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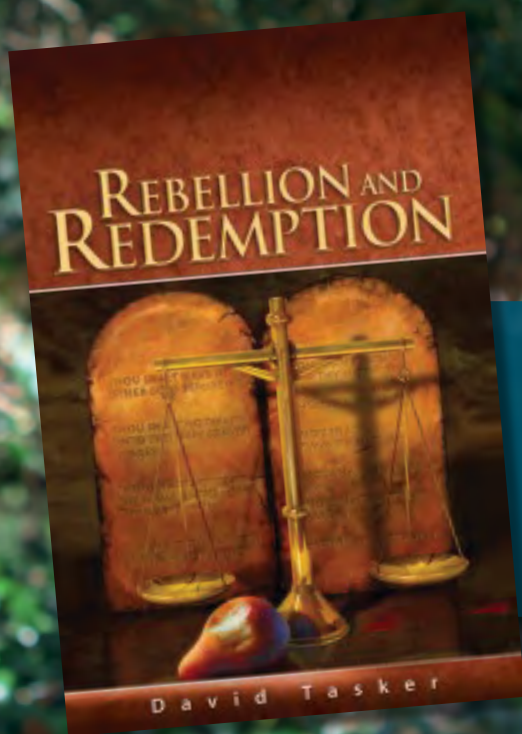
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Aussie captain becomes a Weet-Bix kid

Berkeley Vale, New South Wales

Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing's marketing department has certainly been "kicking goals" or you could say "hitting sixes" this summer.

In December, Sanitarium announced that Australian Test cricket captain Steve Smith is officially a Weet-Bix Kid. After the announcement, Smith went on to have a stand out season and was named ICC cricketer of the year.

"As a child, I grew up on Weet-Bix and I'm so excited to become an official part of the Weet-Bix family," said Smith.

The Australian batsman joins an elite team of Australian sports stars as Weet-Bix Kids, including retired Australian cricketer Brett Lee, Socceroo Tim Cahill and six-time World Surfing Champion Stephanie Gilmore. He will join them as an ambassador for the Sanitarium Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon in 2016.

"Weet-Bix is such an Aussie icon," said Smith. "I am delighted to officially be a Weet-Bix Kid and encourage Aussies to start their day with a healthy Weet-Bix breakfast."

Smith becoming a Weet-Bix kid is not the only marketing coup Sanitarium has pulled off this summer. They are also sponsoring the "King of the Six" Big Bash, with boundary signs and TV spots prominent in Channel 10's coverage.

Smith has also taken part in some "trick-shot" videos for Weet-Bix, part of an online campaign that has seen celebrities perform seemingly-impossible feats of skill, like hitting a Weet-Bix box into a shopping trolley from the

other side of the field.

Cricket is not the only sport involved in the campaign. Ten pin bowling star Jason Belmonte's video showing him curving a bowling ball around two mates eating Weet-Bix in his distinctive two handed style, currently has more than 560,000 views.

Perhaps the cutest trick-shot video is of young Riley Diary, a YouTube star, whose video has already amassed 26,000 views on YouTube and 36,000 on Facebook.

The other major event Sanitarium has gotten behind was the NBA's "Australia Day Game" fixture between the Cleveland Cavaliers and Minnesota Timberwolves at Quicken Loans Arena. UP&GO sponsored the event, held in Cleveland in honour of the Cavaliers two Australian-born players, Victorian Matthew Dellavedova and star point-guard Kyrie Irving.

"The partnership with Australia's leading breakfast category brand, UP&GO with the Cavaliers and Matt Dellavedova is strong endorsement of the growth and presence of Australian players in the NBA and the strong NBA fan base in Australia", Daniel Derrick, Sanitarium's General Manager, Marketing said. —Jarrod Stackelroth



Riley Diary and her trick shot video.



InFocus TV changing

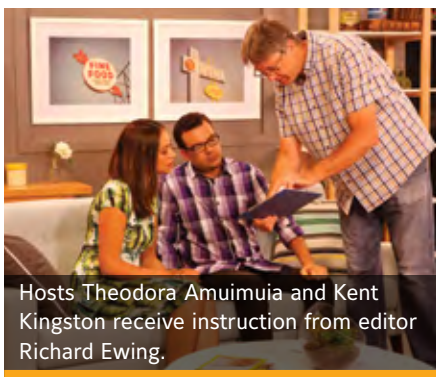
Wahroonga, New South Wales

December saw the last news bulletins being produced by *Adventist Record* magazine's sister TV program, *Record InFocus*. However, episodes will continue to be produced featuring interview and other segments from the program's eight-year back-catalogue.

"Since 2008 we've produced more than 400 episodes of *InFocus*," said host and producer Kent Kingston. "That's more than *Seinfeld*, but not as many as *The Simpsons*." For many Adventists, the HopeChannel and Australian Christian Channel program was a weekly staple and the news segment will be missed.

"It's hard to overstate how difficult it is to get the professional look and feel *InFocus* achieved, and without the resources routinely employed by other studios," said executive producer James Standish. "Kent and the rest of our team did an outstanding job producing a multi-faceted, high quality newsmagazine show for eight years on a shoe-string budget. In an ideal world, we'd continue making *InFocus* indefinitely. As we pivot to focus on young families (see Calvin Dever's article on p 16), we're going to employ the limited resources entrusted to us to produce new shows developed specifically to reach our new target demographic with the gospel."

The first episodes of *InFocus Recouched*, which repackages the more "timeless" segments of the program, began playing in January this year. —Record staff



Hosts Theodora Amuimuia and Kent Kingston receive instruction from editor Richard Ewing.



Future media

James Standish

There are two things worth stating at the outset. Christian media is expensive. And most of it doesn't work.

Yes, we've all seen the marketing campaigns from media ministries and we've heard the sensational stories. And, of course, people who work in media are good at blowing our own horns and we have, by definition, a megaphone to do so. But here's the deal. Most Christian media is made with one audience primarily in mind: donors.

Don't believe me? Then flip on a big name Adventist TV show and watch. First, watch the program as an Adventist. Not bad, eh? There they are, a group of older guys in suits, giving out the message in a very comfortable, time worn manner. But now imagine you're a non-Christian.

First think about the names of the shows. Imagine if secular TV kept regurgitating shows from the 50s like *Lassie* and *Gunsmoke*. How well would they connect with the modern audience? And yet, the biggest name Adventist media ministries are all making shows with names coined in the glorious but dusty past.

Then look at the design. I can't remember the last time I saw an Adventist TV ministry that didn't look like it was on a set from 30 years ago. Safe, secure, middle-class, suburban. And boring as mouldy bread.

Why so excessively safe? For that you have to understand the secret of fundraising. There is a giving curve. When people are young, they don't have much to give. As they progress in their careers, disposable income increases—so giving potential goes up. But do you know where the real fundraising paydirt is? It's the 55 years and older demographic. Why? Because many have paid off their mortgages and waved their kids off into the world. How do you get money from them? When it comes to media, you make the kind of media they are comfortable with. And so, we do.

But imagine you're living in a city in the South Pacific. Imagine you've got aspirations to progress your life. You're smart. You're motivated. You're connected with the modern world. What about any of our "legacy shows" comes close to connecting with you?

Well, that doesn't matter, because the secular audience

doesn't fund the show—its primary audience, by necessity, is the 55 + Adventist couple who are in their best donor years.

And so it is to you, dear donor, that I write this column. Because how you decide to employ your resources makes all the difference. If you decide to invest in media that appeals to you, that is your right. But let's not kid ourselves. When we do that, we aren't giving to spread the message. What we're giving to is creating media that makes us feel comfortable, and that we wish appealed to others. And yes, like collateral damage in war, there will be some impact on non-Adventists along the way. And those people will be highlighted in fundraising letters—implying the exception is the rule. It isn't.

And if you don't believe me, come and sit in my chair. Because I've written fundraising letters for an Adventist TV ministry. And every time I have, my first challenge is to find good stories. And what's shocked me is how few good stories there are. Our legacy media ministries are proving successful at absorbing substantial resources, producing high quality fundraising materials, and reaching ourselves. What they are not excelling at is reaching our modern society in any substantial way. I wish it were otherwise, but it's not.

Something has to change. We need a very different approach to media ministry. But we can't fully do that. And you know why? Because Adventists only support the kind of shows Adventists like. Do you see the paradox? We want to reach the unreached. But we only support shows that reach ourselves. We can change that.

We need to give to reach the future, not replicate the past. We are desperate for new, fresh, engaging programming. God's blessed us with a community brimming in talent and ideas. But the bulk of our donations are wrapped up supporting legacy programs aimed primarily at ourselves.

If we want to reach the world with media, we have to financially support innovative, faithful programming. Why? Because if there are enough of us who actually want to reach the unreached with media, we can do it. It's up to us.

