

C O L L E G E A N D U N I V E R S I T Y
DIALOGUE

E n g l i s h • F r e n c h • P o r t u g u e s e • S p a n i s h



***Dialogue* marks
25th anniversary**

A new “trinity”

A time to remember

**What if I accept
theistic evolutionism?**

**Adventists and
environmental
stewardship**

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Volume 25

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EDITORIAL

Dialogue: **Celebrating a continuing ministry**

Of the 25 years of *Dialogue's* ministry, I had the unique privilege of spending 22 of them as an editor, and so had an intimate connection with its philosophical thrust and theological assertions. Each in its own way, through every issue that came off the press, challenged me to think and think again, and then reaffirm in my personal life and ministry the core of Adventism. Thus, *Dialogue* to me is not just a journal but a call to live and reflect Adventist essentials.

The philosophical thrust that *Dialogue* dealt with boldly for a quarter century offered Adventist young people in secular campuses a way to deal with the issue of personal identity and communal responsibility. Be it Joseph in Potiphar's enticing home, Daniel in the lion's den or imperial palace, or Esther in a beauty contest and subsequent spiritual battle, the issue each child of God faces in a strange land is: who am I, and whose am I? Ownership and stewardship are two defining philosophical factors that control the contours of our present life and guide that life into a sure and certain future. No human philosophy can provide a safe and definitive answer to such questions. Such a safe and sure definition can come only in the biblical affirmation of human creation: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to our likeness'" (Genesis 1:26, NKJV).

"Made in the image of God" offers the highest form of dignity to human beings. Science cannot match it. Philosophy cannot reason it out. Economics cannot assign its value. Human beings are not cosmic accidents; they are not the cumulative collocation of atoms; they are not meaningless matter; they are not animals. They are the children of God; they are His handiwork; they are the prized possession of the Infinite One who has made them in His image. That image means the Creator has chosen to share part of His own character with His creatures: creativity, freedom, responsibility, consciousness, knowledge. Unlike animals, men and women stand at the center of existence, and survey the past, the present, and the future. History, action, and hope are part of the human journey.

For 25 years, *Dialogue* has projected the creatorship of God as the fundamental source of meaning and relevance for human life.

That's not all. The Bible presents not only the high level at which God placed humans in creation, but also the low level to which they have sunk as a result of their own choice. If creation places humans as children of God with all glory and dignity, the choice that humans have made – namely, to rebel against God and turn to sin – has turned them into helpless objects of depravity and death. Isaiah paints a horrific picture of that depravity: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores" (Isaiah 1:5, 6, NKJV).

Depravity in all its dreadfulness is not God's intended destiny for humans. Even though sinners are in constant rebellion against their Creator, biblical anthropology does not leave human beings to the results of their dreadful choice. The account in Genesis that introduces the predicament of humans also joyfully proclaims that the Creator has taken the redemptive initiative to offer humans the choice to come home to glory (Genesis 3:15). Men and

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Dialogue has received correspondence from readers in 120 countries around the world.

LETTERS



women are thus not hopeless. They are not abandoned. They are not left alone. They are redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus (1 Peter 1:19).

For 25 years, *Dialogue* has consistently proclaimed a biblical anthropology – a creation celebrated by the song of the angels, a fall that wounded the heart of God, a redemption that cost the life of His Son, and an eschatology that promises total renewal.

Within the context of that biblical worldview – God-centered, Bible-based, redemptive, and eschatological – *Dialogue* has ministered to Adventist students in secular campuses, cementing their faith, augmenting their search for truth, enabling them to be live witnesses for a God who cares. That ministry should continue.

John M. Fowler, Editor
Dialogue

John M. Fowler (Ed.D., Andrews University) has edited *Dialogue* for the past 22 years, contributed an *Action Report* to the inaugural issue of *Dialogue* (1989) vol. 1, and was listed in the journal's masthead as the regional representative for the Southern Asia Division.

As we celebrate 25 years of *Dialogue*, we pause to share a few samples of the hundreds of letters we have received along the years.

1990 – from PHILIPPINES (Asia)

I personally found the topics included in *Dialogue*, very relevant to my situation as an Adventist student in a secular university. Dennis I.

1991 – from U.S.A. (North America)

I have been receiving *Dialogue* regularly. I find its content both informative and stimulating. John A.

1999 – from ECUADOR (South America)

I'm always proud to share *Dialogue* with my non-Adventist friends. Zacarias M.

2000 – from PAPUA NEW GUINEA (Oceania)

I am a great fan of *Dialogue*. Every issue is a God-send. Wake M.

2001 – from FRANCE (Europe)

As the only Adventist student in my school, at times I find myself struggling with feelings of loneliness. However, *Dialogue* is a welcome friend. Each issue enriches me intellectually and spiritually. Adrea S.

2002 – from MARTINIQUE (Central America)

Each issue of *Dialogue* offers plenty of stimulating material on which to reflect. Sandrine C.

2003 – from DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (Africa)

Here there is no other journal that is more attractive to Adventist students. The few copies that reach us irregularly, find broad circulation in the various campuses of our university. Jerry K.

2004 – from U.S.A. (North America)

It is very hard to be and Adventist studying at a school in which atheistic evolution is taught as a fact. For that reason, receiving *Dialogue* has been a complete blessing for me. Valerie R.

2004 – from BRAZIL (South America)

There are times in which I feel almost overwhelmed by the secular and naturalistic philosophies presented by my professors at the public university. Then I receive *Dialogue* ... and I am encouraged to live and share my faith. Anderson M.

2005 – from BARBADOS (Central America)

The interviews with Adventist researchers are especially inspiring and motivational. Andrew M.

2005 – from GERMANY (Europe)

I read *Dialogue* and like its content very much. It is a very good journal for Adventist students. Jakob W.

2006 – from MADAGASCAR (Africa)

It is refreshing to find a journal that tackles difficult topics and deals with them biblically. Paul P.

2007 – from NIGERIA (Africa)

Thank you for publishing *Dialogue*, a journal that strengthens our faith and motivates us to live as true Christians. Peter L.

2009 – from INDIA (Asia)

I am very happy and grateful to you for producing such high-quality thought-containing articles. Robinson K.

