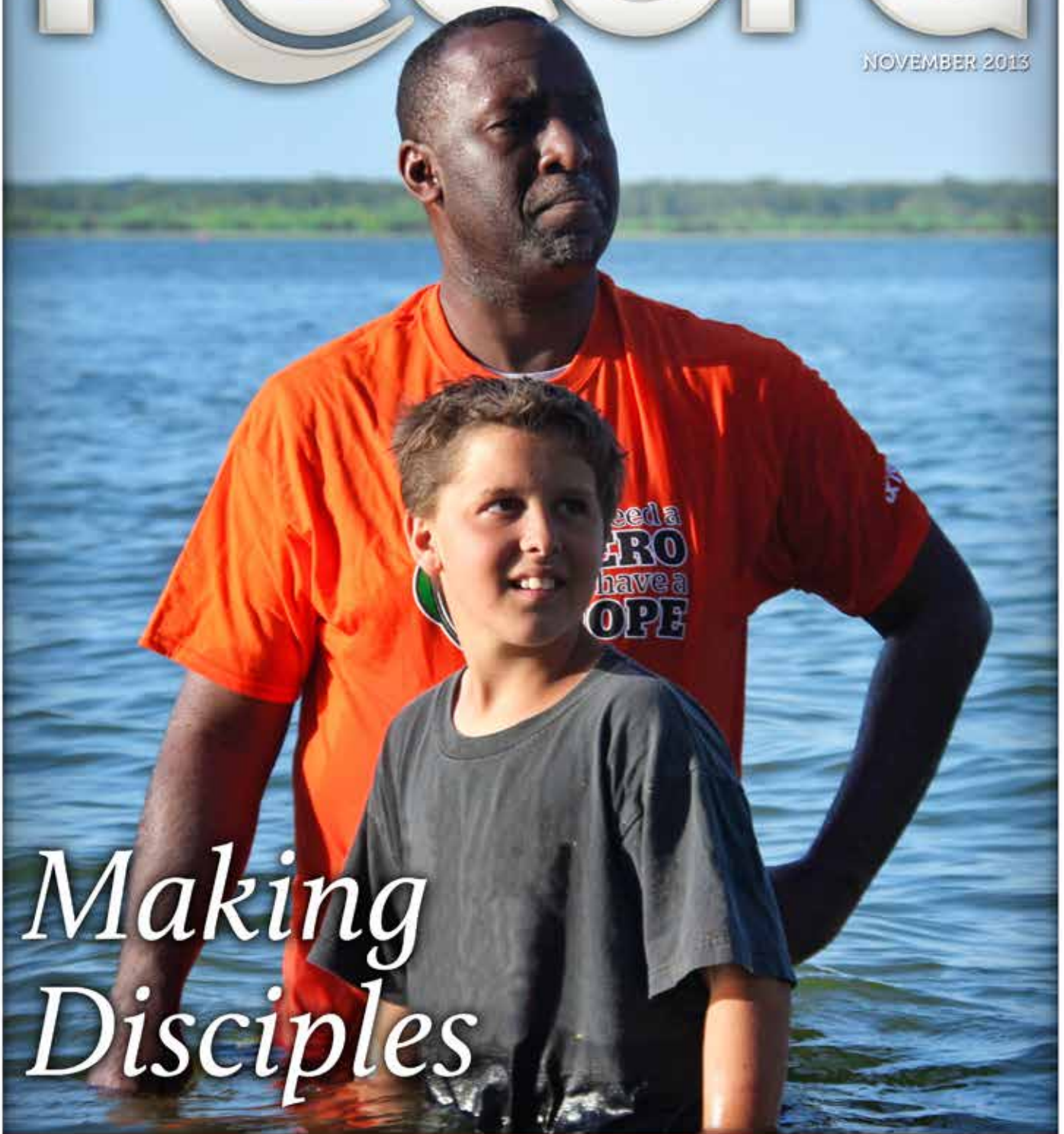


SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

NOVEMBER 2013



*Making
Disciples*

LEAVING ALL TO FOLLOW JESUS



In this Issue...

DEPARTMENTS

- CREATION Health 4
- MyFaith 5
- Pass It On 6
- Visión Hispana 7

FEATURES

- Thoughts on Discipleship 8
- Making Disciples at Summer Camp . . 10
- Modern-day Disciples Leave All to Follow Jesus 13

NEWS

- Arkansas-Louisiana 16
- Oklahoma 19
- Southwest Region 22
- Texas 25
- Texico 28
- Southwestern Adventist University . . 31
- North American Division 32

ETCETERA

- Classified Ads 34
- Obituaries 38
- On the Record 39

THOUGHTS ON DISCIPLESHIP: AN ANATOMY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION



8

10

MAKING DISCIPLES AT SUMMER CAMP



Modern-day Disciples Leave All to Follow Jesus 13

NOVEMBER 2013, Vol. 112, No. 11. The *Southwestern Union Record* is a monthly publication of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas, and is published at the headquarters of the Southwestern Union Conference, 777 S. Burleson Blvd., Burleson, TX 76028, 817.295.0476. www.SouthwesternAdventist.org | www.SWURecord.org



On the Cover

Discipleship begins with a commitment to follow Christ. At Lake Whitney Ranch during summer camp, Keith Gray, pastor, baptized Matthew Boelter, a member of the Cleburne First church in Texas. [Photo by Amber Barber]

Point of View»



BY LEAH JORDACHE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES COORDINATOR

“Follow Me, and I Will Make You...”

When Jesus called His first disciples, His message was very simple. “Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,” (Matthew 4:19). It has always amazed me how these young men responded to Jesus. The Bible tells us that they immediately dropped everything and followed Him. This scene has often caused me to reflect on my own response to Jesus’ invitation. Would I have been willing to give up my identity, livelihood, position in society, and family history as quickly as those brothers did? Am I willing to do that today? I think it all boils down to a matter of trust. Do you and I believe that Jesus is who He says He is and that He is going to do what He says He is going to do? Can we believe it enough to give up everything else to follow Him and trust that we will still have everything we need? I think one critical element is how Jesus offers His invitation. It isn’t a command to turn away from who we are, it is an invitation to turn to who we can be in the hand of the one who “makes” something new out of something old. Jesus’

invitation to each one of us is an invitation to better options, better identities, better lives, better families, and better stories.

In the account with His disciples, Jesus does exactly what He said He would do. He made those who followed Him into something they never could have been on their own: replicas of Himself, and agents of life in the world around them. He makes the same invitation, and He promises to do the same for any person, no matter what their story. What remains is how we will respond to the invitation. His methods can be unorthodox, His ways beyond understanding, but if we take the risk to trust Him, I believe we will find what the disciples who have gone before us have found; that Jesus will always do what He says He will do. And He will make us into something better than we were before we followed Him.

Leah Jordache, discipleship ministries coordinator



Stepping Stone to Success

Larry Moore: Isn't it interesting how God's plans are rarely our plans, and yet, looking back, we see how He was in control all along and had our best interest at heart? Meet Lora and Kevin, two Southwestern alums who let God lead.

Lora Netzel Weygandt, '07: Southwestern wasn't my first choice, but it turned out to be God's first choice for me. I am so glad I chose to follow His plan because I absolutely loved everything about Southwestern! God continues to guide me. My work experience and connections at Southwestern led me to a job as a dean. Becoming a girls' dean was not at all what I planned for my life, but I'm so grateful for that opportunity. At my first job, I met my husband of five years and our first son was born there. I am now beginning my fourth year as the dean of girls at Ozark



Lora Netzel Weygandt
Class of '07



Kevin Bruce
Class of '06

Adventist Academy. Our second son was born last November. I'm always amazed to look back on my life and see the ways God has led me when I had no idea what He was up to.

Kevin Bruce, '06: Attending Southwestern was one of the best experiences of my life. The friends I made at Southwestern have become lifelong friends. My classes at Southwestern were also a blessing. The things I learned have changed my life for the good. What I've enjoyed the most is that I still have access to many of these professors, anytime, to talk about what is on my heart. My pastoral ministry in Dallas and Tulsa, and now my leadership roles as a student at Andrews University are possible because of the leadership skills I learned at Southwestern, and because my professors were so proactive on my behalf.





CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN » SENIOR MANAGER OF MISSION DEVELOPMENT, FLORIDA HOSPITAL

Disciples Of Whom/What?

DANGERS OF DISCIPLESHIP

It was November 18, 1978. I was 11 years old, but remember it like it was yesterday. My family was living in southeast Texas where Dad pastored the Beaumont church. That night, we watched a horrible story unfold on the evening news.

We saw grisly images of dead people strewn across the ground with paper cups near their bloated bodies. Although I did not fully

understand what had happened, I remember wondering who the guy in the big glasses was and how he convinced so many people to commit suicide.

The guy in the big glasses was Jim Jones, founder and leader of the People's Temple; 909 of his disciples had drunk cyanide-laced grape-flavored Flavor Aid. Among them were 303 children who were poisoned first. Families were instructed to lie down together and die; Jones died from a gunshot wound to the head.

WHY?

Why would so many people take their own lives and those of their children? In a PBS special called

Jonestown, The Life And Death of Peoples Temple, former cult member Hue Forston, Jr., quotes Jones as having said: "What you need to believe in is what you can see. If you see me as your friend, I'll be your friend. If you see me as your father, I'll be your father, for those of you that don't have a father. If you see me as your savior, I'll be your savior. If you see me as your God, I'll be your God."

They were looking for someone to believe in—someone to lead them to a better life.

In an audio recording of the mass suicide recovered shortly thereafter, people are heard weeping. Jim Jones reprimands them to stop their "hysterics" and to die with "dignity" because they are

just stepping over from one plane of existence to another, that death is their "friend."

THE CRIES OF A LONELY PLANET

Thirty-five years later, people are still searching for a better life and someone to believe in. And they always will, which is why Jesus commissioned us to lead people into an eternal relationship with Him:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:18-20, NKJV).

DISCIPLES OF WHOM?

Jesus commissions us to invite people to become His disciples—not *our* disciples.

What does it mean to be Christ's disciple? It means we follow Jesus and model His ways. It means we accept our status and inheritance as sons and daughters of God. It means we are living examples of His sacred character.

And it means we share these eternal truths of Jesus with others: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6, NKJV).

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," (John 8:32, NKJV). "A thief comes to steal and kill and destroy, but I came to give life—life in all its fullness," (John 10:10, NCV).

CREATION HEALTH & DISCIPLESHIP

Through CREATION Health, we extend the healing ministry of Christ to people who are searching for something better. We introduce them to Someone they can trust. We help people experience God's original plan for living life to the fullest in mind, body, and soul.

CREATION Health just released a new discipleship tool called The CREATION Health Bible Study Series. It is an eight-part Bible study designed to transition people from the CREATION Health Seminar into a relationship with Jesus Christ so they can become *His* disciples. If you are interested in learning more, please visit www.CREATIONHealth.com.

That's CREATION Health!

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Florida.

- C
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- E
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- N

Choice

Rest

Environment

Activity

Trust

Interpersonal
RELATIONSHIPS

Outlook

Nutrition

My Summer Camp Experience

THE WHEELS OF THE ATV RACED ACROSS THE DRY, ROCK-COVERED EARTH. Dressed in tank tops, shorts, and sunglasses, we were having the time of our lives! We sped around the next corner, scaring the horses as we passed, all in order to arrive at the worship tent on time to set up the sound system for that night's song service.

I had been thinking about what to do with myself this past summer. I knew I needed a job, but I didn't know what to do. My friend, Ben, and I were told about a job opportunity at the new Texas summer camp, Lake Whitney Ranch. We decided to apply and see what happened. I decided I'd just put it in God's hands whether I got hired or not. After a time of waiting and not knowing whether or not I'd been hired, it came down to the day that I was supposed to leave. We drove to the camp not knowing whether I'd be hired on, or sent home. We got there, and I was on the list. I was the first Staff In Training (SIT) ever to sign in at Lake Whitney Ranch!

