During his life, Rex was a church member at Gympie and Ayr in Qld, then Murwillumbah and Tumbulgum in North NSW. He was strong and humble, a hard worker who always tried his best. Rex is remembered for his selfless commitment to his family, friends and community.

Matt Atcheson

Advertising

SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND RECORD ON CD

The SPD's Christian Services for the Blind (CSFBHI) produces a monthly audio compendium of articles from recent *Record*, *Adventist World* and *Signs of the Times* issues, along with Sabbath school lessons, for the vision impaired. If you or someone you know could benefit from this service, mail or email CSFBHI including postal address. Email <CSFBHI@adventistmedia.org.au> or write to Christian Services for the Blind, Locked Bag 1115, Wahroonga NSW 2076. For the legally blind in Australia and New Zealand, CSFBHI also has a large audio library of Christian and denominational books available.

INVERCARGILL CHURCH CENTENARY

Have you ever called Invercargill church home? Then join us as we celebrate our 100-year anniversary on November 27, 2021. Memories, photos and RSVP to <bulletin@southlandadventist.org.nz>.

ABSOLUTE CARE FUNERALS

The Adventist family owned and operated business, caring for you from Sydney to Newcastle

and Wollongong. Contact Arne Neirinckx, who understands our Adventist philosophy. Contact us on 1300 982 803 or 0408 458 452 or <arne@absolutecarefunerals.com.au>, even if you have already paid for your funeral.

KINGAROY ANNIVERSARY, QLD

Kingaroy church invites all past members to celebrate its 75-year anniversary, happening at 10am on November 20, 2021. Please RSVP either by emailing <kingasdabulletin@gmail.com> or by text to 0428752421.

PARK RIDGE CHURCH

HOMECOMING. Park Ridge church is celebrating 45 years on December 4, 2021. To receive your invitation to join us in person or online, request details via email <homecoming@parkridgeadventist.church>.

Finally

"God does not give us everything we want, but He does fulfill His promises, leading us along the best and straightest paths to Himself."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Position vacant

MANAGER, ADVENT PARK MAIDA VALE, WA

The Western Australian Conference is looking for a dynamic, dependable and proactive individual who is passionate about the Church's camping ministry. This position is full-time and based at our camp facility at Maida Vale. The camp manager will be responsible for maintaining all buildings and equipment, keeping grounds clean and tidy and overseeing all activities that take place on-site. This self-motivated individual will ably navigate competing deadlines with a pleasant demeanour and ideally has previous experience in a similar role. This varied role requires excellent customer service skills, strong organisational skills and a hands-on attitude. To apply, please email a cover letter addressing the selection criteria, your CV/resume, three work-related referees and the contact information of your Seventh-day Adventist Church pastor, to Wilhelmina Williams at <wilhelminawilliams@adventist.org.au>. Only those who have current Australian work rights will be considered for this position. The appointing body reserves the right to fill this position.



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