SPECIAL FEATURE

A Vision and a Journey: 25 years of *Dialogue*

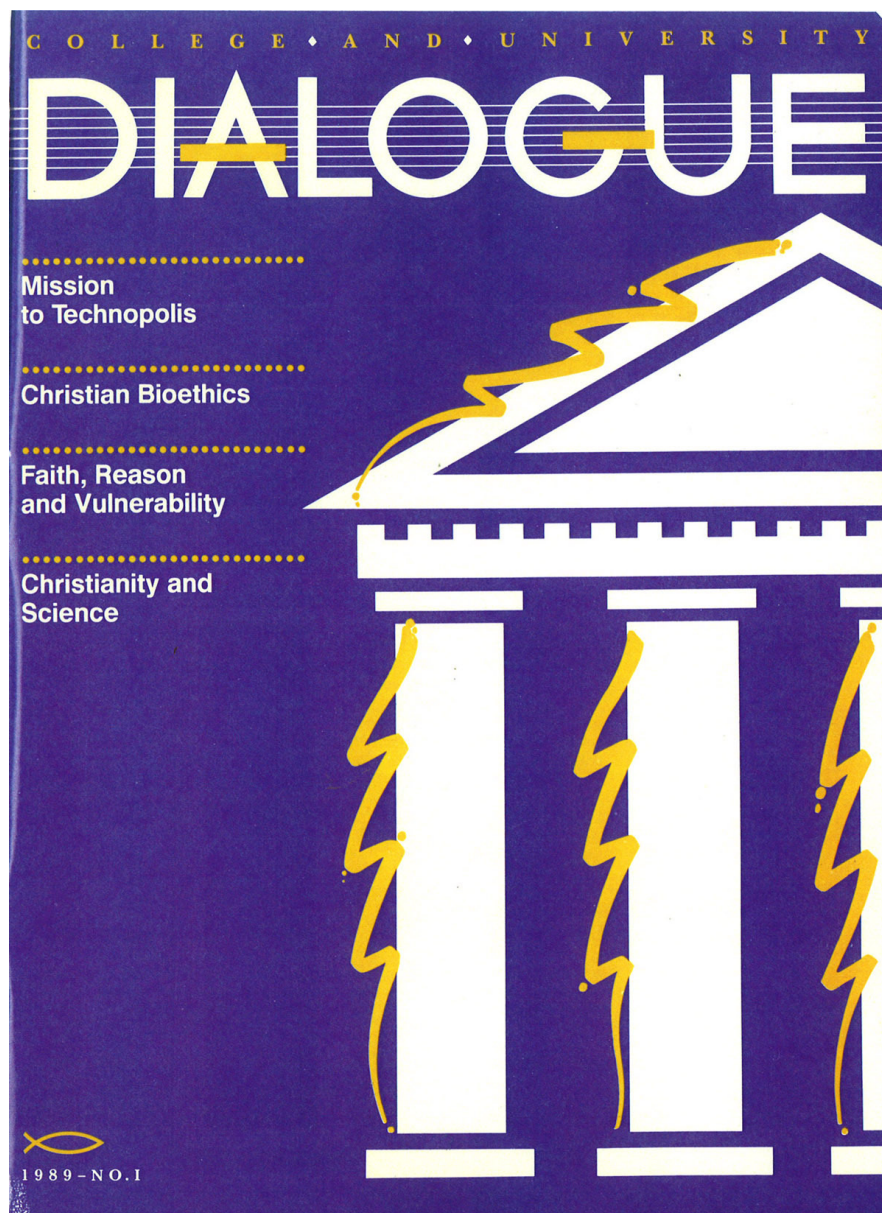
by Humberto M. Rasi

This journal's story begins with an ambitious launch, an international perspective, and an expanding roster of authors and readers, with encouraging surprises along the way.

The 25th birthday of a journal offers the perfect occasion to celebrate and reminisce. In 1988, *College and University Dialogue* was born in response to a need: thousands of bright Adventist students around the world attending public institutions of higher learning risked losing their belief in God and abandoning biblical-Christian principles. There was little to help shore up their faith.

Having been such a student myself in Argentina and the U.S., and meeting with many more during my international travels, I knew those challenges well. Nurturing and challenging their minds was essential, I felt, to keep them engaged in Adventist mission, both as students, and later as professionals. Experience as vice president for editorial development at the Pacific Press Publishing Association gave me the expertise needed to plan the launch of a new journal, but the path was not smooth, and I was already committed to a significant workload.

However, with the support of the General Conference Education Department and the encouragement of two other departments, we decided to forge ahead, producing a sample issue with a survey for potential readers. The projected journal was to be the first publication from Adventist Church world headquarters to appear simultaneously in four parallel language editions: English,



French, Portuguese, and Spanish. The editorial page outlined the journal's essential goals: to help university students (1) *know* their faith better, (2) *live* their faith more consistently, and (3) *share* their faith more effectively. The content page outlined its structure: Essays, Profiles, Logos, Campus Life, Action Report, and For Your Information.

Next, what to name the new journal? After compiling a list, we asked for input from the recently-created Committee on Ministry to College and University Students, its regional representatives, and university students. Dr. Gordon Madgwick, executive secretary of the North American Division Board of Higher Education, recommended the name finally adopted. "If you wish to engage this special group of international readers – he observed – *Dialogue* should be part of the journal's name." Pages and cover were designed in pre-computer paste-up fashion. The 36-page *College*

and *University Dialogue* 1 went to the printer in 1989 with an optimistic print order of 33,500 copies – 18,500 in English, 8,500 in Spanish, 4,000 in Portuguese, and 2,500 in French.

The survey forms soon came pouring in. We were convinced that the new journal fed an intellectual and spiritual hunger among tens of thousands of Adventist college and university students. After them came a stream of letters from engaged readers. Postmarks read Botswana, Canada, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, the U.S., and more. Our readers asked follow-up questions, took issue with authors, and added relevant observations and information.

Neidi Axford, at Clark Community College in Vancouver, Washington, U.S., thanked us for *Dialogue*, adding, "There's so little published for us! We're being forgotten and, in turn, we are forgetting the church. In future

issues, please include articles written by students on how to get involved in the life of the church, how to bring Christ to our college, and how to keep Christ first in our lives when tempted by other lifestyles." In response, during the second year of publication we added a letters section.

Another section, called "Interchange," became very popular. It listed the name, address, and a short biography of readers interested in corresponding with other Adventist students and professionals around the world. The growing exchange of postcards, letters, and souvenirs resulted in friendships and, in a few cases, even wedding bells. We received appreciative notes and also photos of Chilean-Norwegian, Cuban-Mexican, and Northern Brazilian-Southern Brazilian couples and some of their children! Later *Dialogue* issues included first-person stories, book reviews, and open forum features, rounding out a rich menu for an expanding readership.

The journal fostered the establishment of Adventist student associations in many countries, by providing guidelines and suggestions for activities as well as promoting chaplain appointments. These associations held prayer circles, hosted Bible Days, donated Adventist books to libraries, and launched service and outreach programs. In several cases, the associations were formally registered and granted privileges by public campus administrators. In Kenya, for example, Adventist students have been meeting for lively worship services on several public university campuses. In two other public universities on the African continent, authorities have donated campus land for construction of a church and service center that provides free nutrition and smoking cessation courses and tutoring. The deciding factor: a number of students and faculty members stopped smoking and were eating improved diets thanks to the student association's outreach.

In other countries, however, the

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challenge of required classes and labs on Sabbath have persisted. *Dialogue* reported that in one Asian country, public universities required students completing dental and medical programs to attend graduation ceremonies on Sabbath to receive their diplomas. Faithful Adventist students waited six or seven years until, by God's answer to prayer, an exception was made so they were able to receive their diplomas and begin their careers.