I spent two weeks as a trial period working to see if the SITs would help or hinder the camp. I was ready and willing to stay, but also ready if the outcome was to leave. I was relieved to find out that I was asked to stay as a volunteer until the end of camp. I happily obliged! God knew that I was learning so much about Him there, and He knew He could use me for more.

After a couple weeks at camp, I had many friends who mean the world to me now. There's nothing that could break those bonds. During the fifth week, I had a deep spiritual conversation with a fellow counselor, Ryan, that made an impact on me. He told me his story, and I told him mine. Surprisingly, they were really similar. We had been good friends before, and that just sealed the deal. He became like my big brother. We were

always there for each other. Every day, he'd share a Bible verse with me, and he'd share more of his testimony. It gave me hope that I could get through the same things too. He was, and still is, Jesus to me. I see Jesus shining through him.

With Ryan's testimony, in addition to some others, I realized I wasn't alone in the fight of life. I came to know that other people had the same fights as me. It really gave me a spiritual boost, which I needed badly. I was almost out of hope, and these people, whom I've come to know as my family, showed me that I'm not alone. They've got my back. And even when they don't, God does. There's always a light shining in the darkness.

The spiritual influence of each of the staff there gave me the heartfelt joy of seeing people just a few years older than me leading out for Jesus. It showed me that I could do that same thing. I can shine for God, no matter how young I am. This was an obstacle that I didn't feel like I could get over before I had my great summer camp experience. But now I know I can overcome. I've had many people come up and ask me about summer camp, and I've gotten to share my experience with every one of them. It's amazing how sharing your stories can change someone else's view, too. There was one verse that I read over and over this summer, and I think it's right to share it now: "We, too, wait with eager *hope* for the day when God will give us full rights as his adopted children," (Romans 9:23, NLT, emphasis supplied).



◀ Wesley Beaulieu had a life-changing experience at camp this past summer.

Far left: Working on an arts and crafts project that involved painting a tree with fingerprint.



Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY YVETTE RAMOS



B.Y.O.B.—Bring Your Own Bible

Observing and experiencing the difficulties of trying to walk the narrow path, I witnessed how a great number of members of our church, faced with the dilemma of being young Adventists in today’s religiously deviating culture, were setting God on the back burner in their lives. In 2010, God placed a burden upon my heart to bring young adults together in a way that would foster true God-honoring Christian fellowship. God impressed me to plan a weekend retreat for the young adults of our local church.

Since then, the Lord has provided the perfect conditions to continue organizing retreats on a semi-annual basis, with the purpose of providing an avenue for the young adults of our churches to reconnect their hearts with God in a raw and profound way, using basic methods of delivering His Word.

As we pack our bags to get away for a weekend in the absence of smart phones, tablets, or technology, we head to a retreat center with a naturally beautiful setting each March and October, where we can focus on God through His Word, prayer, and fellowship. Our desire is to ignite a movement of young men and women to encounter God in ways they have never experienced before and passionately live for Him every day. The following are testimonies to how the retreats have affected our young adults:

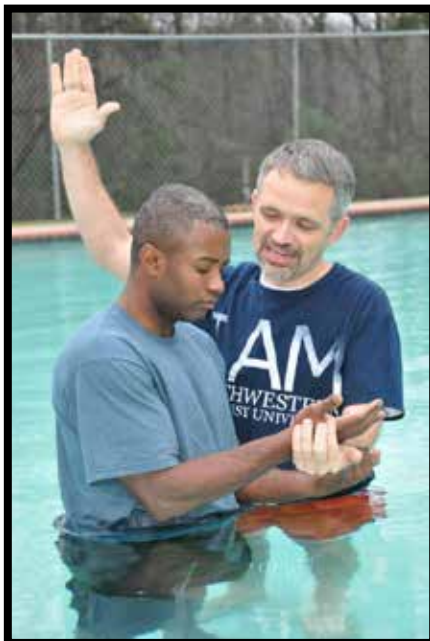
“This is the first church retreat that I have ever attended. I wasn’t sure what to expect and I was a bit nervous. However, as the weekend drew on my uncertainty melted away and was exchanged with peace.

Every speaker had a wonderful message that related to the experience of Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. In other words, the transformation that God can do in our lives.”—Judith

“The B.Y.O.B. Back to Basics Mission Statement? ‘To lead God’s children to have a raw encounter with our Father, providing them with an experience so profound they will never want to leave His side.’ I say, mission accomplished, as three Adventist young people dedicated or re-dedicated their lives to God over the weekend retreat. Back to Basics is an experience that I won’t soon forget, and I look forward to experiencing more heart-rebuilding encounters of this spiritual kind in the near future.”—Coral

“Thank you for being used by God to lead the retreat. I know I was blessed by the music, sermons, discussions, nature, and people. Looking at Paul’s story, we find that he was ‘hit’ by God, which changed his life’s trajectory. I pray that we also prioritize our lives around God.”—Kevin

For more information about the retreat, visit www.BYOBBacktobasics.com.



▲ Young adults who attended a recent B.Y.O.B. retreat encountered God through Bible study, prayer, and fellowship.

Above left: Travis Patterson, pastor of the Three Angels church in College Station, Texas, baptizes Reginald Noel, who made a full commitment to Jesus following his experience at the discipleship retreat.

◀ Small group interaction is a key component of the discipleship experience.



En Busca de Amigos para Cristo

El sábado por la tarde cuando salían los jóvenes a dar un paseo al zoológico, Jamie y yo decidimos cumplir con nuestra promesa, de visitar al señor Fernando. Antes de salir oramos así: “Señor, tú sabes que nos gustaría mucho ir al paseo, pero nos comprometimos a visitar a este señor. Por favor haz que nuestro tiempo sea utilizado de la mejor manera y que pueda servir para mostrar a otros quién eres tú.” Efectivamente, cuando llegamos Fernando no estaba, pero dos señores estaban sentados a los pies de la puerta, y entablamos conversación. Después de hablar con ellos alrededor de una media hora, finalmente les ofrecimos estudiar la Biblia y para nuestra sorpresa ellos aceptaron. ¡Parecía demasiado hermoso para ser verdad! Hicimos cita para la siguiente semana. El domingo siguiente Sorina me acompañó pero ellos no estaban y derramamos lágrimas, mientras lo hacíamos uno de ellos llegó. Y nuestros corazones se llenaron de gozo. A partir de ese domingo estudiamos con Arturo y Daniel en el parque. Les regalamos una Biblia y La Fe de Jesús. Damos gracias a Dios por responder a nuestras oraciones.

En otra ocasión que salimos a buscar interesados, una tarde calurosa de jueves, nos sentíamos cansadas, habíamos tocado puertas en un vecindario, pero aún faltaban algunas. Sorina y yo pensamos en irnos, porque además teníamos mucha sed, la temperatura marcaba 101 grados Fahrenheit. Pero recordamos la promesa en Josué 1:7, “Sólo esfuérzate y sé valiente que yo voy a estar contigo.” Así que oramos, pedimos a Dios ayu-



▲ De izquierda a derecha: Daniel, Tatiana y Arturo.



▲ De izquierda a derecha: Nori Hernandez, Claudia, Laura, Yuli, y Norma.

da y fortaleza y nos animamos para seguir tocando en los últimos apartamentos.

Subimos las escaleras y tocamos, en ese momento llegó Claudia, una persona muy amable, le ofrecimos orar por ella y nos invitó a pasar, nos sentamos en un lugar cómodo, con aire acondicionado, nos ofreció un vaso de agua, y nos permitió orar con ella. También le ofrecimos estudios bíblicos al cual ella aceptó. A la siguiente semana que la visitamos para continuar con el estudio de La Fe de Jesús, nos dijo que invitó a su hermana y ella quería estudiar con nosotras. Esa tarde estudiamos con Claudia, sus 3 hijos, su hermana Laura con sus 4 hijos entre adolescentes y niños. En los últimos estudios que tuvimos hablamos acerca de los mandamientos de Dios y el sábado, a lo cual ella dijo: “Yo no sabía que esto es lo que pide Dios que hagamos, yo quiero obedecer a Dios y ser salva.” Ella le contó a su esposo de lo que había aprendido de la Biblia y le dijo: “La Biblia nos pide amar a Dios y obedecerle. Voy a ir a la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo día; y si veo que en esa Iglesia hacen lo que la Biblia dice, yo voy a seguir asistiendo. No sé tú si quieras venir, pero yo quiero salvarme.”

Estuvimos muy contentas al escucharla, y pedimos sus oraciones porque ella trabaja en sábado y dijo que quiere obedecer a Dios antes

que a los hombres. Así continuamos conociendo personas por el tiempo que estuvimos en Tulsa.

Tatiana Ochoa, estudia en Montemorelos, México

THOUGHTS ON DISCIPLESHIP: AN ANATOMY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

Leah Jordache, discipleship ministries coordinator

Discipleship is one of those terms that just about everyone has heard, many have defined, and some have actually experienced. As a young person, I remember craving to have a tangible, genuine relationship with God and asking many people whom I respected and trusted to tell me the secret to feeling and living that connection. It should be no surprise that the answer that finally made a lasting difference for me came through other faithful disciples who pointed me to Jesus Himself in the Scriptures. There are many passages that tell the stories and principles of discipleship, but the one that opened the world of discipleship for me is found in Matthew 28:18-20. It is not an obscure passage or anything new; in fact many of us have heard it tens or even hundreds of times. But this passage, most commonly known as the "Great Commission," took on a whole new meaning for me as I participated in a focus group on discipleship with some colleagues and mentors. This is when I discovered that the Great Commission is actually a beautiful formula for discipleship.

The context of this passage is that Jesus is meeting with His disciples after His resurrection, and He is about to leave them. This is one of the last opportunities that Jesus has to tell His followers what is important for them to remember once He is gone. So Jesus begins His commission by giving the foundation upon which the rest of the statement is built. He says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations."

It is significant that He starts with this statement, considering the most basic definition of what a disciple is. Discipleship is primarily a teacher/student relationship. Christian discipleship happens in the context of a relationship between a person and Jesus Christ; more specifically, a person who lives under the authority and teachings of Jesus.

After establishing His authority, the Master in the discipleship relationship, He outlines what He expects His disciples to do. There is only one command in the Great Commission, and that is to "make disciples." This identifies *what* Jesus wants His followers to do as a result of His authority. Jesus then outlines the two steps in the process of *how* to go about making disciples. "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teaching them to obey* everything I have commanded you," (emphasis supplied).

Now when we see the word "baptizing," most of us probably get the mental image of a pool of water, baptismal robes, a short history of a person's journey, a prayer, and a person being immersed in the water. This ceremony is indeed beautiful, and we should never downplay its value, but it is only a symbol of something greater, something truly lasting and transformational.

I once found a reference to an ancient Greek pickle recipe that illustrated wonderfully the meaning of the Greek word for baptism, or immersion. Just like in the pickling process, the immersion that brings about the transformation isn't just a one-time thing. It is a sustained and gradual process as long as the vegetable stays immersed in the solution, as long as the transforming agent is present. This brings us to a very important point. What is it that Jesus is saying that people are to be baptized in? What is the brine or solution that will be the transforming agent for the person who is immersed in it? He says, "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." We traditionally incorporate this into the baptismal ceremony by raising our hand and pronouncing it over the person being baptized just before they go under the water. But that is still only a symbolic representation of something more beautiful and lasting. Jesus is referring here to the transformational process

**"MATTHEW 28:18-20...MOST
COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE
"GREAT COMMISSION," TOOK ON A
WHOLE NEW MEANING FOR ME AS
I PARTICIPATED IN A FOCUS GROUP
ON DISCIPLESHIP WITH SOME
COLLEAGUES AND MENTORS."**

of being immersed in the name and character of God. In order to understand what Jesus is talking about, we must move beyond the symbol, to the Christ-powered freedom and transformation that it represents; the restoration of the character and image of God in us through sustained exposure to the presence of Jesus.