James Standish is communications director for the Seventh-day Adventist church in the South Pacific.

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"A father and daughter walk to collect water in East New Britain, PNG."

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Opportunities

I hate receiving junk mail as email. I receive enough legitimate email to work through each day, I do not need the 'unnecessary' used Japanese cars for sale, winning a lottery notice, great deals on internet advertising or website designs . . . They waste my time. Sometimes I have to check email addresses just in case I hit 'Delete' too soon.

However God led me to a counter plan. I reply to each junk mail and attach two GLOW (Go Light Our World) tracts. People who send junk mail are bold and brash with services and products we usually do not need. Seventh-day Adventist Christians have a message of good news in Jesus that the whole world needs to hear. We need to be as bold in sharing our faith.

The apostle Paul wrote to the church in Colossae, ". . . make the most of every opportunity" (Colossians 4:5 NIV). In context he is talking about how we relate to those of different faith backgrounds.

Last Sabbath I met an Adventist who sends a Bible study every day on WhatsApp to relatives overseas. I admire the others who text a God blessing to their unchurched friends and who post Christian and Adventist messages on Facebook or LinkedIn or blog spiritual insights. Such Adventists are making the most of every opportunity and give me courage.

I often wonder how the junk senders respond to my email that says, "Thanks for the offer you make however I am not needing this at the moment. What I have attached is valuable for all humans for all time" with the attached "Where is God when I am Hurting" and "The Promise of Peace". I did receive one response from a Japanese Used Car salesperson saying they had read the attachments and thanked me for them!

So let's be creative this year and make the most of every opportunity to uplift Jesus and His message in some way. Who knows what the response might be!

Glenn Townend is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific.



Three testimony clangers I never want to hear again

Kent Kingston

Am I jaded and cynical after 40 years of hearing Christian testimonies? Probably. But maybe there's something here that could help you tell your testimony in a more effective way.

1. I was smoking and drinking...

This is classic Adventist shorthand. "Smoking and drinking" has become a cultural marker for rebellion against God. But what does this really mean? There are thousands of other Christians who continue to smoke and drink and would still say they love God. Or do you mean binge drinking, regularly getting drunk to escape from your problems, running the family finances into the wall with your spending on addictions? If the smoking and drinking was an expression of a careless or self-loathing attitude, tell us about it. If the smoking and drinking was destroying your health, tell us about the signs that your health was being damaged, even if you ignored those at the time.

If you limit your conversion story to the mere fact that you stopped smoking and drinking, you're only saying, "I used to be one of them, now I'm one of you." That can breed a sense of smugness among Adventists—"Thank you Lord, that I'm not like that cancer-inhaler over there..." The fact is there are likely to be Adventists in your audience who are struggling with self-loathing, profligate spending, idolatrous hobbies or other self-destructive or addictive behaviours. If your testimony is really going to help them, they need to hear how God transformed your attitudes, gave you power to overcome your bad habits and helped you realise how much He values you.

2. Drugs, parties, women...

Male testimony-givers, I just want to point out that "women" are not an addictive substance—they're people. And listing them as one in a series of vices can easily be interpreted as blaming them for your choices. Let's be honest here: the mention of "women" in this context is shorthand for *I used to see women as sex objects; there for my pursuit and pleasure. I manipulated them and used them; I seduced them and allowed myself to be seduced by them, taking advantage of their foolishness, bad choices and vulnerability.* Explain clearly that the problem was not "women" but your attitudes about women and relationships.

Sadly, there may be men and women in your audience who still struggle with these issues. Your testimony can be very powerful if it involves God teaching you that every woman is a precious daughter of the King who deserves to be respected and related to as a whole person. Your sisters in Christ need to hear this and your brothers in Christ do too.

3. God brought me safely home...

You make being a Christian sound boring when you say this! Don't make your old life sound more exciting than your new life. The story of an adventure through stormy seas is over when the boat finally reaches the tranquil harbour. Over. But should Christianity be so "safe"? Well, yes, in terms of eternal security, but if I read the stories of Bible heroes correctly, a true believer's life is filled with challenges, some of which may even threaten life and limb. So tell us about the new frontiers God has asked you to cross since you started following Him. Tell us how the radical Christ is challenging you to live a radical life. Tell us about the struggles your new life involves and how God is battling alongside you. Let us know clearly that your true adventure is right here, right now.



Bite-sized

Loma Linda University Health has produced a series of 14 short videos that give lifestyle tips for living longer. Each of the free Live It videos is based on the Adventist university's research findings and covers issues as diverse as pomegranate juice, the dangers of sitting and the Mediterranean diet. —*LiveltLomaLinda.org*



Free at last!

After three years in Iran's notorious prisons, American Christian pastor Saeed Abedini has been released in a prisoner exchange deal between the US and Iran. It's believed Abedini was targeted for his support of underground churches during his visits to Iran. His imprisonment triggered a worldwide campaign, calling for his release. —*Christianity Today*



No knocking

After negotiation attempts failed, Adventist leaders are taking the White Hall (Arkansas, USA) local council to court over restrictions on door-to-door evangelism. The Church says the council's solicitation permit regime is arbitrary, costly and a barrier to free speech. They're asking for the ordinance to be declared unconstitutional. —*Adventist Review*



Division president at rest

The president of the Adventist Church's Southern Asia-Pacific Division, Pastor Leonardo Asoy, has died of a rare bone marrow disease at the age of 56. After serving the Church for more than 30 years he was elected Division president at the 2015 General Conference meetings. —*ANW*



Tough action

Anglican leaders from around the world have voted to suspend the US-based Episcopal Church from the Anglican Communion due to its support of same-sex marriage. For the next three years the Episcopal Church is banned from participating in Anglican decision-making forums or representing Anglicans at interfaith gatherings. —*CNN*



History unearthed

Two of the top 10 biblical archaeology discoveries of 2015 reported by Christianity Today came from excavations sponsored by Southern Adventist University. The finds—both inscriptions, one in ancient Hebrew, the other in Canaanite—shed light on biblical history and add support to the Bible's chronology of Saul's and David's reigns. —*Adventist Review*

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Adventist encyclopedia going digital

Silver Spring, Maryland, US

Spies are in. Subcultures are out. And cosmetics and dance belong together in a single article titled "Lifestyle."

These were among the decisions made last month as a 26-member editorial committee behind the new Encyclopaedia of Seventh-day Adventists gathered for the first time at General Conference headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland to fine-tune topics and adjust the vision of the \$US1.6 million, five-year project.

The online encyclopaedia, which will replace the bound Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopaedia first published in 1966, is a global church endeavour that will see thousands of members participate by researching, writing articles, editing, and sharing memories, documents, artefacts, and other information.

The Adventist Review and Adventist World magazines will take the lead in encouraging congregational and crowd-sourced histories of local churches, Adventist institutions, and individuals who will not be the subject of separate articles in the encyclopaedia, while the effort by the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research will focus on scholarly contributions to understanding Adventist history and experience.

"We keep discovering how much bigger the project is than we first imagined... at the moment I would estimate that 90 per cent of articles will be newly written.

This will be one of the strengths of the encyclopaedia," said editor David Trim, an Australian currently serving as director of the General Conference's Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.

Dr Barry Oliver, who retired from his position as South Pacific Division president last year, is one of the encyclopaedia's assistant editors and will compile the entries relating to the South Pacific region. His current list of more than 300 topics includes everything from Atoifi Adventist Hospital to evangelist George Burnside to the Azaria Chamberlain case.

The Encyclopaedia of Seventh-day Adventists will start publishing its estimated 15,000 to 20,000 articles online as they become available, starting in 2017. The full encyclopaedia will debut at the 2020 General Conference Session, although its online presence will ensure that it is continually updated and amplified. —Andrew McChesney with Kent Kingston



Dr David Trim and Benjamin Baker.



Justin Torossian preaching.

EGW descendant joins famous violinist on Solomons mission

Honiara, Solomon Islands

A group of Adventist volunteers was featured in Solomon Islands' newspaper Solomon Star, following a recent weeklong fly'n'build.

The project was organised by Waitara Seventh-day Adventist Church (NSW) and supported by other churches including Katoomba and Windsor. The team of 37 flew to Honiara to help refurbish Kukum Seventh-day Adventist Church and run an evangelistic campaign.

"It was our first fly'n'build and we didn't know what to expect before the trip," admits Waitara youth leader Charissa Fong. "But it was an incredible blessing."

Although only eight members were professional builders, the other volunteers willingly assisted in repairing Kukum's kitchen, cry room, Sabbath School rooms and church pews.

During the evenings, Charissa teamed up with international speaker and great-great-grandson of Ellen White, Justin Torossian to preach at the evangelistic campaign that was about preparing for the Second Coming. The campaign was launched with a concert by renowned violinist Jaime Jorge. Approximately 800– 1000 people attended each evening and at the campaign's conclusion, 26 decisions were made for baptism.