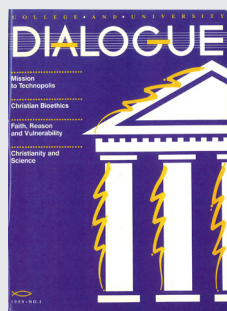
In a Western African nation, the regional Adventist chaplain met with the highest national education authority to intervene on behalf of students falling behind in their studies due to the requirement to attend classes and take exams on Sabbath. The chaplain brought copies of *Dialogue* in English and French to show that the local Adventist student associations were part of an organized international fellowship. The education minister was so impressed with the journal that he issued an official letter granting students permission to take examinations on days other than Sabbath. At the end of the interview, the minister also requested a subscription to *Dialogue*.

In the meantime, the international roster of Adventist professionals surviving the challenges of a secular university education has grown, as evidenced by the journal's profile interviews and author list. With satisfaction, we have also seen *Dialogue* essays quoted in academic and scholarly publications.

Four persons were instrumental in helping the journal reach its cruising altitude. Gerard Latchman skillfully transitioned *Dialogue* editions from manual paste-up to computer design. Beverly Rumble checked the English text for accuracy and clarity of expression. Julieta Rasi finessed the four-language translation process, aided by a gifted team of contributors, and she consolidated its international printing and distribution. John Fowler brought the English editing up to a professional level.

Now that *Dialogue* has reached its 25th anniversary – precisely the average age of our readers – we thank God for His guidance through the years. *Dialogue's* 72 issues, hundreds of articles, and nearly two million copies in four languages continue to reach out to readers around the world, helping them to know, live, and share their biblical-Christian faith ever better under God's blessing. Those of you who would like to read some of the articles published in previous issues can enjoy them at <http://dialogue.adventist.org>. May God keep a lively dialog going with a Christ-connected readership until He returns in glory!

Humberto M. Rasi (Ph.D., Stanford University) is founder and chief editor (1989-2007) of *Dialogue*, and former director of education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. His e-mail: hmrasi@gmail.com.



During its 25 years of life, *Dialogue's* face has changed several times.

See page 35

A new “trinity”

by Michael Pearson

One of the authors in the first issue of *Dialogue* reflects on the past in light of the present and asks, “Have I also come of age in the intervening 25 years? Has my own faith matured in step with my own life experience?”

Many congratulations to *Dialogue* on its silver anniversary! And many thanks to the editors and contributors who over many editions have done so much to produce a journal which supports the life of faith of so many students. At university, you can find yours in intellectual and social environments that are hostile to the flourishing of faith, and may struggle with a particular kind of loneliness. *Dialogue* has always offered an important type of companionship.

When I was asked to contribute an article in 1989, I gladly agreed to share my own experience. But I was a little nervous, as contributors to any “Volume 1, Number 1” often are. Would this publication go the way of other similar publications, ambitious but unrealistic about the demands of regular production? Well, such reservations were clearly unfounded. *Dialogue* has come of age. My questions then to myself must be: Have I also come of age in the intervening 25 years? Has my own faith matured in step with my own life experience?

Some things that sustain us in the “morning” of life may prove unfit for purpose as “evening” approaches. In the intervening years, I have been a father to teenage and now adult children, become a grandfather, suffered the loss of a number of family

and friends, and experienced other kinds of loss too. I have also experienced joys unimagined 25 years ago. Beyond my small world, the Berlin Wall has fallen, technology drives our lives in ways unimaginable in 1989, and our planet is more fragile than we ever thought. How has my faith responded?

The first article: Faith, reason and vulnerability

I have just reread my first article, titled “Faith, reason and vulnerability.” “Faith” and “reason” are common enough twins. “Vulnerability” was the unexpected member of this trinity. My concern was that my faith would – like the ice on a frozen lake – be unable to sustain the weight of my demanding everyday life. My faith needed to be accountable, intelligent though not merely rational. I could not simply ignore difficult questions. My faith needed to respond to the serious insights of many disciplines, without being intimidated by them.

It also needed to embrace different types of intelligence. A life of faith is not merely a cerebral matter, but draws on the emotions, the will, intuitions, our social being, and our aesthetic sense. One of the great gifts that Adventist teaching has offered

me is the understanding that life is multi-faceted, that we are indeed whole persons.

Faith and uncertainty

My concerns have not changed. I want to affirm that we have nothing to fear from being open to the wider world. I want to affirm that having faith may not always give us certainty. Indeed, the idea that having faith relieves us of all uncertainty is deeply false. We have to make crucial judgments and commitments. We all have to live with unanswered questions, and some of them are troubling. I want to affirm that it is important to seek the right question, even if you do not currently have the right answer.

Therein lies the vulnerability of which I speak. Sometimes your faith lies uncomfortably with advances in the world that you are studying. These can be disturbing. Some abandon faith as not sustainable in the world of modern academia or abandon the community of faith as inadequate. I have sympathy with many who lose hold of faith or leave the church, even though I regret their choice. Many give up, somehow sad that they have not been able to marry their faith with their everyday life, and that the community of faith did

not recognize their struggle. I want to say that such dissonance need not be the occasion for giving up.

A new “trinity”

So here I offer a “trinity” for 2013. It has one member in common with the 1989 version. The “vulnerability” described above provides the enduring thread. David Ford says in his book *The Shape of Living* that as we live the Christian life in the modern world, we must expect to be repeatedly overwhelmed. Baptism by immersion is, after all, the rite of passage that symbolizes such overwhelming. The fact that we are daily overwhelmed by the world we live in – by technological advances, by the horrors of war, by natural catastrophes, by suffering, by personal failure, by disappointment – is only made livable by the fact that we are overwhelmed too by the great goodness and providence of God.

And so to the new trinity: hospitality, joy, and vulnerability. These are, in my view, three important hallmarks of the sort of life of faith I wish to lead, the sort of church to which I wish to belong.

Hospitality

First, my idea of hospitality includes, but is by no means limited to, the generous provision of food and shelter to others in one’s own home. “Hospitality,” “hospital,” “hospice” – all derive from a Latin word for “guest” or “host.” All involve extending welcome to those in varying kinds of need. For example, listening attentively in a conversation is a form of hospitality, a type of welcome all too rare today. We are too often waiting for an opportunity to deliver our own speech, too often seeing how we can move on to another conversation perhaps more to our liking. Truly being present to another person, their needs, interests, joys, and sorrows is a form of hospitality.

Hospitality includes welcoming

those who may be different from ourselves in culture, background, or personality. This may not be at all easy. We may be afraid that they are not natural Facebook friends. They may be all the things that we are not. We may be afraid of the demands others may make.

The clear message of the gospels is that such people are to be given welcome in any way that we are able. Giving such people welcoming space in our lives does not mean that they or their values take over our lives. But a clear teaching of the Bible is this: strangers often bring unexpected gifts. One of the gifts that strangers most commonly bring is new insight into ourselves and our world. Their presence demands that we revisit our own views of our complex world and renew them.