The second step that Jesus outlines is teaching obedience. You may remember the old adage, “Do as I say and not as I do.” This has never made sense to me because people are most likely to do what you do and not what you say, if the two are different. No other experience has taught me this lesson more clearly than being a parent!

But let’s move beyond just the concept of teaching, to the subject matter that Jesus is having us teach in this endeavor to make disciples. What is it that we are to be teaching? And what is the scope of the curriculum? Jesus says, “teaching them to *obey everything that I have commanded* you.” So what Jesus is asking His disciples to do is to teach obedience to His commands. This well-known passage in Matthew 22:36-40 offers some perspective: Jesus was once asked, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law? Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’”

What this passage tells us is that obedience isn’t just about following “the rules” or not sinning. But our obedience must be tied back to one of these two commands, loving God and loving our fellow human beings. It’s all about relationships! When our obedience is not anchored in one of these relationships, it is not true obedience. It is about knowing the character of our God and having respect for and commitment to His authority in our lives. If there is no respect for His authority, and no connection to His loving character, then there is no true obedience.

In this formula for making disciples, Jesus is telling us what a disciple is: someone who is baptized and obedient, in other words, someone who is immersed in His character and reflecting His image. These two steps in the process of making disciples—immersing them in the character of God and teaching them to obey—make one thing very clear. We cannot make disciples if we are not being

disciples! We often believe that bringing someone else to Christ and salvation involves a simple transfer of information that a person either accepts or doesn’t. But Jesus is telling us in this commission that making disciples is much more than a transfer of information. It is being immersed in His character so that we can immerse others in it. It is teaching obedience by reflecting the love of God in the way we ourselves live in obedience to His command to love Him and love each other.

Once again we must not forget that this is not just an exercise of our own will power. The authority of Christ makes it possible for us to reflect the image of God. Through immersion in His character, our sinful natures are transformed into the image that we were designed to represent. Through our love and respect for Him, obedience becomes a part of who we are and not some additional or optional requirement. Remember, baptism and obedience is the formula for making disciples, not the formula for salvation. It is because of the authority of Christ that we are called to do these things! That is the whole context of the “Great Commission!”

And now for the final words of His commission, “Surely I am with you always, even to the very end of the age.” This is His commitment to the relationship.

God can save us and use us in any condition. But the more we spend time with Him, know Him, submit to Him, are transformed by Him, and reflect Him, the more He is able to use us. The longer we are in His presence, the more His transforming power and authority are released into our lives and into the world around us!

This is the part where Jesus reminds us that He has promised us His continued presence. Because according to this plan, He cannot do it without us, and more importantly, we cannot do it without Him. All of this is possible only because of Jesus and what He has accomplished for us. Without Him, without His authority and His presence, none of this could be true, no matter how hard we try on our own. Not only has His authority provided everything we need, but He is never going to leave us alone.

Your Creator, your Lord, your King, your Savior, your Brother, and your Friend is calling out to you today with this same Good News!



MAKING DISCIPLES AT SUMMER CAMP

Rosibel Ordonez

“Follow me” continues to be Christ’s simple, yet, life-transforming invitation to each one of His disciples. Abandoning the luxuries of sleeping in, long showers, and home-cooked meals, a group of 80 people accepted God’s leading to the new Texas summer camp and dedicated their vacation to counseling and mentoring young people. Amidst the challenges of breaking ground in a “foreign land,” laughter, activities, and worship daily filled the atmosphere at Lake Whitney Ranch. This summer was unforgettably unique and through this experience, we learned many lessons of faith and discipleship.

If you’ve ever worked at summer camp, you can relate to the fatigue one feels as the weeks pass by. However, God greeted us each morning with renewed strength and a promise of impacting moments with the energetic campers! Though there is plenty of physical activity offered at camp, this summer we intentionally strived to tap into the cognitive abilities of our campers by offering a class called Discipleship. “At first, I wasn’t sure what to expect, but as the days went on, I realized I really enjoy this class,” a camper shared

with the class leader.

The class focused on growth and discipleship. As we learn in Luke, “Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man” (Luke 2:52). Campers were led through a week-long project in which they created their life timeline. As campers evaluated big and small events in their own lives, they were able to draw correlations between what seemed to be “mundane” events and the greater purpose for which they were created. They also participated in activities that taught them to effectively study the Bible and seek communion with God. Taking the method of growing like Jesus did, they learned that discipleship is a life-long journey and that sometimes, solitude and reflection are needed in order to hear God’s calling.

Many Christians can recite the Great Commission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you,” (Matthew 28:19). Oftentimes, this may seem like a daunting task. Therefore, our campers also learned that one person plants, the other waters, but



God gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6, 7). It does not fall on us mere humans to change the heart of unbelievers. God promises to give the increase! Chantal Williams, a counselor and class leader, recounts, "Discipleship was a deep class. I experienced a lot of kids opening up and the activities helped them to organize their thoughts. Everyone has a testimony and if you tell someone, it will help lead them to Christ."

The evening worship program, an allegorical play entitled *The Journey: Shadows of Hope*, helped campers explore and evaluate what hope is. Directly after the program, counselors would gather with the young people in their cabins and facilitate discussion groups outside the worship tent. This allowed campers to participate in immediate introspection. I wish you could have seen the hugs between cabin brothers, the glow on camper's faces, the breakthrough cries to the Healer, and hear the



- ▲ Keith Gray baptizing a precious camper into the family of God.
- ◀ Campers enjoying fellowship and the view of Lake Whitney.
- ▼ Sabbath evening prayer and praise on the waterfront.





singing and murmur of prayers being lifted into the majestic starry night towards the great I AM in heaven!

As the weeks of camp ran in full throttle, small groups of staff members would meet, sometimes skipping a “rest period” nap, in order to have a Bible study before resuming their afternoon duties. When I envision what it must have been like to be one of the 12 disciples in the company of Jesus in the flesh, I’m sure it was similar to the peace and stillness we experienced during the evening discipleship meetings. Under the shade of the trees and in the breezy evening with the sun setting in the horizon, groups gathered to study, share, and pray together. It was not only spiritually enriching, but it also offered a moment of respite in which the staff could come away from a busy schedule and uplift one another.

Counselor Pierre Ortiz, who led out one evening, gleefully shares that he loved the small group setting and the intimate nature of the discipleship meetings. “I realized that in sharing about my life and my walk with Christ, it took some vulnerability on my part. It was a blessing to be able to come together and helped me feel re-energized,” he says. Counselor Arlette Hinojosa enjoyed the challenge of some of the thought-provoking discussions as they helped her “see certain things from different perspectives and helped me grow spiritually.” It was beautiful to observe counselors reading their Bibles under their porch lights once campers were asleep. These personal retreats allowed them to display kindness and patience toward their ever-energetic campers—I’m sure of it.

Each Friday evening, the programing team led us through a Com-

munion service and afterward we celebrated with an agape feast. Sabbath was a special all-day celebration as well, that culminated with baptisms at the lake. It is crystal clear that a ripple effect takes place once you are in the mindset of intentional discipleship. For example, on registration days, the security team aimed to pray with each family as they entered the campgrounds. A special family donated their time and efforts to build a platform, floating dock, and make signs for camp. Nurses volunteered their vacation time and worked around the clock to provide love and care for any who were physically ill or merely homesick. You see, discipleship means you get to reach out and bless others without reservation!

There is a special shore on Lake Whitney known as “The Cove.” It sits quietly as the waves gently greet its shore and the wind dances under the colorful, grandiose Texas sky, eagerly anticipating next summer when young people will again gather around a bonfire, celebrate baptisms, sing praises at the top of their lungs, and watch the sun set as the Sabbath day and camper week comes to a finale. For many, Lake Whitney Ranch was a place of renewed faith to press on as a disciple of the living Savior! He is the Master Counselor.

Top left: Prayer is a very important part of camp for both staff and campers.

Top right: Staff dedicating the campers to Christ.

Bottom left: Foot washing on the beach during staff training week.

Bottom right: Campers and Staff enjoying camp songs together.



MODERN-DAY DISCIPLES LEAVE ALL TO FOLLOW JESUS

Student Colporteurs Participate in Youth Rush

Derrick Williamson, Texico literature ministries director

Christ was intent on making disciples. He started with 12 men willing to leave behind houses, jobs, friends, family, and even their reputations. They ate what Jesus ate. Slept where Jesus slept. Walked where He walked. And they worked with Jesus where He worked to heal and save people. At the end of their training, Jesus instructed them to go make new disciples. By invitation and demonstration Jesus gave the church a vital key for its success: discipleship.

During these past summer months, youth from all over North America accepted the invitation to become disciples of Christ. They joined ten-week summer colporteur programs, often called Youth Rush.

Like the first disciples, these youth gave themselves unreservedly to serving others. By carrying gospel-filled books and DVDs from door to door, these new disciples left access to health and salvation with thousands of hurting and lost souls. In order to do this, they gave Jesus what discipleship requires: everything! They left behind their summer plans, comfortable beds, and the conveniences of their homes to follow the footsteps of Jesus.

You see, there's more involved in discipleship than just paying tithe and agreeing to 28 fundamental beliefs. It requires the full surrender of our time, money, talents, and plans

to be fully given to Christ and to reaching lost people. And what is gained in return? Was it worth surrendering what these youth had hoped for, wanted, and dreamed of for their summer? Even for their lives?

Gabriel writes, "This summer has improved my relationship with God. Before I came to the Youth Rush program, my relationship with God was what I considered 'good enough' but I soon discovered that it 'wasn't enough.' By going door to door and telling

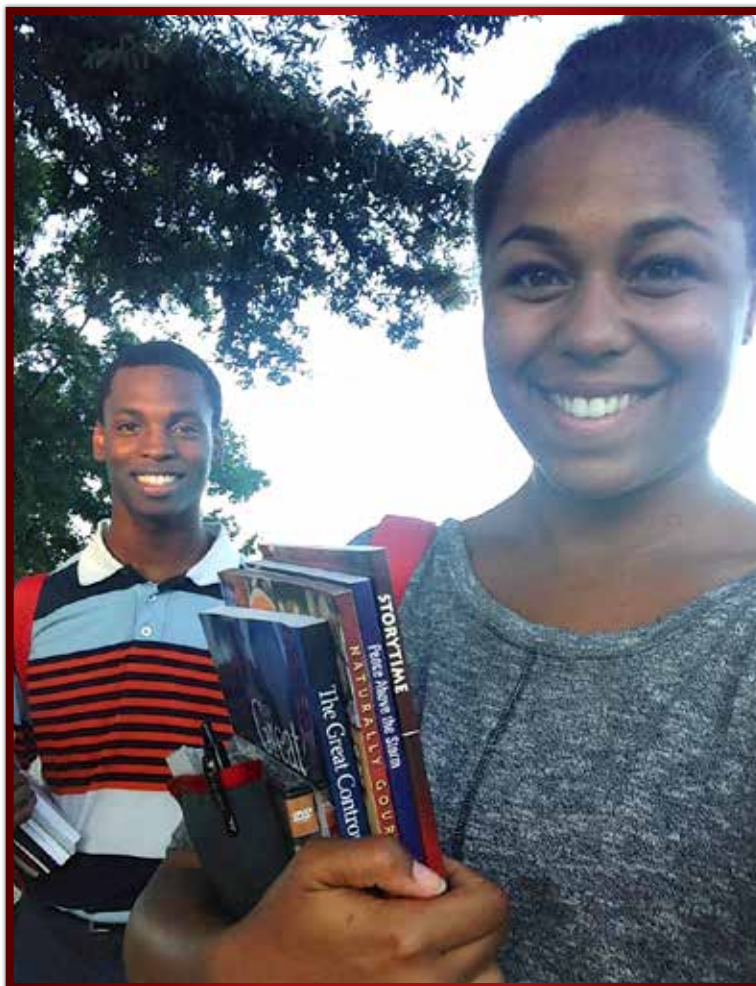
people about these books, God helped me realize that what we do isn't something to play around with. I strived for that closeness with God that my leaders talked about, so I began to read the books *Steps to Christ* and *Man of Peace*. Once I started to fully understand what these books are worth, I told the people how much they would bless them spiritually. I thank God for opening my eyes to Him and for helping me see sin for what it really is."