Following the repairs of Kukum Church, the volunteers also visited National Referral Hospital. They sang at several wards, handed out care packages and found time to pray with patients.

"We went to Kukum to bless them but they really blessed us," says Charissa, reflecting on the team's experience. "It was especially good for our youth to see that the Adventist Church is a worldwide movement, working together to bring people to Jesus." —Vania Chew



The Waitara team.

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Bushfire claims lives, church campground

Waroona, Western Australia

A bushfire in Western Australia has killed two people and destroyed more than 140 buildings, including several structures at a Seventh-day Adventist Church campground.

All but one cabin at the Western Australian Conference's Camp Logue Brook (CLB) were lost in the fire.

Conference general secretary Pastor Sid Griffith flew an aircraft over the campsite after the fire had passed through and confirmed the severity of the damage.

The home of camp managers Ken and Lesley Topperwien remained undamaged in the fire, as well as CLB's maintenance shed.

"A sad day for sure, but they are buildings," wrote Western Australian Conference president Pastor Terry Johnson on Facebook. "All the memories [will] remain. The buildings can be rebuilt."

Pastor Johnson expressed his condolences to the families of two men, aged 73 and 77, killed in the blaze which ripped through the town of Yarloop on January 7. The historic town, with a population of 600 people, has been described as a "war zone," with 128 homes destroyed in the fire.

Two Adventist families, David and Teresa Regent and Bernie and Maureen Riegert, were among those who lost homes in the blaze.

Volunteers from the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia have helped find emergency accommodation at two evacuation centres for almost 100 survivors of the bushfires. ADRA was inundated with 1500 offers of private accommodation for them.

The ADRA volunteers, mostly from local Seventh-day Adventist churches in the area, assisted at local evacuation centres—identifying people in need, sourcing accommodation, and connecting victims to other services.

At the Pinjarra evacuation centre, ADRA volunteers facilitated accommodation for 68 people, including 11 families, seven couples and 11 individuals, while at the Australind centre, 29 people including four families received help finding accommodation.

ADRA national manager for emergency services Kevin Munro said it was a testament to the dedication of the volunteers that they were able to help so many people.

"I hope this paints a positive picture of how ADRA Emergency Management (EM) volunteers from local Seventh-day Adventist churches have done a marvellous job in WA, under the guidance of Suzanna Cuplovic, ADRA's EM coordinator in WA," he said.

Ms Cuplovic praised the ADRA EM who worked "tirelessly" to support victims affected by the disaster. "I'm really proud of their efforts, effectiveness and empathy towards the victims," she said. The generosity of the WA people who offered accommodation left her "completely blown away". "These offers have exceeded any of the previous offers from previous disasters that we have ever received," Ms Cuplovic said.

Mr Munro also appealed for people to donate in support of this service.

"Often there is a perception that there's no cost involved because people are volunteering," he said. "In fact, it is costly to train, equip and resource EM volunteers to perform this great service. If you wish to see this excellent resource and service continue to support those most vulnerable in times of disaster, please consider a donation." —Linden Chuang/Josh Dye





Down but not out: Institute of Worship will continue

For the past 12 years the Institute of Worship, based at Avondale College of Higher Education (NSW), has been leading a worship renewal movement in Adventist churches throughout the South Pacific Division (SPD). Now, with its funding all but ended and its founder and director, Dr Lyell Heise, moving into retirement, Institute staff are holding on gamely but have accepted the need to scale back their operations significantly.

What is the Institute of Worship? If you've ever attended an Adventist Hymns and Songs of Praise event there's every chance the Institute was behind it. If a child you know has been learning piano using the popular *Play Today* books, you can thank the Institute. Perhaps you've been part of an Institute of Worship orchestra or maybe your church has participated in one of the Institute's training events.

The "worship wars" of recent decades have pushed many Adventists towards two opposing groups: the immovable defenders of the traditional "three hymn sandwich" versus the "happy clappy" hook, line and sinker hill-singers. The Institute of Worship has intelligently, biblically and prayerfully charted a course through these troubled waters, identifying authentically Adventist worship styles that help congregations express their unique character. Key themes are creativity, balance and broad involvement, including intergenerational participation.

"Be intentional and strategic about worship ministry," Dr Heise says to churches. "Be so underpinned with good theology that you're able to be more flexible in regards to culture."

"How do we keep our vision going?" asks Pastor Joe Talemaitoga from the PTEC university church in Suva, Fiji. "It's going to rely on vibrant, inspirational worship. This was modelled so effectively by Lyell and his team. We continue to run our worship services based on what we learned and had demonstrated to us by the Institute of Worship." This year Pastor Talemaitoga moves into the role of secretary for the Fiji Mission and wants to see every Adventist church in Fiji benefitting from the insights PTEC gained during its worship training.

Over the past 12 years, the Institute has delivered worship conferences and other training events in each of the four unions, in every conference around Australia and New

Zealand and in many of the island missions. "We have a longstanding invitation from Vanuatu," Dr Lyell Heise says. "They're really keen for us to go there."

But right now, a worship conference in Vanuatu is looking unlikely. Funding from the SPD ran out at the end of last year, as did the significant financial support of a private donor. Dr Heise is retiring from his senior lecturer position at Avondale but says he'll continue working with the Institute as a "labour of love".

"The Institute of Worship has now been downgraded to a part-time office with voluntary retired staff," Dr Heise says. "I'm retiring from everything but maintaining a volunteer interest in a number of projects."

News of the Institute's funding cuts has been met with dismay from supporters around the Division. But they've also rallied and put plans into place to ensure that momentum is not lost. The SPD's new Discipleship Ministries team is keen to benefit from the Institute's expertise and plans to consult with Dr Heise on matters worship-related. Avondale College has agreed to take the Institute under its wing and will provide office space and technical support as Institute resources are made available on a new website.

Avondale president Professor Ray Roennfeldt regrets that he can't offer more support. "College doesn't have resources to fund training and events," he says. Avondale is also launching a separate Spirituality and Worship Research Centre, which Professor Roennfeldt says will have a broader focus.

"The Institute of Worship Orchestra will keep going. We think we'll do Hymns and Songs of Praise at Homecoming this year," says Dr Heise, referring to Avondale's annual alumni gathering. Clearly his love of music is a key factor in his continued involvement, salary or no salary.

Another factor is the success the Institute has had in mentoring young people in the area of worship—both musically and theologically. Many of these young people were Avondale students who worked part-time with the Institute and have gone on to leadership roles in local churches, taking their skills and insights with them.

"There are still many young people interested in these issues," Dr Heise says. "It's one of the reasons I'm still willing to continue." —*Kent Kingston*



Pint-sized preacher

by Vania Chew

SOME KIDS GROW UP PLAYING WITH DOLLS. Others lean towards Lego or remote-controlled cars. But Charissa Fong preferred to preach. Shortly after Charissa's parents married, her father David drifted away from God. It would be many difficult years before he would finally surrender his life to Jesus. Despite this, he was happy for his wife Gayl to take their two daughters to church.

"I was born into a home where I was taught about God and how much He loved me," says Charissa. "I will always be grateful for my mother's Godly guidance during those early years."

Around the age of six, Charissa developed what would soon become her favourite activity. Each Sabbath, when the family returned home from church, Charissa would go to her bedroom, stand in front of the full-length mirror and preach her heart out.

"Few theologians would be able to appreciate the depth of those sermons!" laughs Charissa.

She was missing only one thing—an audience. That all changed when her younger sister Marleta found her preaching to the mirror one day.

"What are you doing?" she asked curiously.

"I'm playing church," Charissa replied.

"Can I play?" her sister wondered.

"Sure!"

Between the two of them, they came up with an entire church service. Marleta would do the welcome, sing the opening hymn, take up the offering and say the prayer. Charissa would preach, sing the final hymn and then conclude with the benediction. She would then go to the door of their bedroom, shake her sister's hand and thank her for coming.

But Marleta wasn't the only one to stumble upon one of Charissa's sermons. One day, Neale Schofield, the head elder at Waitara Church, was visiting her father David. The

door to Charissa's room was slightly open and Neale could clearly see her passionately preaching to the mirror. That memory would remain with him for many years.

At the age of 14, Charissa was caught off guard when her English teacher asked her to deliver a speech. The assignment, which she'd completely forgotten about was to read a book and give a speech from a character's perspective. Charissa had read the book *Rachel's Tears*—a powerful book about a student who was shot during the Columbine High School shootings for saying she believed in God.

"Impromptu speeches have never been my thing," confesses Charissa. "In my early days, I was so scripted that I would even include a symbol in my notes that told me when to breathe!"

As she was presenting this unprepared speech, an idea suddenly popped into her head. Why don't I make an appeal like evangelists do?