Joy

The second member of my trinity is joy. I have been a teacher of ethics for many years. Ethics is about answering the question: what is the right thing to do? And so we may consult some authority or law to discover our duty. Further, we will consider a course of action and seek to anticipate its probable outcomes and act accordingly. All of this is important if we are to live well. But it is not enough.

Ethics is about character; it is about what a virtuous person would do in given circumstances. And so the fundamental ethical question becomes: what sort of person should I be? A biblical response is that an important part of a believer’s life is joy. It is easy in our kind of religion to be so focused on duty that our joy becomes obscured.

Joy is not the same as happiness and certainly not the same as fun, though they may all be members of the same family. The differences do not translate easily into other languages. In English usage, joy goes very deep in our hearts. Joy can exist

in the midst of suffering and sadness. The Bible uses childbirth as a metaphor for joy. Discomfort, inconvenience, pain, and increased responsibility may all accompany joy.

You cannot plan for joy. Joy when it comes will often take us unawares. The story of the conversion of the great Christian apologist C.S. Lewis is called *Surprised by Joy*. It is out of our control. You may find it in worship. Equally, you may encounter joy in an airport arrivals terminal. You may experience it when listening to or making music. You may find it in the arms of your lover. You may find it when climbing a mountain. But you may also find it at the death bed of a loved one or in moments of exhaustion.

Hospitality, joy, and vulnerability

The common thread is that both hospitality and joy take us out of our comfort zone, beyond the point where we are in control. The person we welcome into our presence may challenge us. There are many biblical examples of the stranger discomforting the host. Strangers often bring gifts, but not always ones on our list. An experience of joy may catch us unawares. Thus, both acts of hospitality and experiences of joy make us vulnerable.

Much of modern life is constructed so as to minimize risk and make us less vulnerable. The difficult truth about a life of faith is that it must by its nature be a life lived in a vulnerable way. Yet a life of faith is often described as being a life defended against vulnerability, immune to the worst pains of life. We follow the supremely vulnerable one. God was made man in Jesus. I can think of no greater story of the embrace of vulnerability than this.

University life

I believe that life at university is to be lived in this way. We have to

welcome into our presence those whose view of the world is different from our own, whose way of life may be very different. To engage with them is not to agree or condone. The Christian life is a life of risk. Anyone who sees it as a life of safety is distorting the matter.

This magazine is called *Dialogue*. “Dialogue” means the sharing of different views with a view to seeking mutual understanding. This is never achieved if one participant believes that he or she is holding all the right answers. It calls for true engagement. And such true engagement may bring real joy.

The life of faith I recommend here is not easy. It means being in those places, at those times, when real exchanges about real issues are taking place. It means having the courage to voice your opinion that may be counter-cultural – the way of Jesus has always been counter-cultural. It may mean becoming the subject of others’ amusement if they find your view of life idealized, puritanical, irrational. It means developing confidence in your God: “I know *whom* I have believed.”

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Do you wish to see *Dialogue* available in the library of your public college or university so that your non-Adventist friends may also have access to the journal? Contact the librarian, show him or her a copy of the journal, and suggest that they request a free subscription to *Dialogue*, writing on official letterhead. We will take care of the rest!

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It is about each one of us becoming the sort of person where moral conviction, trustworthiness, friendliness, welcome, intelligence, empathy, practical concern, and real presence are all bound up together in a life which will make its own impact, without the need for any contrived witness. There are many people around in universities and colleges who will respond slowly, thoughtfully, gently, firmly, lastingly to the sort of witness given by a life that is centered in God in this way.

I regret that I did not understand this better when I was a student at university. I succumbed too often to the temptation to run for safety into the presence of like-minded people. There is, of course, an important place for fellowship with other believers. But the places where robust faith is really formed are in the lecture room, in the university cafeteria, in university residences, on social networking sites. It leads you to ask yourself the really important question: is this Adventist Christian faith of mine able to support the demands and complexities of my life in 2013?

If the faith of young and intelligent Seventh-day Adventists is to have any sort of credibility – if it is to be believable by fellow students – it must be tested on university campuses around the world on a daily basis. We must confront ideas that are threatening. We must deepen our own life in God. We must find new ways of coming before God – out of necessity, not just out of interest.

This can be overwhelming. But we are the children of One who overwhelms us with His grace.

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A time to remember, a call to press on

by Ted N. C. Wilson

As the General Conference marks its 150th anniversary, the president of the world church issues a call to remember and a need to press on to the ultimate goal of redemptive history.

The great day of disappointment left many in despair and disarray. But a small band of believers continued to affirm the certainty of the second coming of Jesus and the unflinching certainty of the prophetic word. They were driven not to depression but to a deeper study of God's Word, earnest and continued sessions of prayer both individually and in groups, and a mission to discover God's will for their faith and community. Such a coming together and seeking after God's way led them to some of the great truths that set them apart as a special people with a special message for the last days: the seventh-day Sabbath, the heavenly sanctuary, the gift of the spirit of prophecy, the three angels' messages, conditional immortality, and a concept of the remnant church with an emerging worldwide mission, to name a few. Discovery of unique truths and the need to share them with people everywhere led this small group of Sabbatarian Adventists to organize themselves as the Seventh-day Adventist Church. That first organizational session took place on May 20-21, 1863, in Battle Creek, Michigan – 19 years after the disappointment in 1844.

Now we are in 2013 – a year that marks the 150th anniversary

of the organization of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. What began as a church, based in the United States with 125 churches and 3,500 members, has grown into a worldwide family of faith and mission with, according to 2011 statistics, 72,144 churches and 67,078 companies in 208 countries and an adult membership of 17.5 million, still waiting for the breaking of the dawn.

Recently, the General Conference Executive Committee met for its spring meeting in Battle Creek, Michigan, to recount God's blessing during these 150 years of prayer and study, sacrifice and stewardship, growth and development, local and worldwide mission and ministry – all within that orbit of eternal hope: our Lord shall come soon.

As a world church, we must never forget what God has done for us as His people, so that our journey ahead will remain buoyant with hope. God's faithfulness so demands. Our mission so expects. Our history so directs. Our road, therefore, must ever be upward.

God's faithfulness

It is an axiom of the Christian journey that God expects us to be faithful to Him. But this expectation is always based on His past faithfulness to us.

When God gave His law to Israel and expected its obedience, He personally admonished His chosen people that His expectation is rooted in His historic action: "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 20:2).¹

Later in its history, Joshua charged Israel to "hold fast to the Lord your God" (Joshua 23:8), because the Lord was faithful in His promise that He would bring Israel to the promised land. Israel responded to Joshua's stirring appeal by declaring, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; for the Lord our God is He who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went and among all the people through whom we passed" (Joshua 24:16, 17).

Still later in its history, Samuel charged Israel to remember the nexus between what the Lord did in history and what He expects in return in the present: "Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you" (1 Samuel 12:24). Indeed, what great things the

Lord did for His people! But the word of God records how terrible was their fall when the generations that followed failed to be mindful of the Lord's leading: "When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals; and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers" (Joshua 2:10-12).