Gabriel is 15. His experience is one among many. For Gabriel, the spiritual mentorship from his program leaders guided him into a close relationship with God.

This point should be carefully considered. Today, we are desperate over losing many of our pre-



Gabriel



cious young people. And we are eager to find solutions. In Gabriel's testimony we find a golden key: participation in ministry under the mentorship of spiritual leaders. Ten weeks this summer changed Gabriel's life forever.



Anyssa

Another young lady named Anyssa says, "My time serving the Lord this summer was great! I learned how to have my personal morning devotions and how to spend time with God. God also taught me how to be faithful in my life. One lesson I learned is that God makes you smile, even with the littlest of things." Anyssa, also 15, is a very happy and cheerful follower of Christ. She always brightens people's day and brings a smile to their faces.



One result of being a disciple of Christ is making a positive difference in other people's lives. The following experiences happened in cities and towns throughout the Southwestern Union.



Savannah

One story from Savannah stands out. "Being involved this summer with Youth Rush has been one of the most life-changing, character-building, faith-trusting experiences I've ever had. By the daily experiences of witnessing to others, I've seen the power of prayer. I've also learned that there is a great need for this work in reaching out to people in the communities."

Savannah shares her experience on how prayer changed a couple's tragic day. "I met a man who had just lost his best friend. He told me that he wouldn't be able to do anything

that day. Immediately I shared with him *Steps to Christ* and how it would bring him peace and comfort. He began to cry, so I asked if we could pray together. After leaving and doing several other doors, this man drove down the street to find me. He wanted me to meet his wife and asked me to pray again with both of them. This experience showed me that there are people searching for comfort and need to meet the 'Prince of Peace.'"



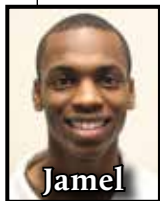
Ester

Ester shares about one experience she had. "Brad claimed to be an agnostic, environmentally friendly, and a political activist. Describing himself, he said he was like Karl Marx and makes the 'left wing look conservative.' Brad lives in

a house without running water, gas, or electricity, and considers himself to be living in a brick tent. He was such a genuine person, just genuinely deluded about who God is. I shared with him about the infinity of God and the character of the God I serve. He listened politely but had nothing to contribute. A few doors later, I received extra donations. It felt like someone was tapping on my shoulders and impressing me to go back and give Brad a copy of *The Great Controversy*. So I ran back. Brad received the book with joy! Inside the front cover he asked me to sign my name and put the date of our conversation. He also promised to diligently read the book. When he saw me coming back he felt like it was a sign from God. I'm praying that he will read this book and find satisfactory answers to his questions."



Ester's experience with Brad illustrates how a disciple reaches out to touch people's lives. There are countless people who have unanswered questions. Their minds are filled with doubts about God. Because Ester was willing to go to his door, Brad is now linked to the source of all our answers: Jesus Christ.



Jamel

Jamel's story is incredible. It comes from his two consecutive summers of colporteur-ing in the Texico Conference. "In Lubbock, my friend, Rebecca, and I met a gentleman whom I had spoken to the summer before. Last summer he had given me ten dollars and took the DVD on the prophecy in Daniel, chapter two. It changed his perspective on God. He requested Bible studies and is now a member of the local Seventh-Day Adventist church. This experience is nothing less than a direct answer to prayer. It has grown my faith in God." What a fulfillment of the Gospel Commission! Jesus instructs His disciples to go and make new disciples. That's what Jamel did by prayer and faithful work.



Tyra

Tyra went colporteur-ing for the first time this summer. Her story reminds us of the miracles God performs every day to protect His disciples. "On Thursday, July 18 my life was saved. I was about to cross a busy intersection. Suddenly, I heard someone call my name and tell me to stop. So I stopped. At that moment, a big truck flew by right where I was about to cross the road. The voice sounded like my leader's voice but, when I turned around, no one was there. Now I know that it was my angel. If I hadn't listened to my angel's voice, I would have died. I will never forget that day!"

Tyra's story is a special one. God's workers have at times found themselves in danger's way. But God, as our loving heavenly Father, sends angels to watch over and protect His disciples.

These stories are the Acts of Modern-Day Apostles. Willingly and cheerfully prioritizing the Lord's business, they set out on adventures, near and far, to spread comfort and peace. And as they've

expressed by their testimony, nothing else compares to being a disciple! Like what **Hadasa** said, "I grew up saying 'God is good.' Now I know that God is good!"



Hadasa

It's easy to see why Jesus was passionate about making disciples. It changes people. For these youth, this summer spiritually revived them. By daily worship and training, a constant dependence upon God through prayer, receiving hands-on mentorship from experienced leaders, seeing God perform miracles in and through them, and by living together with other dedicated young people, their lives were changed for eternity.

These summer programs are youth-retaining, disciple-making ministries. Serving the Lord impacts youth in ways nothing else can. The changes are so evident that one mother thanked a local literature ministries director by saying, "Thank

you for what you've done! You've given me back a different son."

So why would anyone decide to be a disciple of Christ? What reason would lead someone to willingly prioritize God and His work above their own? Perhaps words from one of the colporteurs' favorite songs will tell it best:

"Sleepin' on floors, in spare rooms
Short nights and long afternoons,
I sure would never do this for nobody but You.
Grabbin' my bag, stocked up on books
Getting ready to knock on some doors,
I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for You."

"Because You left heaven for me,
Hit the roads to the shores of Galilee.
You gave Yourself on Calvary (O Lord for me)
So I gotta go and tell them what You've done for me."

Yes! That's the reason. Really, it's the only reason. Giving all to Jesus because He gave everything for us.

Dear reader, consider taking up Christ's invitation today. We are living in awesome times! And there is no other time more exciting to be a disciple of Christ than now. For everyone, young and old, there are exciting opportunities across the Southwestern Union to get involved. And, as a fair warning in advance, get ready. You're in for the time of your life!



The team spends some time having fun and cooling down on a hot Friday afternoon.

A Follower and Imitator



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

“And He said to them all, ‘If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me’ “ (Luke 9:23). The word “disciple” literally translated from the Greek means to be “a learner.” However, a disciple is more than a student; he is a devoted follower, an imitator of his teacher.

Jesus came into the world to make disciples. Before He went on His first mission to do His first miracle, Jesus called men to discipleship. Jesus was looking for more than believers. Jesus was looking for those who would follow Him and be imitators of His ministry, and in turn, lead others to become followers and imitators of Him. The disciple of Jesus learns from Him, and then

mirrors what he has learned so that others see in his life an image of his Master.

I had the privilege of going on a Share-Him mission trip to the Philippines with about 20 Ozark Adventist Academy students. Some of these students were rather shy, but in time, they became effective disciples for Christ. They attended the meetings, freely visited with church members and others, and preached. The lives of these students, these disciples, were never the same. They discovered a whole new life in serving our Lord and Savior. They were doing what Jesus did.

In Rapid City, S.D., where I last pastored, we trained members in small groups how to pray for others, how to study the Bible, and how to apply Bible principles to every-

day life. These members, these disciples, invited friends and neighbors into their homes and began to disciple others on how to effectively pray and study the Bible. The result of this discipling experience was that as a pastor I discovered that I could be more effective if I invited members to partner with me in discipling others. The members discovered the joy of discipling those who had drifted away from the fellowship of the church as well as new members who were learning to experience the Christian walk. A renewed love for Christ was found in these small group discipleship experiences.

Dennis Shafter, ministerial director

Paul’s Dangerous Journey Vacation Bible School in New Orleans

METAIRIE, LA. » The Metairie Spanish church, about 15 minutes from downtown New Orleans, recently held its Vacation Bible School. It started with 23 children in attendance and grew to 46. The theme, “Athens: Paul’s Dangerous Journey to Share the Truth,” was depicted with pillars, greenery, vases, and a picturesque sea in the background. Activities, costumes, and characters helped the children become a part of the journey, as they participated in songs of worship, making crafts in the marketplace, and eating snacks.

The young people, ages four through 13, were divided into four “Oikoi,” which means “families” in Greek, with two leaders per group of 12 children. Sixteen of the young people were “first-timers” and expressed enthusiasm and a desire to re-



All of the participants and staff of VBS on the last day of the event.



turn for next year’s program. One young visitor from Arizona attended each night through a family who were members of the church. She shared that this was her first visit to a church. She listened intently

to the different Bible stories and teachings, but was most intrigued to learn more about the angels and Jesus. She was able to ask many questions and learn many things. At the end of VBS she confessed that she wanted to prepare for Jesus’ soon return and go to heaven with Him and His angels. We will continue to pray for her as she goes back home.

At the close of VBS, the young people and parents gathered to watch a slideshow of all the week’s activities. No one was left out of the show, and on a big screen the children loved seeing again all the things they had done. The children sang their praise and worship songs for the parents and had a tough time with the end of VBS, but anticipation is high for next year.

Mary Elizabeth Diaz

Diamonds of Fort Smith

FORT SMITH, ARK. » The state of Arkansas is one of the few places in North America where diamonds are present in the host rock. It's also the only place where tourists may hunt for them. Diamonds were first discovered there in 1906, when a local farmer picked up two rocks near the mouth of Prairie Creek, south of Murfreesboro. The discovery created a local frenzy, but after several attempts to mine the diamonds commercially, it eventually turned into a tourist destination. In 1975, a Texan unearthed a 16.37 carat white diamond worth nearly \$175,000!

Just as finding a diamond can change lives, finding Christ can change lives even more. The Fort Smith church recently hosted an Amazing Facts evangelistic seminar. The following are just a few of the shining stories and testimonies from those who experienced God's amazing grace there.

Dennis has always been a hard worker, but with the downturn in the economy and the local plant closing, he had to rely on any work he could find. After hearing the Sabbath presentation, he was convicted that he needed to make his stand and keep all of God's commandments. It was a Friday when Dennis received a phone call with a job offer that paid nearly twice what he had been making. The one caveat was that it required him to work on Sabbath. Without any hesitation, he turned it down. Then, only 10 minutes later, Dennis received another phone call with another job offer that also required him to work on Sabbath. Again, Dennis took a stand and turned it down. It was a very difficult decision because he desperately needed the money. Still, low on fuel, but wanting to come to hear God's Word, Dennis siphoned gasoline out of his lawn mower and put the fuel into his truck. Dennis was baptized a week after turning down those job offers, and a couple days after he was baptized, the Lord blessed him with 40 hours of work. He is still

praying for full-time employment.

Alex and Amanda were both seeking the Lord's direction in their life together. Alex was able to attend the seminar every night, but Amanda's job required her to work on Sabbath. Feeling convicted that they needed to keep all of God's commandments, Amanda quit her job as a hairstylist and applied for a position in health care. The church prayed for God's blessing, and not only was Amanda offered a new job, but one with more pay and Sabbath-friendly hours. Before Alex and Amanda moved forward with baptism, there was one more stand God was calling them to make. They were living together, but they were not married. Having built a relationship with them during the seminar, I was honored when they asked me to marry them. With three days' notice, the ladies in the church rallied together and organized a reception, and Alex and Amanda invited their family. A week after they were married, they were baptized. To truly have God's blessing in the family, we must live our lives in harmony with the principles found in Scripture.

Douglas had served the Lord as a minister in the Assemblies of God church for more than 30 years. He always sensed that

there was more truth that the Lord was calling him to follow. A few years ago, before her passing, Douglas' mother took a stand and became a member of a Sabbath-keeping church. Through this experience, the Holy Spirit planted a seed in his heart. A member of the Fort Smith church befriended Douglas and invited him to the Amazing Facts seminar. Douglas not only came to most of the presentations, he also completed all of his Amazing Facts Bible study guides and made the decision to join the church through baptism. Douglas told me that if someone had told him before the seminar that he was about to become a Sabbathkeeper, he would have said they were crazy.