The idea was intriguing. After all, she'd been preaching to a mirror for years. Now she finally had what she'd always dreamed of—a captive audience. When she reached the conclusion of her speech, she said, "And now, if you would like to accept Jesus as your personal Saviour, would you raise your hands with me?"

Nobody moved. In fact, she had never seen her class so still.

Having grown up in the church, Charissa had witnessed many appeals before but people had always responded to those! She was determined not to move until someone else did. She stood there, for what felt like an eternity, until a friend finally took pity on her and raised her hand.

"God bless you, friend," Charissa said, and she sat down thankfully.

That night, she was in tears, pleading with her mother to let her switch schools. She was too embarrassed to face her classmates again.

It was with great reluctance that Charissa went to school

the next day. When her English teacher approached her, she didn't know what to expect.

"You gave a really good speech yesterday," her teacher encouraged. "How would you like to give it in assembly?"

Charissa was astounded. "The whole thing? Even with the hands up?"

"Yes," her teacher confirmed. "I've been talking with the teachers and we want the whole thing. You got 99 percent!"

Charissa was thrilled by this news, but also a little inquisitive. "What did I lose the mark on?"

Her teacher laughed. "It was too long."

Later that day, Charissa presented the speech at assembly as her teacher had requested. Having learned from her previous experience, she modified the appeal to make it more suitable for a general audience. This time, hands went up everywhere!

As Charissa walked off the stage, one teacher grabbed her arm. Tears glittered in her eyes as she said "Thank you." It was Charissa's first evangelism appeal—but it was far from being her last.

"My English teacher must've seen something in me that could be developed for God's glory," says Charissa. "The following year, I was asked to represent the school in a public speaking competition."

Charissa was secretly terrified and asked if she could pray about it. She finally accepted the opportunity—on one condition. She wanted to speak about God. It would've been easy for her teacher to tell her that there was no place for God in a secular competition. But instead her teacher smiled and said, "I think that's the very best thing you could do."

The night before the competition, Charissa was a nervous wreck. She remembers kneeling beside her bed, quietly dreading what the next day would bring. "Lord, You and I both know that I can't do this," she prayed earnestly. "If You get me through tomorrow... no, if You let me win tomorrow, then I promise You that I will speak for You wherever You open the doors."

The speech was every bit as intimidating as Charissa had feared. At three points, she was distracted, causing her to forget what she had memorised. However she managed to keep her composure, leading the audience to believe that she was pausing for effect.

"Each time, by an absolute miracle, I carried on speaking, with God giving me the words," Charissa says. "I felt like Jeremiah!"

To her surprise, she qualified for the next round of the contest.

"That was an incredible speech," the adjudicator told her. "Just one thing. For the next round, take God out of it."

Her teacher had watched the exchange.

"Do you remember why you went into this?" her teacher asked.

"Yes," Charissa affirmed.

"Then don't change a thing."

Charissa went on to the next round, didn't change her speech, and didn't win. She would go on to compete in other public speaking competitions without success. But God had a different calling in mind.

When Charissa was 16, Waitara Church decided to run a teen mission. Neale Schofield remembered how many years ago, he had seen this young girl preaching in front of her bedroom mirror. After much thought and prayer, he and his wife Coralie decided that Charissa should be the speaker for this mission. Charissa had no idea what to expect. She didn't have any prior experience in running a campaign. She didn't have a theology degree. And she didn't have any evangelistic training.

But she agreed anyway, remembering the promise she had made to God—that she would speak for Him wherever He opened doors.

As a result, 32 people made decisions for baptism. Others committed to keep Sabbath.

Since that first campaign, the doors have continued to open for Charissa. She has come a long way away from that bedroom mirror—preaching in Canada, Romania, Indonesia, England, the USA and all around the Pacific.

"I couldn't do it without God's leading and the support of my loving family," Charissa says.

In 2007, her father David was rebaptised into the Adventist Church and is now an enthusiastic Sabbath School teacher and musician at Waitara. Her mother Gayl has maintained her passion for leading people to Christ by becoming a Bible worker. And her sister Marleta, who recently recorded her debut album, still sings special items when Charissa preaches.

In 2014, Charissa completed a Graduate Diploma in Theology and Ministry at Avondale College. Today, she works in the Discovery Centre at HopeChannel. She doesn't know what the future holds but is eager to keep evangelising and sharing her faith.

"It doesn't matter who you are," she says with confidence, "there are no limits to what God can do through us when we give our all to Him."

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Vania Chew is PR/editorial assistant for Adventist Record.

One little idea

By Vania Chew



BRYAN WALSH, SENIOR WRITER AT TIME MAGAZINE, described it as “the most heartbreaking photo of 2015.”

Three year-old Alan Kurdi was one of at least 12 Syrian refugees who drowned on their way to the Greek island of Kos. The image of Alan’s lifeless little body, clad in a bright red T-shirt and dark blue shorts, sent shockwaves around the world.

Mother-of-two Gia Kavanagh was surfing the internet at home when she came across that photo.

“My heart sank,” she says bluntly. “Why was my family privileged enough to be safe while these families were fleeing from war? I couldn’t answer that question. I wrestled with God that day.”

But Gia wasn’t content to sit back and feel sad. She longed to do something practical to help refugee families and she wasn’t alone. Many of her friends and family felt the same. Through social media, she learned that her cousins Tina and Estelle were planning to start a clothing drive for adult refugees. Meanwhile, her friend Raghida was raising funds, planning to visit Greece and offer financial support to those in need.



Being a mother, and with the photo of Alan Kurdi still fresh in her mind, Gia’s thoughts immediately went towards the refugee children. After the trauma and fear they had experienced, what could she do to give them a sense of security, comfort and love?

She considered the journey that these children were making with no possessions to call their own. She then thought about her own little girl and baby boy soundly asleep in the next room, each snuggled with their favourite cuddly toy. This gave her the idea of preparing backpacks for the kids which would not only contain physical needs like soap, warm gloves, and socks, but fun activities like skipping ropes, crayons, and cuddly toys. The backpacks would enable the children to carry these belongings on the rest of their journey.

But how would she get the backpacks to Greece? It had recently cost her around A\$60 just to send two books. How much would it

cost to send backpacks?

Fortunately Gia had family and friends in Lesvos, the frontline of the refugee crisis in Europe. They were happy to buy the backpacks and goodies in Greece and then deliver them firsthand to the refugees.

Her friend Panos owned a restaurant in Athens and Gia suggested it could be a drop-off point for the backpacks. Gia began posting about her plans and encouraging her Facebook friends to share her posts with their contacts. Many people from Greece and other countries in Europe began filling backpacks that Raghida and Gia’s father Peter then distributed to refugee children. At last count, over 300 backpacks have been donated.

But that’s not where the story ends. The ‘Happy Backpacks’ project has now expanded into other areas of support for the refugees in Lesvos including the provision of clean clothes and blankets. And discipleship is in action. A woman in Canada has since discovered the endeavour via Facebook and contacted Gia; asking for advice on starting up the same project in Canada.

“I’m still shocked,” Gia says. “I didn’t know that one little idea could turn into something so much bigger. I’m not a large NGO or a charity. I’m just a church member at Concord Seventh-day Adventist Church. But I have learnt that God can do big things with anyone who is willing. As His Word says, in Zechariah 4:6, ‘Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit’ says the Lord.”



Vania Chew is PR/editorial assistant for Adventist Record.

RECORD REWIND

Lester Devine



Hard times

Iram and Christina James accepted the Adventist faith in a tent mission in Kellyville, Sydney and were baptised on May 28, 1893. The Church was then in its infancy in the South Pacific region with around only 500 members.

Hard times fell upon the family after the loss of Iram's work. He tried farming but could not meet the interest repayments. Ellen White sensed Iram's farming abilities and invited the family to Co-oranbong to care for her property at "Sunnyside". Once there, Iram James along with many other volunteers worked very hard to get the Avondale School property ready for its first intake of students. He, along with Sarah McInterfer and Mrs Haskell, spent a lot of time nailing down the floorboards in the dining room.

In the Autograph Album given to Ellen White on her departure from Australia, Iram James penned the following:

"Our first acquaintance with you was marked by an incident which we will never forget—for several weeks we were living on a few small potatoes and a little milk. When one evening a coachman drove up and left us a bag of flour. We asked him where it came from and he said the Lord had sent it and really so it seemed to us. The next week you paid us your first visit bringing with you some more of the necessities of this life. You can never know how parched the ground was on which those blessings fell—they said more to us than many sermons..."

In January 1901 the Iram James' family moved to Ellen White's home "Elmshaven" in California where he cared for her property until her death in 1915, following which he purchased 'Elmshaven' from her estate.