Years later Jeremiah, God's spokesman, summarized Israel's persistent neglect to recall the leading of the Lord and the inevitable apostasies that followed: "But this is what I commanded them saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.' Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward" (Jeremiah 7:23-24).

The tragic history of Israel in not remembering God's leading and indeed forsaking His expectations is not a story to be read and forgotten. The Apostle Paul explicitly explains that the rebellion of ancient Israel is recorded as a warning to us as spiritual Israel living just prior to the return of Jesus. After reviewing the mistakes of Israel's past, the apostle warns us: "Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Likewise, to those of us who live in the "end of the age," the Lord's counsel comes: "In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us,

and His teaching in our past history."

History so directs us

As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of our organization as a church of unique mission and ministry, we must never neglect the sacred duty of bringing to mind the Lord's leading and His teaching in our past history. Today, as it was for ancient Israel, God expects our faithfulness to be built on confidence in His past leading and teaching.

A few months ago, the representatives of the world church assembled in Battle Creek, Michigan, to celebrate and recount 150 years of God's blessing and leading. One hundred fifty years of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. It was a wonderful weekend of special celebration, with excellent sessions telling about our fascinating history and God's incredible blessing on His people. Inspiring stories, thoughtful seminars, unforgettable visits to historic sites, and great devotionals brought us to the altar of sacred memory – to remember and never to forget who we are and why we are here.

To be sure, we are grateful that we can celebrate 150 years of history. But in fact this is a sad anniversary. We should have been home by now! The Lord has wanted to come long before this. Why celebrate any more anni-

versaries when we could be in heaven? Why are we not there yet? Could it be that we keep forgetting? Have we neglected that most sacred responsibility of keeping fresh in our minds the Lord's leading and teaching in our past history, and moving forward in obedience to His calling?

Mission so directs us

Recently, while in the city of Zagreb in Croatia, we visited a fascinating museum with an unusual name: "Museum of Broken Relationships." It is a museum that recounts individuals' romantic relationships that went sour; it is a museum that marks broken lives and broken people. It had little souvenirs displaying broken hearts and broken promises, and it won the 2011 award for the most innovative museum in Europe. I wonder what God's Museum of Broken Relationships looks like in heaven: broken covenants and relationships between Himself and His people down through the ages until today? I don't want to be part of that museum. I am sure you don't either.

Unfortunately, there are voices even in the church today that want to break with the strong historical-biblical understanding of God's precious Word. There are those who want to reinterpret what God plainly said in order to make it conform to their



United for Mission

own personal understanding and thus break God's covenant with His people. Leaders and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, stand firm for God's Word and a "Thus saith the Lord!" Do not become part of "God's Museum of Broken Relationships." I want to maintain my personal relationship with the Lord, and I want His precious church to maintain its covenant to be His last-day church, a remnant people "who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17).

God is calling us today to remember His leading and teaching in our past history. Remember:

- How God led the Seventh-day Adventist movement from the beginnings of the early 19th century.
- The understanding of Daniel 8:14 and how it led to the sanctuary message, including the investigative judgment.
- The establishment of the Michigan Conference in 1861.
- The establishment of the General Conference on May 21, 1863, in Battle Creek.
- The enormous expansion of God's church in almost 210 countries of the world, with hundreds of languages used and more than 17 million members.

This call to remember is also a call never to forget:

- God, His Word, His Spirit of Prophecy, and His plan to proclaim the three angels' messages through His chosen people.
- That we are a unique people with a unique message at a unique time in earth's history.
- That all the signs point to the climax of earth's history and that Jesus is coming soon.
- That it is time to proclaim the three angels' messages with the power of the Holy Spirit.
- That it is time to reap the results from *The Great Controversy* distri-

bution project.

- That it is time to enter the large cities of the world with the power of the loud cry with our "Mission to the Cities" project!
- That it is time to utilize fully comprehensive health ministry to act as the right arm of the gospel message.
- That it is time to "Tell the World."

As we look back at 150 years of God's leading, we are certain that by God's grace, the General Conference as the overall supervising body of God's worldwide work will continue to stand firm for God's truth. It will not lessen its strong guiding and nurturing role over all Seventh-day Adventists worldwide until the very final events of history occur, when ultimately religious persecution would prevent organizations from functioning. Even at that time, God will never leave us and will guide His people, regardless of events. This is the kind of God we serve. His promise in Matthew 28:20 to never leave us is sure.

The journey is ever upward and onward

Five years after the founding of the General Conference, Ellen White had a fascinating dream,³ interestingly in Battle Creek itself. She dreamed of being with a large group of people, part of whom started out prepared for a journey. They had heavily-loaded wagons, and the road they traveled went up. On one side was a deep gorge, and on the other a high, smooth, white wall. The road grew narrower and steeper, and finally they could take the wagons no further. They took some of the luggage out of the wagons, put it on the horses, and continued on horseback. The path grew increasingly narrower, and people were forced to press close to the wall to save themselves from falling down the steep precipice. As they did this, the luggage on the horses

pressed against the wall, and caused the travelers to veer toward the drop-off. Finally, in desperation, they cut the luggage from the horses, and it fell over the precipice. They continued on horseback without their luggage, fearing that they would lose their balance and fall off the narrow road and to their death below. Mrs. White says that "at such times a hand seemed to take the bridle and guide us over the perilous way."

As the path grew even more narrow, the travelers decided they could no longer use the horses and went ahead by foot in single file, with one following the other. At this time, something very unusual happened: small cords were let down from the top of the white wall, which they eagerly grasped in order to keep their balance. The cords moved along with them. The path kept getting narrower, and to be safe they took off their shoes, and walked without them. Soon they took off their socks and journeyed on in bare feet. They thought of those who were not used to hardship and looked around to find them, but they were not in the small company of believers. At every point of difficulty, some were left behind, and only those who had become used to enduring hardship were left to push on. The difficulties had made these godly travelers even more eager to press on to the end.

The danger of falling off the pathway increased. They leaned heavily on the wall, but could not completely put their feet fully on the path, since it was so narrow. She says, "We then suspended nearly our whole weight upon the cords, exclaiming: 'We have hold from above! We have hold from above!'" All those in the company of believers on the narrow way said the same thing! As they walked further, they could hear sounds coming from below in the deep canyon – sounds of revelry, vulgar jesting, vile singing, war songs, dance songs, instrumental music, loud laughter, cursing, cries of anguish, and bitter wailing. The trav-

elers on the narrow way, however, were more anxious than ever to keep on the narrow pathway. Much of the time they had to put their whole weight on the suspended cords, which increased in size as they progressed.

Ellen White remarked, "I noticed that the beautiful white wall was stained with blood." She realized that this could be a sign of encouragement for others who would follow, since they would realize that those who had gone before had gone through difficulty but had persevered, and it would encourage those to keep pressing on.

Finally, they came to a large chasm where the path ended. There was nothing to guide their feet or to rest on. Their whole reliance had to be on the cords, which had increased in size until the cords were as large as their bodies. They became anxious, because they didn't know what the cords were attached to. In the dream, James White was in front of Ellen White, and she could see large drops of sweat falling from his head ... the veins in his neck and temples were double their normal size. Agonizing groans came from his lips. Sweat was dropping from Ellen White's face, and she felt anguish like never before, since a very dangerous struggle was ahead of them. If they failed here, their journey would have been useless.