The Fort Smith church witnessed the Lord pouring out His Spirit in a mighty way, and He wants to do the same in your community, and in your church. Maybe your church has thought about hosting a series of evangelistic meetings. For more information, contact Dennis Shafter at the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, 318.631.6240 or 318.393.5661.

Tyler Long, Amazing Facts evangelist



Douglas Kinney was baptized by Bill Painter, pastor.

Adventures with Paul

Vacation Bible School in Texarkana

TEXARKANA, ARK. » In June, the Texarkana church finished a successful Vacation Bible School with approximately 45 chil-

dren attending. The church foyer served as the road to Jerusalem with animals and merchants, and the sanctuary entry was

decorated with a painted stone wall to indicate the entry into the temple. The road to Jerusalem led into the temple with maps of Paul's travels, where the children placed

footprints on the road as they traveled with Paul. They placed Bible stickers on a board when they brought a friend to VBS, or brought an offering for the school's worthy student fund, or even brought canned goods for Adventist Community Services. One side of the fellowship hall depicted the beach, with the ocean and a boat to remind the children of Paul's travels by sea, while the other side of the hall showed a barn and nature scene for a nightly study of different farm animals. The craft rooms and hallway displayed different scenes of Paul's adventures that were studied during the week.

Each evening, the children and youth performed skits to illustrate the adventures of Paul. The children and youth shared their songs and skits during the Sabbath School hour and the visitors stayed for a fellowship lunch. That evening, everyone came back to the gym for a VBS party of vegetarian hotdogs and games.

Loretta Johnson



▲ Peggy Richardson, primary Sabbath School teacher, dressed as one of Paul's friends for VBS.

▶ Debi and Durrick Bush dressed in the attire of Paul's time period. They teach the junior Sabbath School class.



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Discipleship



While living on this earth, Jesus asked many people to follow Him—the 12 apostles, the rich young ruler, and the multitudes who followed after Him. But in the 2,000 years since He ascended to heaven, through the Holy Spirit, He has asked so many more of us to follow Him, to become disciples.

The invitation to follow Christ comes to each of us in a very personal manner. Whether we point to a specific, life-changing moment, or whether we gradually came to love Jesus over a period of time, we all become disciples as we put our Savior first and foremost every day of our lives.

All of us became disciples because one

amazing, unbelievable fact finally made its way into our hearts and minds—God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit loved us more than we could ever imagine. Jesus' life and death had only one purpose and that was to prove to us how much we are loved.

That amazing love is what draws us to follow Christ, and to turn our lives completely over to Him. Unconditional love poured out without measure demands a response from each of us. That response can be nothing short of giving our whole lives in surrender to Him. Daily submitting our will to His will is evidence that we have truly become His disciples.

As much as we long to win others to Jesus, we must follow His example and allow

each person to make his or her own decision. As Jesus watched the rich young ruler turn away, His heart ached for what could have been. As we spread the joy of knowing Jesus personally, we must be prepared for some to turn away from Him. But we can't let that affect our choice to continue being a disciple.

To me, that's the whole concept of discipleship: to love Jesus so much that I choose each day to surrender to His will, and to spend each day helping others see the wonderful gift that has been given to them.

Karen Senecal, treasurer and executive secretary

Baptisms, Marriage at the Choctaw Church

CHOCTAW » On September 7, 2013, Austin Terry and Stephanie Keefe were baptized and became members of the Choctaw church only days before their wedding.

Austin has a long history with the Choctaw church. He and his family are long-time members of the church; Austin himself was baptized as a child. However, life intervened and Austin drifted away from the church. In the seventh grade, Austin met Stephanie. They were in band together and became good friends. In high school they pursued different interests and

went their separate ways, until their paths crossed again three years after high school graduation. "We've been inseparable since then," says Austin.

In the past few years, some of Austin's family members had begun to talk about the new pastor of the Choctaw church, Leighton Holley, and Austin became interested in coming back to church to hear him preach. He began attending regularly, and soon began bringing Stephanie, as well.

In the meantime, Austin and Stephanie decided to marry. Stephanie had been

raised in the Church of Christ, but the things she began learning at the Choctaw church touched her heart, and when she and Austin began planning their wedding, they thought this would be a wonderful time to rededicate themselves to God and be baptized. After studying with Holley, they chose the Sabbath before their wedding as their baptism day.

Two days after the baptism, the church held a beautiful wedding shower for the happy couple, and on Friday, September 13, they were united in marriage by Jerry States, who had baptized Austin the first time!

Robin Sagel



Leighton Holley, pastor of the Choctaw church, baptized Austin Terry and Stephanie Keefe just days before their marriage.

Owasso Member Appears On 3ABN Latino

One of our own had the opportunity to share some of her plant-based recipes with the world last June when she recorded her first two cooking shows with 3ABN-Latino. Lesley Orellana and her family transitioned to a completely plant-based diet about 13 years ago. The change was gradual, first removing meat from the diet, followed by other animal products, as she learned how to prepare more nutritious yet simple and affordable meals using only fruits, veggies, seeds, nuts, and food products derived from these.

Through the years Lesley has become more and more interested in sharing the talent God has given her with others. She has helped friends and family members prepare nutritious and tasty meals, avoiding animal products and other items that contain harmful chemicals, colorants, and

artificial preservatives. When she shares her recipes, she is mindful of this counsel: "That which we eat cannot be converted into good blood unless it is of proper quality, simple and nutritious...Food poorly prepared is not nutritious, and cannot make good blood...The body must have sufficient nourishment...Food should be prepared in good order, so that it is palatable" (*Review and Herald*, May 8, 1883).

Earlier this year Lesley was contacted by 3ABN-Latino and invited to record two cooking shows. She eagerly accepted the opportunity as a means to reach thousands with the message of healthy (and tasty) eating. The two initial recordings aired in August and October and she has recorded two more shows that will air later in the year.

Lesley recognizes that her ability to cook

nutritious and tasty meals is not her own. She realizes that it is God who has given her that talent and she is well aware that it is given to her so she can share it with others. This is evident when her children, while traveling, tell her that they can't wait to return home so they can eat her home-made meals.

It was exciting to hear the phone ring two days after the first show aired. "Is this the lady that was on the TV show?" the caller asked. Lesley responded, "If you are referring to the cooking show on 3ABN, then yes, this is she." The lady calling was a Methodist who invited Lesley to come to her church and present a cooking school to the members there! Lesley happily agreed as she remembered these words: "When properly conducted, the health work is an entering wedge, making a way for other truths to reach the heart" (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 327).

Lesley is excited about this "opening wedge" to reach the hearts of many through good and tasty cooking. 3ABN has also expressed interest in having her present a cooking show in English in the future!

To direct viewers to her recipes, Lesley has started two blogs, one in English (www.lesleysvegankitchen.com) and the other in Spanish (www.lesleycocinavegan.com), where she shares her delicious recipes and health tips. She also started a Facebook page, [Lesleysvegankitchen](https://www.facebook.com/LesleysVeganKitchen). The cooking show's schedule is also shared on her Web sites and Facebook page.

Please pray for Lesley and her health ministry, but especially pray for those who are being reached through the health message that the Lord has graciously given to our church.



Lesley Orellana has recorded several cooking shows for 3ABN Latino. Two of these shows will air later this year.

Nelita Martin

Parkview Academy's Paint War

OKLAHOMA CITY » Schools all over the United States have begun their school year. Many of them chose to do welcoming ceremonies, get-to-know-you exercises, and team-building activities. Parkview Adventist Academy found a way to do all of these things, plus get messy and colorful at the same time.

Third- through sixth-grade teacher and associate principal Annette Park borrowed an idea from Wewoka Woods summer

os and stepped onto the Parkview front lawn. Teachers in matching white uniforms also took to the field to add color to the green grass. With a roar, the teams



camp, where her husband, Apple Park, is the director. Each week at camp during the summer, four teams took a wide-open field and squared off to make sure no one walked away clean. Each team was represented by a color, and each team was outfitted with balloons, buckets, and sponges filled with tempura paint-tinted water.

As the second day of school came to a close, students donned their white T-shirts and other clothing destined for color cha-

rushed each other, intent on covering their fellow students with their representative colors. Streams and gushes of paint flew through the air, covering foe and team

member alike. When the "paint" had settled, students were able to take home a uniquely colorful shirt to remind them of the first week of the school year.

Park says she intends to have the shirts screen printed with the school logo in order to use them as field trip shirts. The students say they are excited about the school year, are better acquainted with

their fellow students, and have bonded with their fellow team members.

Richard Castillo

Each One Reach One



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

Have you ever heard the term discipleship? What comes to your mind when you hear this term? I have heard this term often and I really ponder on what is real discipleship.

The word disciple is the root word for discipleship. A disciple can be defined as a follower of Jesus Christ. Discipleship identifies the lifestyle or process whereby individuals or groups live out their understanding of what it means to be a disciple.

In order to be a disciple, there has to be discipline or self-control. When individuals profess that they are a follower of Christ, they must show the life of Christ in their daily lives, so I really ponder over this term discipleship. A lot of people utilize the word discipleship, but are they really committed to following Christ and living the lifestyle that He would have them live?

I'm reminded of Peter when he denied Christ three times—was he committed? Peter had been with Christ, witnessed what He could do, and still denied Him. Following his denial of Christ, however, tradition says that he said, "Don't crucify me like Christ but crucify me upside-down."

A disciple has to be a student, learner, or pupil. If we are going to say that we are a disciple of Christ, we must be students of Him. Matthew 28:19, 20 says, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

A great disciple will learn from the great Teacher and will always want to grow.

It's my desire that we all become disciples of Christ, sharing the Word of God

so that others will become disciples growing in the beauty of the Lord. When I think of my own personal life and discipleship, I remember that it was my parents who fostered that sense of discipleship of not only "do what I say but do as I do." I remember my parents making sure that we prayed every morning before getting on the school bus, and reading the Bible and having devotions before going to bed. When I look at discipleship, Jesus had the 12 disciples who followed Him. Are we really following Jesus and doing what He would do? As we follow Him, we will see others follow us and, ultimately, God will be glorified.

Discipleship made simple: each one reach one for the glory of God!

Helvis Moody, youth director

Corsicana Bethel Graduates Celebrated

CORSICANA, TEX. » This past June, the Bethel education department took a Sabbath to recognize students who had graduated in 2012 and 2013. Roy Rowden, Sr., was the speaker and his sermon title was "God Gives Second Chances." Alleta Stiggers-LaGrange graduated in April 2012 from Colorado Tech University with a master's

in business administration. In June 2012, Kyra Clark graduated from Timber Creek Academy, and Ieshia Hamilton graduated from Kerens High School in May 2013. Quayonte Kemp graduated from Mesquite High School in June 2013. Small gifts and a card were given to each graduate. Each graduate expressed appreciation to the Lord, family, loved ones, and friends, and shared

their plans for the future and of the ultimate goal, heaven.

Norman Stiggers

Below left: From left: Lorraine James-Stiggers, Kyra Clark, Quayonte Kemp, Alleta Stiggers-LaGrange, and Alleyah LaGrange sitting on Alleta's lap.

▼ From left: Kyra Clark, Quayonte Kemp, Alleta Stiggers-LaGrange, and Roy Rowden, Sr.



Strengthening Marriages God's Way

CORSICANA, TEX. »

Buford Griffith, Jr., executive secretary for the Southwestern Union, was the guest speaker for the Bethel church's marriage enrichment day program this past March. His wife, Carmen Fuentes-Griffith, rendered a beautiful vocal selection and accompani-



▲ From left: Norman Stiggers, pastor; Roy Rowden, elder; Charles Miller, elder; Minner Labrador, Southwestern Union church ministries director; Carmen Griffith, Southwestern Union women's ministries director; and Buford Griffith, Southwestern Union executive secretary, enjoying a fellowship meal.

Above right: Buford Griffith was the guest speaker at the Bethel Corsicana church's marriage enrichment day.

◀ Couples in attendance at the marriage retreat.

Below left: Buford and Carmen Griffith presenting at a marriage retreat at a hotel in Ennis, Texas.