OPENING HIS WORD

Gary Webster



Ancient Gerar: Something has gone wrong with the Harvest

"Discipleship" is the current buzzword in Adventism, and rightly so, for the making of disciples has been Christ's purpose for the church since the day He ascended to heaven. But let's be honest, something's gone wrong with the harvest—especially in Western countries!. And the problem is not with the fields, for as Jesus said, "they are white (or ready) for the harvest!" Let's cut to the chase, the problem is with the harvesters—you and me, us—the church! There is a shortage of those who are out there harvesting. But why? That's the question we will answer in this new series of studies.

Read Matthew 28:18,20; John 4:34,35; Luke 10:2.

But let's change metaphors from growing crops to grazing animals in order to begin to address our problem. There was famine in the land, so Isaac moved to the land of the Philistines. Due to Philistine envy he was forced to move into the Valley of Gerar. Now water was a problem. It was desperately needed for his animals or they would die. Because the situation was so dire this was no time to creatively dig new wells. Rather he dug again the wells of his father Abraham, which had been filled in by the Philistines. He knew there was water down there somewhere, so he re-dug them.

Read Genesis 26:1,15–18.

The lesson for us today? At such a time as this we need, not to look so much to creative new ways to solve our problem (for if we are really honest they're not helping much, and some are even making the problem worse)—rather we need to go back to the "old wells" and re-dig them. In other words we need to seek to understand what it was that brought a tremendous ingathering of souls in past ages when the church was revived and souls flooded into it. Come with me on a fascinating and vital journey in time that will surely help us today if we will let sacred history teach us.



The valley of Gerar, Israel, in the region Isaac lived and re-dug Abraham's wells.

OPINION POLL

What is the most pressing concern of modern young families?

- How to manage screen time
- Which school to go to
- Childhood obesity/eating disorders
- Maintaining a loving marriage
- Childcare out of school hours
- Over scheduling kids

Visit record.net.au to answer this poll.



Pacific ravaged by drought

by Josh Dye

Photo credits: (T) Josh Dye, (B) Matthew Kanua

AS THE PLANE DESCENDS INTO PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea, I'm shocked by all the brown outside. What I imagined to be tropical and green is anything but. Brown crops, brown trees, brown grass. The extent of the El Niño drought ravaging the country, and indeed the entire Pacific region, is plain to see: everything looks dead.

Within a few days I get first-hand accounts of just how bad things are as I meet people battling water and food shortages.

Ruth* lives with her husband and three young children in a small village in East New Britain. The drought has severely affected her family, especially with water shortages. She explains the pain she feels for her children who now have to walk long distances to get water for the family.

"My children experience headaches and backaches because of the daily work of collecting water," Ruth says.

But even worse is the fact that disease is spreading.

"We often experience sickness such as diarrhoea because we use the same water for washing, cooking and drinking," her husband Thomas* says.

But why the drought? And why now, during the wet season? El Niño is a naturally occurring event that leads to a major shift in weather patterns across the Pacific causing extensive warming and minimal rain. In Australia, it can



bring warmer temperatures and reduced rainfall, as well as increased bush-fire risk. But in countries like PNG, it hits people harder.

Thomas says that the drought has scorched their food supply. "When we go to harvest the food from our garden, the yield is usually small or there is no yield at all."

As he takes me through the fields, I see rows of shrivelled plants. There is still plenty of greenery, but when Thomas pulls up

a taro plant, there's no taro. Up in the Highlands provinces, frosts have wiped out entire crops.

So what is being done? For a start, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia funded an emergency response coordinator to assess the drought. ADRA is also waiting for the results of assessments conducted through the Church Partnership Program (CPP), a collaboration of the seven main churches in PNG funded by the Australian government. This will inform the best way to provide assistance to families desperate for relief.

CPP disaster response coordinator Matthew Kanua has visited remote regions of the Highlands and tells me the entire country is experiencing the drought.

"The impact of the drought varies depending on where you are," Mr Kanua says. "In the low altitudes, the weevils are attacking the crops of sweet potato and drinking water is running short. In the higher altitude areas, you've got sweet potato crops decimated by the frosts. The creeks have dried up [and] all the people are fetching their drinking water from the big rivers."

And the effects are being felt right across the Pacific. ADRA Vanuatu director Mark le Roux says Vanuatu has also been hit hard.

"It's been getting bad, particularly for the smaller islands," Mr le Roux says. "The biggest problem with this El Niño is for the communities hit by Cyclone Pam. Their crops were only just starting to recover and were relying on the wet season to get them through."

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology predicts El Niño will end in the second quarter of this year. While that's good news, the timing also means it will end just as the usual dry season begins, causing further pain for those affected.

So how can you help? By giving generously to the ADRA Disaster, Famine and Relief Offering next Sabbath, 13 February. Your offering will help ADRA respond and provide relief to drought-affected communities in PNG, as well as during other disasters in Australia and across the world.

* All names have been changed to protect privacy.

—Josh Dye is media and communication coordinator at ADRA Australia. He visited PNG in October 2015.



R HEALTH FEATURE

with Cathy McDonald

Food politics

Recently the US 2015-20 Dietary Guidelines were released and rather than be met with widespread praise, they were met with widespread debate. But what may come as a surprise to some is that most of the debate is in regards to what the document doesn't contain, rather than what it does.

Every 5 years when the US guidelines are reviewed, a *Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) Report* is put together looking at the latest science available on what a healthy diet looks like. After this report is written, the public is given the opportunity to submit comment on it and then the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and US Department of Agriculture (USDA) use the report and the comments from the public and federal agencies to inform the creation of new dietary guidelines.

When the DAGC Report for 2015 was released, it was praised by many for including a section of sustainability. It's appropriate that when we choose food we think about the impact its production has on the environment. There's no point building our diets around food that can't be produced in large enough quantities to support our needs long term.

But this section and the recommendations in it didn't end up making it into the US 2015-20 Dietary Guidelines. Dr David Katz, founder of the True Health Coalition described this omission as "the political adulterations of the excellent work of scientists". A great deal of evidence shows that a shift towards a diet built around minimally processed plant foods is great for the environment and great for our health. The recent US dietary guidelines are seen by many as an unfortunate reminder of how evidence and important messages can be left on the shelf when there's political gain to be had.



Green Paw Paw Salad

Preparation time: 15 minutes Cooking time: 5 minutes Serves: 6

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small red onion, finely diced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 limes, juice only
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce (salt reduced)
- ½ cup unsalted peanuts, roughly chopped
- 200g green paw paw, peeled and grated
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- ½ cup mint leaves, torn
- ½ cup basil leaves, torn

1. Heat oil in frypan, sauté onion and garlic until golden brown. Set aside to cool.
2. In a bowl combine lime juice, salt, brown sugar, soy sauce and half the peanuts. Mix dressing with paw paw and carrot allowing the paw paw to soften.
3. Mix half mint and basil into the onion mixture.
4. To serve, place paw paw mix on a plate, top with the onion and herb mix, then remaining mint, basil and nuts.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVE: Kilojoules 1345kJ, Calories 320 Cal, Protein 10g, Total fat 10g, Carbohydrate 47g, Sodium 210mg, Potassium 515mg, Calcium 144mg, Iron 2.2mg, Fibre 5g

Call and arrange to speak to one of our qualified nutritionists at Sanitarium Lifestyle Medicine Services on 1800 673 392 (in Australia) or 0800 100 257 (in New Zealand). Alternatively, email us at nutrition@sanitarium.com.au (Australia) or nutrition@sanitarium.co.nz (New Zealand). For more great recipes and health articles visit our website www.sanitarium.com.au or www.sanitarium.co.nz

Sanitarium LIFESTYLE MEDICINE SERVICES



New vision for media

by Calvin Dever

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU WERE HANDED the responsibility of running Adventist Media? For most of us, that's a hypothetical question. But for one person its not. And that person happens to be me.

After an exceptional period of leadership by my friend and colleague Neale Schofield, I was asked towards the end of last year to lead our church's media ministries in the South Pacific. What a privilege, challenge and opportunity all at the same time! Thankfully, we have a fantastic, creative team in the office, as well as around the South Pacific. A team who are passionate about sharing the love of Jesus through media.

But here's the challenge we face.

Do we continue doing what we've been doing?

Or if we do something different, what would it be, and how should we decide?

Continuing to do what we're doing may be a comfortable option but it's not a very good one. Every sector of our society is changing, and none faster than media. If we want to be relevant, we need to change too. The alternative is irrelevance.

In the past the "public square" of social influence was the temple courtyard, used by Jesus or a tent as used by our young pioneers. Today it's most often a small, portable screen. That is where we go to be informed and entertained, where we go to learn and to communicate. So

either we get our media efforts right or . . . well, we fail in our mission to reach our modern world.

Saying we need to adapt to a changing world is useful, but we have to ask ourselves how?