On the other side of the large chasm was a beautiful field of green grass, with bright, soft beams of light looking like fine gold resting on the field. It did not compare with anything she had ever seen on this earth. She wondered if they could reach that beautiful field of grass, or would the cord break and they would die. She explains the final part in these moving words, "Again, in whispered anguish, the words were breathed: 'What holds the cord?' For a moment we hesitated to venture. Then we exclaimed: 'Our only hope is to trust wholly to the cord. It has been our dependence all the difficult way. It will not fail us now.' Still we were hesitating and dis-

tressed. The words were then spoken: 'God holds the cord. We need not fear.' These words were then repeated by those behind us, accompanied with: 'He will not fail us now. He has brought us thus far in safety.' My husband then swung himself over the fearful abyss into the beautiful field beyond. I immediately followed. And, oh, what a sense of relief and gratitude to God we felt! I heard voices raised in triumphant praise to God. I was happy, perfectly happy. I awoke, and found that from the anxiety I had experienced in passing over the difficult route, every nerve in my body seemed to be in a tremor. This dream needs no comment. It made such an impression upon my mind that probably every item in it will be vivid before me while my memory shall continue."

Our journey today

Today, as we progress in our journey ahead, we must do so with complete confidence in the God who has led us in the past and who extends the "cords" of guidance and safety for us. We must lean completely on Jesus Christ and His righteousness for our every need as we confidently journey on through His power. God wants us to realize that even as we celebrate the 150 years of His leading, we have nothing to fear for the future. We can proclaim the Advent message with power because we are God's remnant church, with a strong history of God's leading in His church and a special call to proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14.

This Advent message will not pass to another group or church. There will not be another remnant church. You and I are part of the final church God has prepared. One hundred and fifty years of the General Conference is simply a call to move forward on that great narrow pathway-journey, allowing God to make revival and reformation real in our lives and in the church – to reform our selfish ways and to plant our dreams and hopes on the

Holy Word and on the Living Word, Jesus Christ.

God calls us today to never forget or be fearful – God will carry us through if we will rely completely on Him and allow the Holy Spirit to take full control of our every thought and action. He wants to claim us as His own. He wants to return to take us home soon. No more anniversaries. Have faith in God!

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1. All Scripture passages are from the New King James Version.
2. Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1943), p. 196.
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What if I accept theistic evolutionism?

by Raúl Esperante

Theistic evolution is not the solution to the apparent conflicts between biblical and scientific interpretations of origins. Here's why.

Christians are frequently faced with a faith dilemma: on the one hand, they have the biblical teaching that God is the Creator of the universe, including the Earth and all that it contains; on the other hand, every day they face the common teaching that life is the result of unguided chemical processes and that biological diversity arose through millions of years of evolution. The clash of ideas is confusing, and many conclude that science and belief in the Bible are in conflict (at least over the issue of origins) and that there is no way to harmonize them.

Yet some have tried to harmonize the two contrasting views. One way to resolve this tension is to hold that religion¹ and science are separate realms of knowledge, and the two cannot be compared and contrasted – thus making room for contradiction. Galileo Galilei stated it this way: “The intention of the Holy Spirit is to teach us how one goes to heaven, not how the heavens go.”² If science and religion function within their own realms and do not interact, there can be no conflict. Many scientists have embraced this approach, despite the fact that it does not solve the seeming contradictions and does not answer the questions. Recently, Stephen Jay Gould, an atheist paleontologist, defended the separation of religion and science, for they – he argued – pertain to different realms of knowledge that do not (and should not) interact.³ Philosophers and

scientists have argued that this is not a neutral position. In fact, it only allows science (facts and interpretations) to trump religion (faith) every time they encounter each other. Furthermore, such a dichotomous approach provides scientists with an easy way to supplant the authority of religion (the Bible in particular).

Another approach is to *accommodate* the claims of both science and religion, in what is called *theistic evolution*. This view tries to harmonize the biblical interpretations with the scientific interpretations, by claiming that evolution is God's method of creation: God created the universe and life, but He used the processes of evolution through millions of years to accomplish his goals.⁴ Many Christians see this alternative as the solution that explains how matter evolved into complex life, maintaining at the same time God's authority over nature. This view has been widely accepted in the Christian academic world, in spite of the fact that it presents insurmountable theological and scientific problems.

This article deals with some of these theological and scientific problems.

The problem of incompatibility

Theistic evolution requires a profound change in the way we view and interpret the Bible. The Bible doesn't suggest or even hint at the possibility that God used the slow death-driven

process of Darwinian evolution to create life as we know it. On the contrary, it speaks clearly about the mode and timing of creation: God created life *by fiat*⁵ over the span of a week. The idea that the days of the Genesis account of creation represent millions of years of evolution comes not from the Bible, but from outside of it. For theistic evolution to work, the Bible must be viewed as a book of myths rather than a historical record of divine action in the world.

Second, theistic evolution changes the way we think of inspiration, because it challenges the validity of the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Genesis account clearly indicates a literal, six-day, recent creation. The rest of the Bible – including the book of Psalms, the Gospels, the Epistles and the book of Revelation – clearly affirms the content of Genesis. If the Bible affirms God as Creator, from where do we get an evolutionist God? God would have been a liar when stating in Genesis and in other parts of the Bible that He created the world in six days when in fact He did not.

Third, theistic evolution requires that we view the Scriptures in a different way than Jesus did. Jesus always spoke of the Genesis account as literally true, not a myth. Thus, theistic evolution changes the way we consider Jesus's teachings, because it challenges His statements on creation. He referred to the Creator and to the

beginning, when God “made them male and female” (Mark 10:6)⁶, a clear reference to the creation account. If we accept theistic evolution, we would have to reinterpret Jesus, and if we question Jesus’s statements on creation, what happens to the credibility and value of His other statements? What about His miracles? Are they to be reinterpreted?

Fourth, theistic evolution changes the way we consider sin, suffering, and death. In an evolutionary scenario, death of multi-celled organisms would have existed for more than 600 million years. Death and suffering would be part of God’s plan for creation and population of this world. Death would not be related to sin; it would not be the wages of sin, but the result of struggle for survival; it would not be the last enemy to be triumphed over (1 Corinthians 15:26), but a natural part of life. If death were not the result of sin, the death of Christ on the cross requires major reinterpretation.

Fifth, theistic evolution changes the way we think of God’s character. How could a God who notes when a sparrow falls (Matthew 10:29) have used an evolutionary process based on suffering and death? How could the God of Lazarus and the good Samaritan, and the healer of lepers and the blind, have used a system to create ever more fit organisms using those same destructive elements of nature to eliminate the sick and the weak among us? God would have been working against His own methods by healing people who, according to the evolutionary theory, should have been eliminated.