▼ The couples who renewed marriage vows included (from left) the Rowdens, Millers, Shackelfords, and Stiggers.

ing workshops made a positive difference in their relationships.

Two weeks following this event, the couples were awarded their Bible-based and

Texas Attorney General's Office's marriage certificates of completion, as they shared what they believed was most beneficial and what was most challenging for them during the "Strengthening Marriages God's Way" training sessions.

Norman Stiggers

ment. Both were also presenters at the church's recent marriage retreat. They are a dynamic ministerial team.

Six couples participated and benefitted from their informative presentation. One couple had been married for one and a half years, while another couple had been married for 33 years. Most of the couples participated in the vow renewal held at the conclusion of the training. There was a lesson to learn for everyone, young and old, who stated they were glad they were a part of this marriage weekend and revealed that the church's monthly marriage train-





Baton Rouge Berean Celebrates 77 Years

BATON ROUGE, LA. » On July 4, 2013 our nation celebrated its 237th birthday, and two days later, the Baton Rouge Berean church observed its 77th. It was the church's third annual celebration. In keeping with the tradition, not only was it an anniversary, but a homecoming, as well. Therefore, it was only appropriate that a "native son," Clarence L. Wright, be invited to present the Sabbath message. Margaret Lawrence thought it fitting that, in commemoration of the reason for America's beginning, we emphasize the need for religious liberty awareness. Thus the scripture from Hebrew 11:16: "We seek a better country, an heavenly...which God has prepared for us," adorned both the proudly-displayed red, white, and blue banner and the cover of the souvenir booklet.

Festivities began on Friday night with "A Night of Reflection" and the celebration of

the Lord's Supper. The Sabbath service was especially poignant because it included a salute by the Pathfinder Club to the church's veterans. As the various branches of military service representatives faced the congregation, the Pathfinders saluted them, and then presented each veteran with an American flag. Member Arlene Mossey then spoke about a past religious liberty experience involving Sabbath observance and her job. We joined her in praising God that her faith was rewarded and that her employer respected and honored her Sabbath convictions. A salute to our public servants was next. Robert Davis, Berean's pastor, said, "because we endorse causes, not parties, it is most appropriate (even on Sabbath) that we recognize and thank our elected officials." District 61 State Representative Alfred Williams and District 2 Councilwoman Chauna Banks-Daniels were both recognized for their contribution to the communities encompassing the Berean church. Each received a personalized plaque.

The speaker, Clarence L. Wright, a native of Baton Rouge, is a pastor and now the director of church ministries for the Southeastern Conference.

However, his ministry began in the Southwest Region Conference. He began his message by commending the two honorees for their acknowledgment of God in their positions. Then, his trip down memory lane took the congregation to 1939, when Berean was established. His mention of the cost of certain necessities at the time, "Gas was \$0.10 a gallon, a new car cost \$665, and the average worker earned \$1,713," caused many to chuckle.

Wright's message, "Is It Worth the Risk?" directed the congregation to the experience of Daniel and his friends in Daniel 3:8-22, where they learned that, unlike those four Hebrews, "too many of us don't want to do any more than necessary."

"The definition of risk scares some because this modern generation is a slave to the circumstances that bind it. We must stand up for God and realize He is trying to teach us to build our foundation today on what we experienced from Him in the past," said Wright. A fellowship dinner coordinated and prepared by resident chef and first elder Robert Landry brought the weekend's program to a fitting close. The Berean church members remain grateful for God's continued leading as we look forward to yet another year's celebration.

Evelyn M. Edwards



Veterans were honored at the Baton Rouge Berean church's 77th anniversary. From left: Rosalind Wright, Robert Landry, Henry Jones, Valerie Cleveland, Ron Frances, Charles Cloud, Lionel Milton, Antonio Hills, Larry Scott.

Discipleship: The True Test of Commitment



The Bible makes the following declaration in Acts 11:26: “And so it was for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” This is the first time in Scripture that we see a direct connection between the two distinct titles given to those who followed Christ. It’s almost as if the writer of Acts was making the point that one shouldn’t exist without the other! Ellen White comments on the cost of discipleship in *Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 393, speaking of the call of Christ to the rich young ruler: “First, he must accept the conditions of discipleship. He must give himself unreservedly to God. And in this, Christ was not asking for a greater sacrifice than He Himself had made. He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we, through His poverty, might be rich! By beholding the matchless love of Christ, the selfish heart will be melted and subdued.”

When God calls us, He calls us to abandon any and every thing that might separate or distract us from His sovereign will upon our lives. Sometimes it’s a call to separate from some individual who is serving as an obstacle to our ability to focus on

Christ. Any relationship that doesn’t draw us closer to God and His divine purpose is subsequently leading us away from Him. Perhaps it is an occupation or career, the pursuit of which is interfering severely with our ability to give the Lord the time and commitment that He so deserves from us as His creation. Other times, it can even be something good and noble, such as “service” in the Lord’s vineyard, which becomes a magnet, drawing us away from the Master we pretend to serve. We fall in love and become enamored in a greater degree with the task as opposed to the Lord of the task. We find ourselves engulfed and somewhat addicted to the rush of doing and accomplishing things for the kingdom, and we become increasingly detached and removed from a personal and sustaining relationship with the one and only God, who is able to sustain us amidst the ups-and-downs as we navigate this world.

Today, Christians, and more specifically, Seventh-day Adventist Christians, are finding it more and more challenging to remain “connected” to Christ as we live in a world that despises Christ and the principles of His kingdom. With the monstrous worldly philosophies that promote human supremacy of every kind and the minimi-

zation of the authority of God, as disciples of the heavenly King, we are ever called to exhibit and display a more accurate and pristine portrayal of who God is and what His kingdom represents. Let’s take notice once again of the pointed challenge that God gives His people in the last days by means of His apostle, Peter: “But you are a chosen generation [not happenstance], chosen, a royal priesthood, a *Holy Nation*, His own *Special* people, that you may proclaim the praises [advantages of serving] of Him Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light!” (1 Peter 2:9, emphasis supplied).

A chosen generation, such a high calling and elevated mission to live strong and decisively for Christ in the midst of the darkness of this world. That is our mission as His disciples. That is our calling as His people. Never be ashamed of *who* you are! We are part of a prophetic church—ordained and commissioned by God to be His special people, at a most special time in the history of this world! Let us live strong for the Master!

Carlos J. Craig, president

100 Years in Denison

DENISON » The Denison/Sherman church celebrates in November its 100th anniversary of registration into the Texas Conference. We have some history recorded of Ellen G. White living and evangelizing in and around Denison for a time. Our little church stands strong to this day with faith. Any visitor to the church will feel welcomed and touched by the Holy Spirit, as I was as a new member, having first come to the Adventist Church in 2010. Since day one, I knew I was at home and that the members were my new family. I pray that our church will continue to grow, be it another 100 years, or until Christ’s second coming.

Debi Shea



The Denison church is celebrating its 100th anniversary.

TEXAS CONFERENCE

On a Mission for the Master in New York City

RICHARDSON » Youth from the Richardson church traveled to New York City, June 20 through 29, as part of the General Conference's Mission to the Cities initiative. The goal was to prepare youth to be soul-winners for Jesus by attending the International Field School of Evangelism, taught by Mark Finley, pastor, and Ted Wilson, General Conference president.

The youth also handed out GLOW (Giving Light to Our World) literature at every major New York City tourist attraction.

The training equipped Richardson youth with the tools they need to be young evangelists. Each young person that attended will use their training in the Texas mission field. This fall, they plan to preach and hold their own evangelism meetings. Here are just a few testimonies from youth who attended the trip.

Genesis Paz said, "I thank God for giving me the opportunity to go to New York and share His message. After the training, we went to different landmarks and handed out GLOW literature. I have never done that before, and to top it off, we were in the biggest city in the United States. I had 200 GLOW brochures and thought I'd never hand out five, but I handed them all out!"

Felistus Lungu said, "The School of Evangelism was such a blessing and a wonderful experience. I

felt and saw God reveal His loving power every single day, from early morning devotions, to the daily training. As a young adult I have longed to grow spiritually and walk closer with God. This mission trip was exactly what I needed to take my walk with God to the next level."

Oneil Brown said, "I've always felt called to pastoral ministry, but recently questioned whether that was a legitimate calling. After going to New York for training, I'm

more motivated to get involved. My conviction is now clear that God expects me, and all of His followers, to be a witness for Him. The greatest thing about New York wasn't just learning how to preach a sermon, but helping to bring in appeals for the ministry!"

Salomon Espinoza



Richardson youth traveled to New York City to learn how to witness and evangelize in urban areas.

Richardson's Bible Worker Ministry

RICHARDSON » The Richardson church recently hosted a seven-week Bible worker training course. The church takes the commission to share the gospel with the world very seriously.

The course began in September with the church's Bible worker ministry leaders, Dustin Perslin, Danny Salcedo, and Hartono Soedargo, teaching different Bible study methods, as well as Seventh-day Adventist doctrines.

Topics included personal preparation, how to give a Bible study, answering objec-

tions and gaining decisions, and preparing for public evangelism. Other elements of the training course included weekly homework assignments, relevant literature and handouts, a classroom setting, and a final exam.

Twenty-five people completed the course, and made a commitment to fulfill the gospel commission. A graduation ceremony, complete with caps and gowns, graduation certificates, and live choral music, was held for the graduates. They made a commitment to put their training to practical use for God.

Since then, there have been 30 Bible stud-



Twenty-five people recently graduated from the Richardson church's Bible worker study course.



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November 15, 2013 at 7pm
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For more information contact
Evelyn Labrador at 817-295-0476 or at elabrador@swuc.org

Presented by the Conference Youth Directors of the Southwestern Union and NAD Young Adults Ministries

ies held each week. The ultimate goal is to plant a church in the northeast Dallas area.

Several of the students had no intention of conducting Bible studies when they first began the course. Throughout the course, however, they became more and more comfortable in sharing the love of Christ with others. The following Ellen G. White passage has been the theme for the training course:

“He who begins with a little knowledge, in a humble way, and tells what he knows, while seeking diligently for further knowledge, will find the whole heavenly treasure awaiting his demand. The more he seeks to impart light, the more light he will receive. The more one tries to explain the word of God to others, the plainer it becomes to himself. The more we use our knowledge and exercise our powers, the more knowledge and power we shall have,” (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 354).

Annette Lewis

TEXAS CONFERENCE

Follow Me



TEXICO CONFERENCE

One of the blessings of working at the Texico Conference is daily worship at our office. We are currently reading *The Great Controversy* and we've just finished reading *The Acts of the Apostles*. From the latter, we learn that the apostles were, in the purest form, imitators and followers of Jesus' teaching and actions. They heard the Word of God live from the mouth of the Redeemer. They knew their mission and how He wanted them to proceed. They were truly disciples or literal followers of Jesus, for Jesus had bid them "follow me." We should do as they did.

In the last two chapters of *The Acts of the Apostles*, we read these words: "In the days of the apostles, the Christian believers were filled with earnestness and enthusiasm. So untiringly did they labor for their Master that in a comparatively short time, notwithstanding fierce opposition, the gospel of the kingdom was sounded to all the inhabited parts of the earth...Filled

with love for their Redeemer, their highest aim was to win souls for Him. The members of the church were united in sentiment and action. In every city, the work was carried forward. Souls were converted, who in their turn felt that they must tell of the inestimable treasure they had received. They could not rest till the light which had illuminated their minds was shining upon others. By the cooperation of the Spirit, the apostles did a work that shook the world. To every nation was the gospel carried in a single generation.... The disciples...expected much and therefore they attempted much. Jesus Christ, the wisdom and power of God, was the theme of every discourse. Not in their own power did the apostles accomplish their mission, but in the power of the living God. Irresolution, indecision, weakness of purpose, found no place in their efforts. They were willing to spend and be spent. With mighty omnipotence, God worked through them to make the gospel triumphant," (pp. 578-595).