To answer that question, our team analysed a full range of questions, starting with: what's our goal?

We decided our goal isn't to make TV shows, films, music or magazines. Our goal is to introduce people to a loving Saviour, a healthier life, and link them with the Seventh-day Adventist community, where they can grow as disciples of Christ.

That's a great goal. Who would disagree with it? But how do we do it?

Vying for our audience's time today are not just all the broadcast TV channels, satellite networks, Netflix and other online providers of movies and TV shows, but tens of thousands of online magazines and over a billion websites. If we try to reach everyone with a generic multigenerational product, the chances we break through the clutter are almost zero. This is particularly true because we have very limited resources. So we've endeavoured to make God-inspired decisions about where we invest the talents God has given to us.

In deciding where to focus our limited media resources, we researched which demographics are most open to the gospel. For this we talked with pastors, evangelists, lay soul winners and church administrators. We also researched

what has been written on the subject. It turns out that people are most open to the gospel at specific times in their lives. In short, it is during periods of significant crisis and change that people are most open to the Gospel.

Across the Pacific, churches and individuals passionately work with people dealing with particular issues—abuse, depression, health. At another church it's a different issue with a different demographic. We need to focus our media on a demographic that applies around the Pacific, so that when they come to our local church communities we can really meet their needs, regardless of what challenges in life they face.

"Wait a minute," one of our team, Jared, said, "we've got something for young families." "What do you mean?" I replied. "Well, think about it—virtually every church in the South Pacific has children's programs and they are great. They involve singing, stories and often a craft."

"You mean Sabbath School?" I responded. "Yeah. But you know, people pay good money to send their kids to secular programs like that. And we have these superb programs going on, week in, week out, all over the Pacific, for free! At nearly every church. And more than that. We've got Adventurers. We've got Pathfinders. We've got great schools, hospitals along with a host of other services and activities for families, including the world's largest kids triathlon. We've got something pretty amazing!"

I have to admit, Jared had a point. If someone decides to drop into an Adventist Church because they were intrigued by a piece of media aimed at parents of young kids, we can be pretty certain that they'll find something awesome for their children—and for themselves. No matter where in the Pacific they are.

At our most recent board meeting the members unanimously agreed: focusing our energies and media outreach on young families makes sense (not before some serious discussion and not before noting that most of the board members are at the young grandkids stage rather than the young kids stage).

So how do we make our media available to young families? Deloitte Consulting's recent media report showed that the number one source of information and entertainment for the 20–35 year old demographic is . . .

Well, what do you imagine it is? I'll give you a hint. It's not obscure satellite TV networks. Indeed, it isn't even TV. Or radio. Or print. The number one source is the internet. But you knew that already, didn't you?

And so, we're going to focus our resources on producing media to be delivered over the internet. And then connect that media with online resources, interactive information and, of course, to our local churches and schools. After all, if you're a young parent, there's no better place to go!

All sound too good? In some ways it is. Because in order to pivot our focus onto young families, we have to take our focus off some of the things we've been doing, and change others. And that is painful! We may make changes you don't personally agree with. I understand that, but I hope you will understand in time. Change is painful. But it also represents opportunities to try new things, in new ways. Continuing to use the media the way we always have when all around us society is changing so rapidly would be a waste of the resources God has blessed us with.

Along with focusing our attention on young families, we want to democratise our media. What do I mean by that? I mean that we want you involved in a much more direct way, where your videos, songs, poems, and stories contribute directly to our goal of connecting people to Jesus. Watch out for details of how.

I know our church community is absolutely oozing with talent. And these days, we all have access to the technology to turn talent into a little piece of media. Adventists got talent—I know we do, because I know Who gave it to us! Share it with us and we'll share it with the world.

Before I close, can I ask you for something? Look around our cities in this great region. How many of them have we really penetrated with the great news of Christ's soon return? How many people living in Auckland, or Melbourne have even heard of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

Because I spend almost all my time talking with Adventists it's easy to lose sight of just how far we have to go to give the good news to our societies. We've been active for well over a century in the South Pacific, yet everyone knows other companies started in just the last few years—Facebook, Google, Uber—and we remain largely unknown in our largest cities—particularly in Australia and New Zealand.

If we want that to change, we have to change.

As we make the most of the opportunities this change in focus brings, our team needs every ounce of encouragement you can find in your heart to give. And our team need every prayer you have the grace to pray. I want more than anything to see lives changed, souls redeemed, and parents and their children finding meaning, fulfillment and peace as one of Jesus' disciples. There will be stumbles and mistakes along the way, of that I am sure. But, under God's grace, I believe He will use our media to glorify His name and bring others to Him. Good things are happening. Let's all join together to support the effort—and as a church family, let's lead other families to Christ.

A privilege? No doubt. A challenge? You bet. An opportunity? Absolutely!

Kalvin Dever is CEO of Adventist Media.

AVOIDING *Genetic Fallacies*

by Sven Ostring



SOMETIMES, WHEN MY DAD IS FEELING A BIT mischievous, he will say with an impish smile, “Remember! It is important to choose your parents wisely!” Every time I hear him say this, I smile to myself, because of course my dad knows that it is logically impossible to choose your own biological parents. No matter how much you wish or how hard you try, your biological parents had to exist before you were born and you are stuck, generally speaking, with the genetic material that they bequeathed to you at conception.

There is something genetic, though, that you can avoid, and that is genetic fallacies. You may have never heard of a genetic fallacy before, so let me explain what it is. A genetic fallacy is when someone discredits or rejects an idea based simply on the source of the idea or the process through which it was developed.¹ A genetic fallacy can also be committed in the converse manner—when someone defends or accepts an idea simply on its source or the process through which it was developed. The truth or falsehood of ideas does not depend on where they come from. Each concept needs to be evaluated on its own merit rather than simply on its source.

Let me give you an example of a genetic fallacy. Imagine that I had a primary school teacher in Year 2 called Miss Jones, who was a dedicated vegetarian Seventh-day Adventist and every Sabbath afternoon faithfully went door-to-door offering people Try Jesus cards. In Maths class, Miss Jones taught me that “ $1 + 2 = 4$ ”. Imagine, though, that the next year I had another primary school teacher called Miss Wilson, who was a chain-smoking communist

agnostic and at night moonlighted as a bartender. In her Maths class, Miss Wilson taught me that “ $1 + 2 = 3$ ”. Now it would be a genetic fallacy for me to conclude, since Miss Jones was a dedicated vegetarian Seventh-day Adventist and that Miss Wilson was a chain-smoking communist agnostic, that “ $1 + 2 = 4$ ” rather than “ $1 + 2 = 3$ ”. Even though we may agree with many of Miss Jones’ beliefs, that does not mean that everything she said was true. Conversely, just because Miss Wilson may have had so many beliefs and lifestyle practices that were wrong, this does not mean that everything that she said was false.

Now, let’s consider a genuine and significant genetic fallacy. There are scientists who claim that there is an internal inconsistency in the Seventh-day Adventist worldview because our church community embraces certain scientific discoveries but it rejects other theories or conclusions that are currently accepted in the scientific community. For example, the Seventh-day Adventist church has enthusiastically embraced the physics of electromagnetism, since we use electromagnetic waves to carry our evangelistic messages through radio, satellite and optical networks, and the genetics behind the Human Genome Project, which is already providing us with information to design predictive genetic tests and gene-based “designer drugs” to treat hereditary diseases like cancer.² However, the Adventist church has not officially adopted the Big Bang theory and has rejected the deep-time evolutionary theory that we have a common biological ancestor with chimpanzees, along with all of the other furry, feathered and leggy critters that call this planet home. This is internally inconsis-

ent, say some scientists, and reveals a strange paradox in the Seventh-day Adventist worldview. If we accept some scientific conclusions, we should in good faith accept them all, claim these scientists.

Before we rush to conclude that there is actually an internal inconsistency in the Seventh-day Adventist faith, we need to understand some important things about the nature of science. Science is an incredibly effective way of studying the physical world around us, but it is also an inherently tentative and provisional process. This means that we cannot be sure that science has reached objective truth in the case of each and every scientific theory or conclusion. In fact, one of the key aims of science is to develop better theories, and this may, in the process, result in falsifying some of the scientific theories currently on the research table. This means that it is possible that some current scientific theories are false while many others are true. Scientific theories can even be inconsistent with each other, for example like the fact that general relativity is incompatible with quantum mechanics.³ At other times, particularly in biology, two scientific theories can exist side by side to explain a process. They are not necessarily incompatible. It simply means that not enough evidence has been gathered yet to lend more weight to one versus the other.