Sixth, theistic evolution changes the way we see evangelism and the great controversy. According to Revelation 14:6-7, the message of the remnant includes the affirmation that God is the Creator: “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth – to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people – saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God

and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.’” If God did not create by fiat, but used evolution to create life’s diversity, why should we preach the “eternal gospel,” which is the message of Creation? What eternal gospel should be preached according to theistic evolution? Where is the hope that God will destroy death and the struggle with sin will end forever? Invoking an immortal soul does little to help in wringing good news out of theistic evolution.

Seventh, theistic evolution changes the way we see heaven and salvation. Jesus promised that He would return and live eternally with us in the new home He is preparing (John 14:1-3). In the book of Revelation, there is the promise that there will be no more tears or death (7:17 and 21:4). If suffering and death are the way to improve nature, why does God promise to do away with them? If God’s ultimate goal is to provide a better world for people, why does He promise to destroy and restore the Earth, instead of letting evolution accomplish that? Or is it that God realized that evolution can’t do it, and He is providing another solution? Did God fail in His initial plans to use evolution as a creative force? If the Earth and its inhabitants are the result of millions of years of evolution, God’s promise of a new heaven and a new earth (Isaiah 65:17) makes no sense. Will God need millions of years to create the new Earth and the New Jerusalem?

Theistic evolution is in clear contradiction to the book of Genesis and the teachings of Jesus and the apostles. It suggests that God created using death, pain, struggle for survival, and suffering. It suggests that God deceived us with the Bible. If God did not mean what He said, why did He not say what He meant? An evolutionary perspective of origins will always have difficulty accommodating biblical statements about creation, the Fall,

and the Flood. For instance, theistic evolution is an attempt to distance God from suffering and death, but it actually makes Him the author of it. In addition, it makes Him remote and denies divine action. Accepting theistic evolution will affect doctrines based on the historical understanding of Genesis 1-11, including marriage, sexuality, human nature, origin of sin, redemption, etc.

Scientific problems

The idea that God created life on earth using the processes of mutation and natural selection has numerous scientific problems. The difficulties arise from the implausibility of the theory to explain features that we see in both the fossil record and living nature.

First, if God created through gradual evolution through millions of years, we would expect to see the gradual appearance of organisms in the fossil record. The bottom layers of sediment would contain a low diversity of simple fossil organisms, and the upper layers would have diverse fossils representing highly complex organisms. This would be consistent with a model of gradual appearance of both diversity and complexity of life forms.

But that is not the case. The fossil record shows the sudden appearance of complexity and diversity in the bottom sedimentary layers. A dramatic example of this is called the “Cambrian explosion,” which represents the abrupt appearance of fossilized organisms in rock layers near the bottom of the geological column. Most of these Cambrian organisms are interpreted as ocean bottom dwellers. There are other organisms buried in rocks below the Cambrian layers (called Precambrian or Ediacaran fauna), and those are puzzling for evolutionists as well, because they also appear abruptly in the fossil record and are not apparently related in any way to the Cambrian organisms. So how did both the Precambrian and

the Cambrian fauna become fossils? We don't really know. Their sudden appearance does not fit well within an evolutionist model, but they might be explained within a flood model, in which these organisms were among the first to be buried at the onset of the worldwide flood of Genesis.⁷

Second, gradual evolution, either guided or unguided by God, implies the existence of numerous intermediate or transitional forms in the fossil record. If evolutionary change has happened, then we should be able to see numerous transitional organisms from ancient to modern forms. Again, the fossil record does not support this. What we see is a sudden appearance of life forms at different levels of the sedimentary record. True, different groups or organisms appear at different levels – for example, amphibians appear in lower layers than reptiles, and the latter appear below mammals. But this does not necessarily indicate gradual evolution from amphibians to reptiles to mammals. For that, the record should show a smooth transition between the different groups of animals and plants. We would expect to find hundreds or thousands of transitional forms. But they do not exist. Some have been suggested,⁸ but the few questionable transitional forms emphasize their rarity in the fossil record, rather than their pervasiveness.

A third scientific problem for theistic evolution arises from the complex nature of biological structures (molecules, cells, and organs). The study of metabolic pathways – the integration of information and function in cells – has led many scientists to believe that at least some systems inside cells are irreducibly complex, with properties indicating they are unlikely to have been produced by direct successive stages of acquisition mediated by natural selection. A series of numerous positively-coordinated mutations and other genetic changes would be necessary to produce such structures. Also, the intermediate fossils would

be imperfect or less fit than their contemporaries, and by evolutionary standards they should have been eliminated by natural selection. Why would God create imperfect, unfit, incomplete structures or organs that need improvement by mutations? Why would God create through such a process when He can do it by fiat?

Conclusion

These are some of the theological and scientific problems of theistic evolution. Theistic evolution is not the solution to the apparent conflicts between interpretations of science and the Bible. It creates bigger problems than it solves, because it demands a rethink of every aspect of our Bible-based faith. In other words, it is not a viable alternative biblical position; it is a completely different view of reality, God, Scripture, humanity, salvation, nature, good, and evil. A better solution is to say: here are the problems with current science if we accept the biblical model of creation, and here are the theological problems if we accept the Darwinist models of origins; instead of losing our faith in one or another, or both, let us delve into the difficult questions through the study of Scripture and science, and let the Holy Spirit guide us in both. In life, imperfect knowledge and imperfect minds inevitably lead to tensions in our understanding of reality. The question is, what tension are we willing to live with? All live by faith: Christians by one faith, Darwinists by another. It is better to recognize this than to embrace a false solution like theistic evolution.

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1. In this article, I use the terms religion and faith interchangeably and in reference to Christian belief in the Genesis account of creation.
2. In a letter to the Grand Duchess Christina (1615), Galileo was quoting “something that was heard from an ecclesiastic of the most eminent degree.”
3. Gould coined the term NOMA (Non-Overlapping Magisteria) to indicate that science and religion each have a “legitimate magisterium, or domain of teaching authority,” and these two domains do not overlap. See Stephen Gould, *Rock of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002).
4. Some accommodate the Bible account with evolution, indicating that the days of creation were not literal 24-hour days, but millions of years — the so-called Day-Age Theory.
5. *By fiat* means that God created by command or act without further effort.
6. All Scripture references are from the New King James Version.
7. The Bible says, “On that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.” Bible scholars suggest that the “fountains of the great deep” refer to submarine sources of water that flooded the ocean floor. It is possible that such processes killed and buried many organisms, which would be the first layer, in the fossil record formed during the Flood.
8. For example, the amphibian-to-reptile transition, or the reptile-to-mammal transition, or the horse sequence. Some paleontologists indicate that the alleged intermediates are not transitions but *mosaics*, which consist of forms with mixed traits that do not show a linear change from one group to another.

What do Adventists have to say to the world about environmental stewardship?

by Floyd E. Hayes
and William K. Hayes

Seventh-day Adventists recognize and support the scriptural call to environmental care. They engage creation care in multiple ways and at both individual and corporate levels. Can the Adventist Church do more to promote creation care? The answer is “yes,” and the time to do so is now.