"As Christ sent forth His disciples, so today He sends forth the members of His church. The same power that the apostles had is for them.... Zeal for God and His cause moved the disciples to bear witness with mighty power. Should not a like zeal fire our hearts with a determination to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ and Him crucified? It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the Savior," (pp. 599, 600). Their zeal came because they had chosen to follow Jesus. We can do the same.

Soon truth will triumph. Jesus will come in glory to sweep us into the heavens. Holy angels will escort us into the gate of the city of God. We will be there because we are His disciples, because we have responded to the call and literally followed the example of our Lord.

James L. Stevens, president

Texico Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the 40th Regular Constituency Session of the Texico Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held at the Albuquerque Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church, in Albuquerque, NM, on Sunday, December 15, 2013. The Organizing Committee will meet at 7:30 A.M. and the Session will commence at 9:00 A.M.

The purpose of this meeting is to give reports from the quadrennial period then ending, to elect officers for the ensuing term and to transact such other business as may properly come before the Session.

James L. Stevens, President

Lee-Roy Chacon, Secretary



Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will hold its annual Association meeting at the Albuquerque Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church, in Albuquerque, NM on Sunday, December 15, 2013. The meeting is called to begin at 9:00 A.M.

The purpose of this meeting is to give reports from the quadrennial period then ending, to elect officers for the ensuing term and to transact such other business as may properly come before the Session.

James L. Stevens, President

Lee-Roy Chacon, Secretary

The Constituency Session and Association meeting will be held concurrently.

Lives Transformed by Christ

RIO RANCHO, N. MEX. » The Rio Rancho church and the Texico Conference sent 14 people on a ShareHim mission trip to Musanze, Rwanda, Africa. For many, it would be the first time preaching a sermon, let alone preaching an entire evangelistic series. Ten people were scheduled to preach, two planned to conduct children's meetings, one would give health talks, and one would provide technical support at 10 different evangelistic sites. Upon arrival, three more individuals joined the team. They covered 13 sites.

After months of preparation, fundraising, obtaining passports, vaccinations, program preparation, packing, and more, the day arrived, June 30, when the group departed on an adventure of a lifetime. The trip would not only impact the people of Africa, but also those who volunteered.

The goal was to reach as many people as possible with the good news of Jesus Christ; not only at the preaching sites, but also with anyone with whom the team had the privilege to cross paths. They found the Rwandan people to be very kind, courteous, and helpful, and they welcomed the team into their lives as long-lost friends. It didn't take long to develop a strong bond between the team and the locals. Even the staff at the Virunga Hotel, where they stayed, became friends. As they walked the streets of the town, opportunities arose to invite individuals to meetings, pray for the sick, and buy food for hun-

gry children who were looking through the garbage for something to eat. Many other needs presented themselves over the course of the time there, which, because of God's provision, they were able to meet.

Shortly into the series, the team needed another speaker in order to cover a site that did not have one. Brianna Rogers, a young lady on the team, said she was willing to preach there, rather than work with the children as had been planned. You can imagine how terrifying it might seem to preach a sermon in front of hundreds of people when you're not prepared. With only an hour or two to prepare, Brianna was willing, in spite of her fear. She left the hotel for the meeting site, praying expectantly for God to perform a miracle, and she was not disappointed. God overcame her fear with His peace and enabled her to preach her first sermon. The people enjoyed her so much that they requested that she come back the next night and continue the series, which she did until the end of the trip.

Throughout the trip, many miracles took place and many lives were changed; 658 people gave their lives to Christ in baptism the last Sabbath.

The team learned several significant lessons on the mission trip. *First*, be willing to step out in faith for God. Almost no one on the team had the money for the trip, but they went forward in faith, believing that

God would provide, which He did right on time in marvelous and creative ways. If the team members had not been willing to be used by God, they would not have experienced the miracles He had in store for them.

Because many of the speakers had never preached before, some didn't know how they would be able to do the job, especially because some were afraid to get up front, even at their home churches. Some had the issue of trying to get off work for three weeks to be a part of the endeavor. Yet God removed obstacle after obstacle as the team moved forward in this mission.

Second, trust God in all situations. Humanly speaking, it's easy to become stressed or overwhelmed if things don't go the way they are planned. When you trust Him, He can help you to adapt to the trying or difficult circumstances that pop up expectantly, and then work things out to His honor and glory. Even when things may seem impossible, with God all things are possible.

Third, if you want a renewed, vibrant relationship with the Lord, share Him with someone. When you tell others about God, it strengthens your own faith and kindles a fire in your heart. The team is now energized and looking for more ways to spread the love of Jesus here at home.

Sue Hinkle

► Candidates from the Murundo church taking their baptismal vows.

Far right: Crowd at one of the evangelistic sites.

► The Texico ShareHim mission team conducted meetings at 13 sites in Musanze, Rwanda.



TEXICO CONFERENCE

Taos Church Celebrates New Members

TAOS, N. MEX., » The Adventist congregation in Taos, N. Mex., is rejoicing over 10 new members who were welcomed to the family at the conclusion of evangelism meetings conducted by Mike Sady.

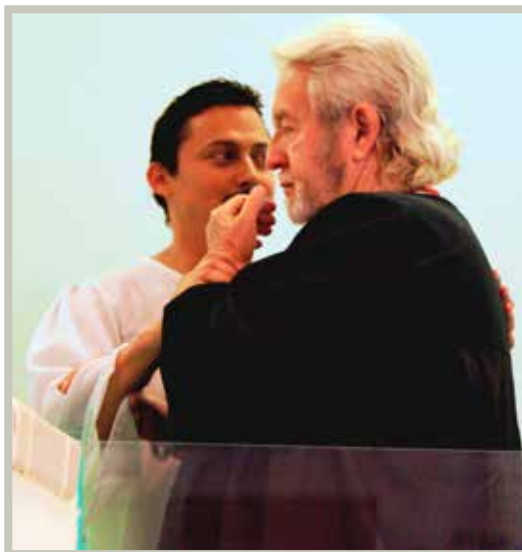
One of these new members, Bobby Harris, was planning to go on vacation out of state when he received a flyer announcing the upcoming prophecy meetings. He decided he would attend the meetings for just a few nights and then travel to see his relatives. Once he began attending the meetings, though, he could not stop coming, and even won a Bible on CD (the gift given for perfect attendance). Harris is thankful that the Lord called him to the Adventist Church and is happy to be a part of this new family. He looks forward to serving the Lord.

The dedication of the people in attendance was incredible. Three individuals drove 40 miles every night

for a month to attend the meetings. One evening, a storm rolled into the area,

which caused the power in the church to go out. Not wanting to stop the meeting, the congregation asked the evangelist to keep preaching, even though they sat in darkness with only an emergency light casting its glow. Sady used a small keychain flashlight to read texts from the Bible as the people listened intently.

One young man was walking his dog by the Kachino Lodge in Taos where the series was being held, and saw a banner advertising the meetings. The next night he came to listen and continued to attend through the end of the meetings. He joined the church by profession of faith, along with other family members whom he had invited to hear the exciting presentations from God's Word.



Bobby Harris sealed his decision to follow God by baptism with by Jorge Poveda, pastor.

Pastor Jorge Poveda

One Knock Away from Eternity!

CORRALES, N. MEX. » A good mentor once told me, "You never know what's behind a door unless you open it." Jesus put it this way: "Ask and it shall be given to you, seek and you shall find, knock and the door will be opened unto you," (Matthew 7:7). In other words, some of life's richest experiences are often one door away.

This summer, a group of youth joined the 2013 Texico Youth Rush Program. Youth Rush is a 10-week summer evangelism program that focuses on sharing the gospel through books, DVDs, and personal contact. With a common goal of asking God to do the impossible, these young people spent their summer knocking on doors and changing people's lives.

Rebecca, 16, shares her miraculous story at one door: "I met a lady who spoke with me in perfect English. After showing her some of the books, she asked me if I had any in Spanish. We then realized the miracle. She was speaking to me in Spanish and I was speaking to her in English but we were un-

derstanding each other perfectly!" For sure this was a miracle that impacted both the lady at the door and Rebecca's life too!

Rolan, 16, said, "This program brought out a spiritual side of me that I didn't know existed! Telling people about how much Jesus loves them has helped me realize how much He loves me." For Rolan, the spiritual contact with others and with God at the doors made all the difference.

The people behind the doors received books and DVDs about health, Bible prophecy, the gospel, and Bible stories for kids. At the same time, more than \$101,000 was donated to the students and leaders to help them pay their way through school. And, this summer God put a record numbers of

45 "dump bags" into homes! A "dump bag" is when someone takes all of the books and DVDs that the student is carrying in his or her bag. God is awesome and He's all about doing the impossible! We praise the Lord for all the success and miracles from this summer!

There are countless other doorknocking stories to share, each of them a testimony on how a life was touched by the love of God. There is another story yet to be told; a testimony of another door knocker who happens to be at your door. He's patiently waiting for you to realize that you are only "one knock away from eternity!" (Revelation 3:20).

If you'd like to hear more testimonies from the Texico Youth Rush Team or get information about the program, please visit www.youthrushtexico.org.

Derrick Williamson, literature ministries director



The 2013 Summer Youth Rush Team experiences countless miracles during their 10 weeks of service.

TEXICO CONFERENCE

New Life in Our Residence Halls

Celebrating 120 years of education with increased enrollment

Residence halls the world over are not known for their quiet atmosphere. Walk into any hall and you'll likely be greeted with a cacophony of exuberant young voices. This year, the halls at Southwestern seem to be louder than ever, but in a good way, reports the dean of men, Wil Iverson.

"There's a really good vibe in our residence halls. Our worship services are packed. We've doubled in participation in men's club activities. Our halls are fuller and louder, which is mostly a good thing," Iverson laughs. "It might be harder to get them quiet in their rooms at night but it's a good feeling to have such a positive atmosphere."



▲ The largest freshman class since 1996 walks through the Mizpah Gate.

◀ The annual handshake featured 120th birthday cake and Dr. Anderson in the dunk tank!



Southwestern's 120th school year started off on a positive note: by breaking records. The residence halls combined have 46 more students in residence than last year. "At the beginning of the 2012 school year, Dean Ann and I started praying for a full dorm," confides Janelle Williams, dean of women. "We've been faithfully and specifically praying for a whole year now and it's awesome to watch our residence halls fill up. We're still praying because we could hold 50 more!"

With 167 freshmen, the class of 2017 is the biggest freshmen class since 1999. There are 50 more freshmen than last year—a 43

percent increase. "I couldn't be more delighted with our freshmen," exclaims Enga Almeida, vice president for enrollment. "We've awarded more merit scholarships than ever because their test scores are so high. This is a high-achieving class."

Southwestern also saw an improvement in other categories with a total enrollment of 817 active students. "Financial full-time equivalents" (an important budget category) was up by 14. "It's a thrilling start to the school year," states Eric Anderson, president. "The enrollment initiative begun in 2012 is paying in dramatic dividends."

Where are the students coming from? Southwestern draws students from Adventist academies, public high schools, and home schools. Of the incoming freshmen, 82 graduated from Adventist academies in New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas. "That's the best number in years," says Almeida. The university also received a boost of 22 new international students, coming from countries ranging from Angola and Brazil to Vietnam and Zimbabwe.

"I came to Southwestern because they wanted me here," explains Taylor, a freshman from Houston, when asked why she chose Southwestern. "I heard back from them quicker and more often than any of the other universities I applied to. They were so friendly and helpful!"

"I'm excited for this school year," says Iverson. "We've got halls packed with students who are happy to be here. Their attitudes are contagious."

Darcy Force

Adventist Web series depicting *The Great Controversy* wins Geekie Award

The trailer for a Steampunk Web series produced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church made headlines at the 1st Annual Geekie Awards in Hollywood, California.

“The Record Keeper,” (www.facebook.com/TheRecordKeeper) which dramatizes the epic struggle between good and evil, won the award in the Best One-Shot category for Best Trailer. The One-Shot category recognizes episodes still in the final stages of post-production.