So, it is reasonable to reject some scientific theories as false, but on what basis would we do that? Firstly, we may reject some theories because they have already been falsified by scientists. We may also reject other scientific theories because they are highly speculative or because we are aware of evidence that contradicts them. Most importantly, we may reject scientific theories on theological grounds because they contradict a clear teaching of the Bible. For example, Jewish and Christian theologians in the first few centuries after Jesus' resurrection correctly rejected Aristotle's cosmological teaching that the universe did not have a beginning, because the Bible clearly teaches that God created everything, including the universe.⁴ In the same way, the Seventh-day Adventist Church can reject the contemporary evolutionary theory that life evolved on Planet Earth over billions of years because the Bible teaches that God recently created life on this planet in six literal days.

Now you may be wondering if rejecting particular scientific theories, while accepting others, is actually possible, since scientific theories may be interlocked and actually depend on each other, sort of like a vast scientific jigsaw puzzle or a delicately woven daisy chain. For example, the Christian geneticist and evolutionary biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky wrote a famous essay with the title, "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution."⁵ However, science is actually more like a Jenga game tower, where you can remove some blocks and the tower still stands. Scientists have been adding and removing blocks from the tower of science over the last few centuries

without causing the entire tower to collapse. The reality that biology is based on DNA and genetics does not mean that biology depends on all of life having evolved from a common ancestor. This is because God could have recently created all of the life on Earth in six literal days in such a way that we are genetically similar to both chimpanzees and bananas. This short timeframe for Creation is, in fact, what the Bible plainly teaches: "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day" Exodus 20:11 (ESV)⁶.

The claim that the Seventh-day Adventist worldview involves an internal inconsistency, because our Church does not adopt all of the theories and conclusions produced by the scientific method, rather than being an indictment that warrants significant concern, actually commits the simple logical blunder known as the genetic fallacy. You may not be able to avoid the genetic material which formed the DNA instruction manual in your personal primordial cell, but you can avoid genetic fallacies, even though this reasoning might be being recommended by well-meaning people in the science community. R

1. The definition of a genetic fallacy is given in Ted Honderich, (Ed.) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 2nd Edition, 2005, p331 and in J.P. Moreland & William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations of a Christian Worldview*, InterVarsity Press, 2003, p57.
2. David Wheeler & Linghua Wang. "From human genome to cancer genome: The first decade," *Genome Research*, Vol 23. 2013, pp1057-1062.
3. As acknowledged by Stephen Hawking's Centre for Theoretical Cosmology at Cambridge University: http://www.ctc.cam.ac.uk/outreach/origins/quantum_cosmology_one.php and by John Schwarz on his Caltech homepage: <http://theory.caltech.edu/people/jhs/strings/str115.html>. Alvin Plantinga has also noted that "science contradicts itself, both over time and at the same time. Two of the most important and overarching contemporary scientific theories are general relativity and quantum mechanics. Both are highly confirmed and enormously impressive; unfortunately, they can't both be correct." Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion and Naturalism*, Oxford University Press, 2011, xii.
4. Refer to Paul Copan & William Lane Craig, *Creation out of Nothing: A Biblical, Philosophical and Scientific Exploration*, Baker Academic, 2004, pp93-145. Alvin Plantinga has described this situation in a more current and personal way: "For example, science has not spoken with a single voice about the question whether the universe has a beginning: first the idea was that it did, but then the steady theory triumphed, but then big bang cosmology achieved ascendancy, but now there are straws in the wind suggesting a reversion to the thought that the universe is without a beginning. The sensible religious believer is not obliged to trim her sails to the current scientific breeze on this topic, revising her belief on the topic every time science changes its mind; if the most satisfactory Christian (or theistic) theology endorses the idea that the universe did indeed have a beginning, the believer has a perfect right to accept that thought." Where the Conflict Really Lies, p121. Something similar goes for the Adventist believer and the Seventh-day Adventist fundamental belief that God recently created all of life on Earth in six literal days.
5. Theodosius Dobzhansky, "Nothing in Biology Makes Sense Except in the Light of Evolution", *American Biology Teacher*, 1973, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp125-129. Available at: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/evolution/library/10/2/text_pop/l_102_01.html. Check out the evaluation of Dobzhansky's far-reaching claim in the following papers: Jerry Bergman, "An Evaluation of the Myth that 'Nothing in Biology Makes Sense Except in the Light of Evolution'", *Answers Research Journal*, 5 (2012), pp1-12. Available at: <https://answersingenesis.org/theory-of-evolution/nothing-in-biology-makes-sense-except-in-the-light-of-evolution-myth-evaluation/>. Stephen Dille, "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of theology?" *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biology and Biomedical Science* Vol. 44 (2013), pp774-86. Abstract available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23890740>.
6. This literal understanding of the Creation week is reinforced in the prophetic gift that Jesus has given the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the chapter "The Literal Week" in *Patriarchs & Prophets* and the chapter "Science and the Bible" in *Education*.

Sven Ostring is director of discipleship movements for Greater Sydney Conference.



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Exodus 3:5

“       _____ ”

  _____ are _____

_____ is _____ ”



LETTERS

EDUCATION NEEDED TO PREVENT DV

Kevin Brown, Qld

Re: "Facing facts: understanding Domestic violence" (Feature, November 21, 2015). Having worked in the criminal justice system for most of my working life, and having seen hundreds of these matters since the introduction of Qld's Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act, 1989, (and subsequent amendments), it is my strong conviction governments, community leaders (churches) and other 'interested' institutions are approaching this issue from a fundamentally flawed perspective.

Innovative, therapeutic, preventative strategies, programs and support mechanisms are the most urgently needed tools by our society to early PREVENT domestic violence. "Educate, educate, educate!", I say, "and early". Early recognition of potential behaviours (incl. words) that may lead to dysfunctionality and ultimately domestic violence, are critical for all of us.

Moreover, we all need to be self aware and to know when to, how to, and who to reach out to, for guidance and constructive support without judgment or censure at very early stages. This requires education, training and awareness. Currently, counselling can be out of reach and ill-equipped to cater for early stages of dysfunctionality, in my experience.

While curative programs and strategies are, and sadly always will be required to

address, and deal with various aspects of DV 'after the event', surely prevention is far better than cure for this most destructive scourge.

Our schools, churches, workplaces, clubs and the like, are institutions all impacted by DV in some way or other. These entities could be conduits through which early recognition and preventative strategies and programs could be launched.

Like it or not, we all need training at some level on how to be functional as a spouse, sibling and parent, moreover to thrive as Christian families.

For most of us, all the training we receive is from 'parents' or 'parental figures' who themselves are often dysfunctional.

Most of all, as Christians, we each and all need Jesus, and Him crucified, continually dwelling deep within our hearts as we near the end. If only the first 15 verses of Philippians 2 could be emulated, our homes and society at large would be better to live in. If I were to daily, "Let this mind be in (me) which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5), then I would be a much better husband, father and friend!

COMMISSION CONFUSION

Kristine Stahl, via email

Thank you for the article "First Female Minister Commissioned In PNGUM" (News, December 5, 2015).

I must admit that I am confused about the term "commissioned minister." Does that mean she is not ordained?

Where is this found in

Scripture? Isn't ordaining a person done by God who calls the person to serve Him? If the "laying on of hands" is ordination, is it only reserved only for men? As I understand it, the "laying on of hands," is symbolic of the "setting apart by God for His work and giving of the Holy Spirit" to the individual to strengthen, guide them in that work. Does that mean that the Holy Spirit is given only to men? Don't women in ministry need the Holy Spirit's power too?

Can someone please explain this to me from Scripture?

We should be bound by the Scriptures, not by a body of men who are held captive by their traditions. We are supposed to be the "People of the Book," so why are we forcing decisions upon the world church based upon traditions? This is supremely paradoxical.

INSPIRED READING

J Bolst, via website

Thanks for this article "The enemy next door" (November 7, 2015). A real inspiration.

I was inspired after reading Paul Fua's article some weeks back to try reading *Desire of Ages* (I find it difficult to understand the language and KJV Bible references).

I have fallen in love with it though, and this article summarises some of the elements that E G White includes as characteristics of Christ.

Thanks for sharing it.

Note: Views in letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author's original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See Page 4 for contact details.

APPRECIATION

Mills. Dorothy and her family, Dianne, Graham and Lesley, and their families, would like to thank everyone who sent flowers and messages of sympathy following the loss of her husband and their father and grandfather, Noel Mills. We appreciate your kind words and prayers for us at this time.

ANNIVERSARIES



Arthur. Errol and Margaret were married 11.12.1950 by

Pastor Roy Brandstater in Kensington church, SA. They express their gratitude for God's blessing in giving them 65 happy and satisfying years together as they have lived and worked in Adelaide and Millicent, SA; Bathurst, NSW; Fiji and Tonga; and Warburton and Lilydale, Vic. They have three married children: Dale and Esther (WA), Loree and Peter McGowan, and Elden and Marilyn (Vic); and five

grandchildren. The family has always enjoyed an active role in the Church.



Tasker. Barry and Lynn were married 9.12.1964 in Tauranga, NZ.

They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with family in Macksville, NSW. They have nine children, 19 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Barry spent many years as a literature evangelist in New Plymouth, NZ, and then in Australia. They now live in Macksville.

Erik Nilsson

WEDDINGS

Ebersöhn–Steenberg. Fanus Ebersöhn, son of Jako and Persis Ebersöhn (Brisbane, Qld), and Allissa Steenberg, daughter of Andre and Debbie Steenberg (Brisbane), were married 10.1.16 at Alexandra Headlands, Sunshine Coast. Their reception was held at Maroochydore church.

Steve Kane



Chengeta–Pidgeon. Alfred Chengeta, son of Clever and

Gertrude Chengeta (Zimbabwe), and Nicole Pidgeon, daughter of Andrew (deceased) and Catherine Pidgeon (Melbourne, Vic), were married 4.10.15 in Hughesdale church, Melbourne. They have set up their home in Melbourne.

David Pearce

Mason–Tew. Caleb Mason, son of Terence and Sharon Mason (Nhulunbuy, NT), and Melinda Tew, daughter of Tim and Terreena Tew (Cooanbong, NSW), were married 11.12.15 at Hillview church, Morisset. Melinda and Caleb met as students at Avondale College. They will live in Cooanbong as they continue their studies.

Mike Parker

OBITUARIES

Cameron, Yvonne Ruth (nee Dever), born 30.3.1940; died 2.12.15. Daughter of Pastor Joe and Alice Dever, Yvonne grew up in South New South Wales and Tasmania. She attended Avondale College. Yvonne had a talent in dressmaking, sewing many brides' and bridesmaids' dresses, and one of her last masterpieces was a debutante gown for her much-loved granddaughter Karly, which was on display at the funeral. She was also active in the Warburton church (Vic) catering ministry, assisting with luncheons and special events. She is survived by her daughter Helen, son Bruce, son-in-law Angus and granddaughter Karly, who all miss her very much.

Kevin Geelan

Campbell, Lydia Marjory Beryl (fondly known to many as Beryl), born 18.11.1938 in NZ; died 23.8.15 in Sydney, NSW. She is survived by her husband Bruce; children: Roslyn, Allan, Greg,

Darralyn, Nigel and their spouses; 13 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Family was number one to Beryl. Much of her working life was spent serving the Lord in aged care and those she cared for loved her dearly. She was always a great support to her husband in the publishing work of the Church, serving in New Zealand, PNG and Australia. Literature evangelists (LEs) in the South Pacific Division will long remember her cheerful smile as she served at LE congresses.

Terence Goltz



Cavilla, Derek Albert, born 18.4.1936 in London, UK; died 27.11.15 in Rossmoyne

Adventist Retirement Village, Perth, WA. On 23.7.1964 he married Janet Hard. He is survived by his wife (Rossmoyne ARV); their daughter Gwynneth, son Christopher and his wife Wendy; and grandchildren Jamie-Lee, Mason and Colwyn (all of Perth). Derek had a talent for singing and arts from an early age. He managed Broadway theatre and appeared on ABC television. He was invited to sing at a mission by Pastor Austin Cooke, stayed for every program and was baptised in 1961. Derek served Sanitarium for 36 years in many roles, from truck driver to state manager. He sang and preached and found innovative ways to share Jesus.

Roger Millist

Cormack, Robert Brian, born 21.12.1941 in Marrickville, NSW; died 12.11.15 in Toronto Private Hospital. On 31.5.1963 he married Glenda Robyn Turner in Dora Creek church. He is survived by his wife; children Gregory and Katie Cormack, Leanne and Jon Knight; and four grandchildren. Brian worked as a rigger and later managed a successful company doing concrete reinforcement work across the Hunter Region. For the next 20 years he



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ran a successful trucking business based in Cooranbong. Brian was well known and loved by many. He served his church well as a head deacon, in Pathfinder ministry and also on fly'n'builds to both Fiji and PNG. Brian was a thoughtful, kind and generous person with a strong faith in Jesus.

Roger Nixon, Horrie Watts



Harders, Henry John, born 31.12.1926 in Toodyay, WA; died 30.9.15 in St John of God Hospital, Geraldton. In 1950 he married Margaret Sewell, who predeceased him. In 1982 he married Melba Alcantra. Then in 2008 he married Marietta Burau. He is survived by Denise (Albany), Sherrilyn (Millicent, SA), Narelle (Brookton, WA), Michelle (Bremer Bay), Ruby (Geraldton), Allen (Canada) and Mark (Geraldton). Henry lived a long life that was still far too short as far as his family is concerned. They will miss him but are comforted in the knowledge that those who believe in Jesus (as Henry did) will live again.

Lynn Burton



Keskinen, Asko Juhani, born 21.12.1936 in Finland; died 25.11.15 in Yeppoon, Qld. He is survived by his wife Vicki; three children Harry (Ireland), Michael (Brisbane, Qld) and Heidi (Millaa Millaa); and grandchildren Kaarina (Cairns) and Nicholas (Ireland). In 1959 Asko immigrated to Australia. In 1968 he married Vuokko (Vicki) Kallio, also from Finland, in Melbourne, Vic. In 2009, after many years of attending church with his wife, Asko was baptised in the Malanda church, Qld, by Pastor Musu Amuimuia. In 2011 the couple moved to Capricorn Adventist Retirement Village. He is remembered for his humour, love of music and firm faith in God.

Mark Turner, Ray Hobbs

Lonsdale, Harold Keith, born 5.4.1923 in Windsor, Vic; died 26.8.15 in Adventcare Whitehorse, Nunawading. He is survived by his wife Leila; daughter Faye, son Ian and his wife Cathy; five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. As a gentle, compassionate, hospitable and well-respected person, Keith

positively influenced many people's lives. He had a deep love for all his family and gave many years of service at Hughesdale church, Vic. Keith went to sleep with a calm confidence in the love and grace of God and with the expectation of the promise of God's full redemption.

Robyn Stanley

Lowe, Phyllis Audrey (nee Jensen), born 2.9.1927 in Wentworthville, NSW; died 22.8.15 in Erina. She married Alexander (Alec) Lowe. She is survived by her husband; children and their spouses, Kevin and Chris Lowe, Margaret and Charles Mackey, Wendy and Maurice Platt; and nine grandchildren. Phyllis's great loves were music and her garden. She lived her life with loyalty and love that showed no limits for her husband, family and God. Friends and family gathered at Avondale Cemetery to celebrate her life and to lay her to rest until Jesus comes.

Don Madden



Mills, Noel Leslie, born 25.12.1929 in Albany, WA; died 7.12.15 in Rossmoynne Adventist Retirement Village. On 2.1.1952 he married Dorothy (Dot) Graham. He is survived by his wife; children Dianne and Richard Bosyk (Perth), Graham and Olga (Perth), and Lesley and Ken Dempsey (Pinjarra); 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and her sister Dorothy (Albany). Noel was a very practical person with a love for family, nature, gardening and fishing. He impacted the lives of many as a science teacher at Narrogin, Fulton College, Victoria Park Adventist High and Bunbury Senior High School. In retirement his generosity and friendship touched many.

Roger Millist



Thyer, Leslie George, born 12.7.1939 in Brisbane, Qld; died 19.12.13 in Townsville Hospital. Les was baptised by Pastor Frank Benham. On 11.10.1961 he married Dawn Nolan in the Red Hill church with the service conducted by Pastor Mel Stewart. He is survived by his wife (Mackay); Lynette and Bruce Kenny, Kristie, Georgia, Jolie and Bradman (all of Monto), Kevin and Lisa Thyer, Jacob and

Darcy (all of Mackay), Adelle and Sean McGrath, Cooper, Mackenzie and Hudson (all of Bilambil Heights, NSW), Paulene and Ashley Rorich, Cole, Alexander and Joachim (all of Kyogle), Melodie and Dean Tickner, Abbey and Emmett (all of Lismore). Les was an electrical mechanic and fitter, and was meticulous in all his work. He returned to his Lord after an absence of 30 years. After his re-baptism he became a devoted member of Walkerston church. Qld, and is greatly missed.

Wilson, Trevor Mark, born 2.1.1950 in Tauranga, NZ; died 31.1.15 in Wanganui. Trevor's funeral was held at the Palmerston North church on 4.2.15. On 6.4.1974 he married Joan Peterson in St George's Anglican Church, Tauranga. On 20.8.08 he married Alice Ruscoe in the Palmerston North church. Trevor is survived by his three children Calvin, Allison and Heather; and two grandchildren Nathan and Sophie Smith.

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A private faith that does not act in the face of oppression is no faith at all.

—William Wilberforce

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