Director Jason Satterlund and executive producer Garrett Caldwell accepted the award, accompanied by cast members Aris Juson and Jelynn Sophia. The award show was live-streamed from the Avalon, a historic landmark in Hollywood.

“I feel so honored to be here,” Satterlund said. “We are excited to receive this response on a series that isn’t even out yet.”

“We can’t wait to show you the rest of the series,” Caldwell said, acknowledging the role of co-creator Rajeev Sigamoney and the two other executive producers, Ben Schoun and Delbert Baker, both general vice presidents for the Adventist world church.

The Record Keeper follows the story of Cadan (JuneSoo Ham) and Larus (Dennis Hill), two angels who struggle to maintain their friendship after universal civil war breaks out. Meanwhile, another angel,

Raina (Lindsay Frame), pursues an accurate record of events while trying to make sense of the chaos.

The Web series echoes major themes from *The Great Controversy*, a touchstone book by Adventist Church co-founder Ellen G. White that chronicles God’s guidance throughout history.

Church leaders said The Record Keeper will resonate with people who may not otherwise come into contact with *The Great Controversy* or even the Bible.

“The inspired insights that Ellen White provides in *The Great Controversy* make the compelling narratives of scripture even more relevant,” Caldwell said. “So many people are expressing interest in [White] as an individual and in her writings as a result of The Record Keeper project. We simply must consider continuing to tell these stories in this manner.”

The Record Keeper is set in a Steampunk universe. A sub-genre of sci-

ence fiction, Steampunk features steam-powered machinery, often in an alternate world or fantasy setting.

The 1st Annual Geekie Awards is the first live-streamed geek-genre award show recognizing the best indie comic books, graphic novels, short films, Web series, and more.

Watch the winning trailer for The Record Keeper at www.thegeekieawards.com/the-record-keeper-2.

Adventist News Network



Mariesha Richard

▲ Director Jason Satterlund, center, speaks after *The Record Keeper*, a Web series he directed, was recognized at the 1st Annual Geekie Awards in Hollywood, California. Executive producer Garrett Caldwell, right, and actor, Jelynn Sophia, left, also accepted the award for Best One-Shot.

◀ Record keeper Raina, played by Lindsay Frame, lays down the law in the Web series *The Record Keeper*.



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MISCELLANEOUS

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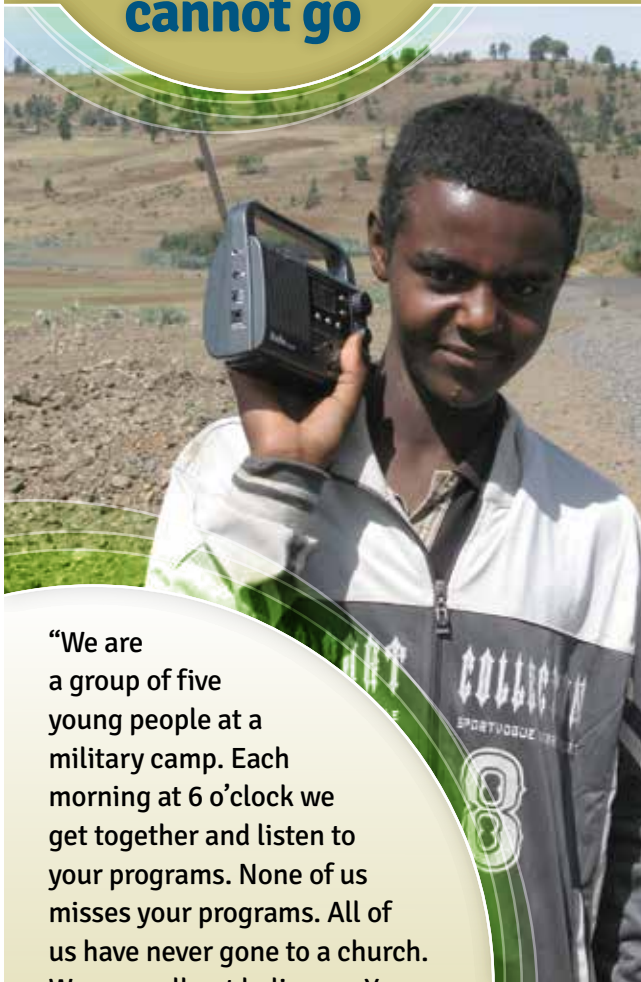
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Sarah Winder is a dog lover, a dedicated walker and a wife. She brings her sense of humor, her humility and commitment to quality care to each and every patient interaction. Sarah is one of the people who help to make Loma Linda a center of clinical excellence and supportive faith-based care.

- Associate Professor-PhD Medicine (Job 54824)
- Asst Professor-PhD Medicine (Job 54825)
- Employee Relations Specialist
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Sarah Winder
RN

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Beulah Moses, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy associate, is offering counseling to church members at special rates in Houston. She is addressing issues related to couple therapy, pre-marital counseling, teen counseling, parenting, and depression and anxiety recovery. For further contact, please call Beulah at 281.520.8223 or e-mail at beulahjm3@gmail.com.

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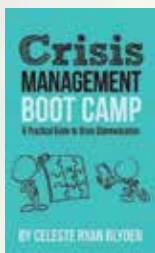
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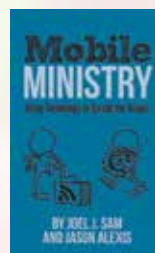
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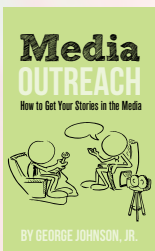
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Obituaries

EICHELBERG, Donna Jean, born January 4, 1932 in Mitchell, S. D. and died July 13, 2013 in Harlingen, Tex. She babysat or cared for young children and academy students, and she loved to make cookies for everyone. She was a member of the Weslaco church, where she served as a deaconess. No matter what she went through, she always had a smile on her face. Donna was a lifelong faithful servant of God. She was preceded in death by husband, Floyd, and son, Terry. Survivors: daughters and sons-in-law, Cheri and Dan, of Denver, Colo., and Susan and Jim of Weslaco, Tex.; son and daughter-in-law, Lonnie and Modesty, of San Antonio, Tex.; eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

MANNING, Tamara, born July 15, 1957 and died February 22, 2013 in Tulsa, Okla. She was a member of Tulsa

Adventist Fellowship.

MARTINEZ, Mary Esmeralda, born in Maxwell, N. Mex. on February 12, 1927 and died on June 16, 2013. Mary married Max Martinez in 1947, and together they embarked on a life-long journey of service to others. She was the perfect pastor's wife and had a deep passion for their ministry. She especially wanted to share Jesus with children. She taught Sabbath School for years and brought Bible stories to life. Their service to the Seventh-day Adventist church took them from New Mexico to California, Illinois, Texas, and even to South America. They were missionaries in Venezuela for five years. When they retired, they moved back to New Mexico and began a ministry to reach Native Americans in the Southwest. Mary was also very involved in women's ministries. They spent the last few years of her life in Colorado. Mary Martinez also had a passion

for her family and loved each one dearly. Survivors: her husband of 65-years, Max Martinez; four children: Paul, Max, David and Nina; and five grandchildren.

MORRIS, Mary Shasta Cooley, born August 2, 1932 in Porum, Okla., and died August 20, 2013 in Muskogee, Okla. Mary and her husband, David, were baptized at the Tahlequah church in 1953 through the efforts of a colporteur who left literature at their home. Mary was her husband's teacher's aide in the schools that David taught for the denomination. They lived in many states throughout the years, including Oklahoma, Nebraska, New Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana, where they were active members and Mary would volunteer to play the piano. They both enjoyed good gospel music. Her husband, David Gambrell Morris, preceded her

in death. Survivors: sister, Genevieve Lewis, of Muskogee; their five children: Charla Jean Morris, of Muskogee; David L. Morris of Dallas, Tex.; Kathy Weigand, of Pleasant Hill, Mo.; Patty Schwach of Tulsa, Okla.; and Debbie Childress of Owasso, Okla.; 10 grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

PYLES, Glenda Gale, born September 5, 1948 in Vinita, Okla., and died August 25, 2013 in Broken Arrow, Okla. She was a member of Tulsa Adventist Fellowship. She is survived by her husband, John Pyles, of Broken Arrow.

STRAND, Barbara Joyce, born October 29, 1927 in Ketchikan, Alaska, and died August 23, 2013 in Comanche, Okla. She was a member of the Summit Ridge church. Survivors: two daughters, Ellen Berlin, of Duncan, Okla., and Jean Tokarsky of Apple Valley, Calif.



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SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Nov 1	Nov 8	Nov 15	Nov 22	Nov 29	Dec 6
Abilene, TX	6:50	5:44	5:39	5:36	5:34	5:33
Albuquerque, NM	6:14	5:07	5:02	4:58	4:55	4:55
Amarillo, TX	6:55	5:48	5:43	5:38	5:36	5:35
Brownsville, TX	6:49	5:45	5:41	5:40	5:38	5:38
Dallas, TX	6:38	5:32	5:27	5:23	5:22	5:21
El Paso, TX	6:18	5:12	5:07	5:04	5:02	5:02
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	6:40	5:34	5:29	5:26	5:23	5:23
Gallup, NM	6:22	5:15	5:10	5:05	5:03	5:02
Galveston/Houston, TX	6:36	5:31	5:26	5:23	5:22	5:22
Gentry, AR	6:23	5:16	5:11	5:07	5:04	5:03
Little Rock, AR	6:17	5:10	5:05	5:01	4:59	4:58
Muskogee, OK	6:28	5:21	5:16	5:11	5:09	5:08
New Orleans, LA	6:14	5:09	5:05	5:02	5:01	5:01
Oklahoma City, OK	6:37	5:30	5:25	5:20	5:18	5:17
Roswell, NM	6:08	5:02	4:56	4:53	4:51	4:50
San Antonio, TX	6:49	5:44	5:40	5:37	5:35	5:35
Shreveport, LA	6:26	5:20	5:15	5:12	5:10	5:09
Tulsa, OK	6:29	5:23	5:17	5:13	5:10	5:09

Note: Daylight Savings Time ends at 2:00 a.m. on Nov 3.



On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Let's Follow the Master

IF I WERE TO ASK YOU WHAT A CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE IS, I imagine you might say something like: a disciple is one who faithfully follows Jesus, or, a disciple is one who does his Master's will, or perhaps, a disciple makes great sacrifices in order to do God's work. All of these answers—and more—would be correct. There are many ways to define discipleship.

I really like the way Ellen White describes the first disciples in *Testimonies*, volume 5, p. 222: "When the early disciples heard the words of Christ, they felt their need of Him. They sought, they found, they followed Him. They were with Him in the house, at the table, in the closet, in the field. They were with Him as pupils with a teacher, daily receiving from His lips lessons of holy truth. They looked to Him as servants to their master, to learn their duty. They served Him cheerfully, gladly. They followed Him, as soldiers follow their commander, fighting the good fight of faith."

The story is told of a young man named Rudolph who lived in Vienna,

Austria. A musical composer and conductor, he put all of his energies into composing a symphony. Striving for perfection, he worked and worked, writing and re-writing his musical masterpiece. Then he called some friends to listen to it. "It's great. It's going to make you a great name," they told him. Still not satisfied, he revised it again, until he was confident that the piece was ready for the orchestra to learn.

When the night arrived for the premier performance of his musical composition, the audience went wild, and when the concert ended, hundreds of people rushed to the stage to congratulate the young musician. But Rudolph was unmoved. After

the crowd diminished, Rudolph noticed an older white-haired gentleman coming toward him. Finally reaching him, the man placed his hands on Rudolph's shoulders and said, "It was well done, Rudolph. It was well done." At that moment a huge smile appeared on Rudolph's face, for that old man was his master.

Rudolph's only ambition in life was to learn from and gain the approval of his master. As faithful Christian disciples, let's also follow our Master, sitting at His feet daily, looking to him as our great Teacher, learning of our duties, and cheerfully performing them. Then one day, we too, with joy, will hear His words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." I look forward to that day, don't you?

Pat Humphrey

Record

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