Seventh-day Adventists base their beliefs on the Bible, regarded as the inspired word of God. As such, their understanding of environmental stewardship is rooted in a biblical worldview. This article summarizes, in a series of statements, what Adventists have to say to the world about environmental stewardship, as guided by our understanding of the Bible and informed by current science.¹

Our world is a creation, not an accident, and is of value to the Creator.

Because the Bible reveals God as the designer and creator of the universe, including life and life support systems on our planet, Adventists believe that the world is a result of God’s creation, not an accident (Genesis 2:2, 3).² God repeatedly pronounced as “good” His creative acts *before* humans were created, which included both living and non-living components of creation (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31), revealing that God cares for *all* aspects of His creation, not just humans.

Furthermore, God bestowed His blessings upon all living things, first blessing non-human creatures on the fifth day of creation (Genesis 1:22), followed by humans on the sixth day (Genesis 1:28). God also blessed the seventh day as the Sabbath, which was to serve as a perpetual reminder that God is the Creator and He cares for all of His creation.³

God’s love and concern for creation are expressed repeatedly throughout the Bible, including Job (40, 41), Jonah (4:10, 11), the Psalms (36, 96, 104, 145, 147, 148), and the words of Jesus (Matthew 6:26; 10:29; Luke 12:6). When threatened by the wickedness of humankind, many living creatures were miraculously preserved by God during the flood (Genesis 6). Through various prophets, God warned about the environmental consequences of sin (Isaiah 24:5, 6; Hosea 4:1-3). Because God loved the world, He sent His Son to redeem it (John 3:16) and promised to eventually restore the original creation, not just humans (Isaiah 11:6-9; Ezekiel 36:33-35; Romans 8:19-23).

The creation is neither sacred nor evil, but a means to achieve the goals of the Creator.

Philosophies associated with ancient Gnosticism found the locus of evil in matter. Those associated with the pantheism of Eastern religions found animate and inanimate objects as being vehicles of the divine and hence good and sacred. In stark contrast, the biblical position is that both animate and inanimate aspects of creation are neither sacred nor evil. Instead, the Bible boldly declares that the Earth and everything on it is not God but instead *belongs* to God, who is the ruler of His creation (Psalm 24:1; 1 Corinthians 10:26). The finely-tuned physical parameters of the universe and ingeniously-designed biogeochemical cycles of our planet result in a biogeochemical homeostasis that perpetually sustains life, revealing God’s intention for the Earth “to be inhabited” (Isaiah 45:18).⁴ Thus, the creation is neither sacred nor evil; instead, it is a means to achieve the goals of the Creator, which were to create a planet

filled with living creatures and to create a race of intelligent beings made in the image of God who would manage the planet (Genesis 1:26).

The Sabbath is a memorial to creation and a perpetual reminder of our moral obligation to care for it.

Adventists are committed to keeping the fourth commandment: to remember the seventh-day Sabbath, keep it holy, and refrain from work (Exodus 20:8-11).⁵ The blessings of the Sabbath are extended to all of creation, not just humans, for the Sabbath represents a reminder of God's provision for the needs of all creatures, including rest from labor for beasts of burden (Exodus 23:12). Freed from daily toil on the Sabbath, Adventists often spend at least part of the day exploring the outdoors and learning about God's creation, thus nurturing an intimate relationship with the Creator and other created beings. By reinforcing the relationship between the Creator and the creation, commemorating the weekly Sabbath reminds us that our lives depend on the planet's life support systems and that we must adopt a wholistic approach in our relationship with the creation.

We are a part of the creation, yet intentionally set apart by the Creator to manage the creation responsibly.

Shortly after being created, God gave man "dominion" (KJV) and set him apart to "rule" over all living things and "subdue" the Earth (Genesis 1:26, 28). Because the "dominion" over all living things and permission to "rule" and "subdue" were given before sin entered the planet (Genesis 3), before skins were needed for clothing (Genesis 3:21), and long before humans were allowed to kill animals for food (Genesis 9:3), the "dominion" is clearly a mandate for responsible stewardship of Earth

rather than a permit to plunder the planet's resources.

After being placed in the Garden of Eden, Adam was commanded "to dress it and keep it" (KJV) or "to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15). Later, God commanded His people to take care of the land (Exodus 23:10, 11; Leviticus 25:2-7, 23, 24) and to treat animals humanely (Exodus 23:5, 12; Numbers 22:23-33; Deuteronomy 25:4; Matthew 12:11). These texts clearly reveal God's desire for us to manage the creation. Not only did God endow us with the intelligence and ability to study and utilize the creation to make our lives more comfortable, He also gave us the freedom to make choices, even if our choices ultimately harm the creation.

The biblical view of stewardship encompasses time, money, possessions, health, and opportunities, as well as natural resources.⁶ However, the Bible clearly states that none of these is our own; instead, the world and everything in it belongs to God (Leviticus 25:23; Psalm 24:1; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20; 10:26). Because of human greed, God specifically prohibited rulers from accumulating horses, silver, or gold (Deuteronomy 17:16, 17). Instead, God associated royal rulership with benevolence toward the weak and needy (Psalm 72:8-14). Jesus, the Creator (John 1:1-3), was sent to the world to teach, heal, and redeem us, and demonstrated how we should interact with fellow human beings and other cohabitants of the planet.

The Creator values all life forms and tenderly provides for their needs, and expects us to follow His example in the way we regard and treat other species.

God provided for the needs of all creatures, not just humans or those that provide direct benefits to humans (Job 38:19-41; Psalms 36:6, 104:27, 28, 147:9; Jonah 4:11; Matthew 6:26). God repeatedly reminded us of our moral obligation to treat animals

humanely by providing them with sufficient rest and food (Exodus 23:5, 12; Deuteronomy 25:4), rescuing them from harm (Matthew 12:11), and never torturing them (Numbers 22:23-33). Although some animals must be sacrificed to sustain human life, any such usage that causes pain, suffering, and death of animals for the benefit of humans or other animals must be morally justified. Because God cares for all of His creation, we should recognize that the non-human creation has moral value. Nevertheless, as exemplified by Noah's flood and elsewhere in Scripture, God regards animate life as more important than inanimate objects, and human life as more important than non-human life.

Life is a gift from God; therefore, we must respect it and are morally compelled to protect and preserve it. Consequently, we should never kill or injure any animal for mere sport or pleasure. We should always strive to nurture and never abuse any animal within our care. We object to inhumane treatment of any animals in the livestock industry, in biomedical and other research, and in the pet industry. Christians who have ready access to a plant-based diet, which was God's original plan, should refrain from eating animals or at least consume fewer animal products. A vegetarian diet impacts the environment far less than a meat-based diet.⁷ Nevertheless, some human populations have no choice but to consume meat. Although genetic manipulation can help us more effectively meet the needs of the sick and hungry (Matthew 25:34-36), thorough study should be undertaken before adoption of any practice to assure that benefits strongly outweigh any potentially-adverse health or environmental effects.

Wholeness encompasses not just body, mind, and spirit, but also the environment, as healthy ecosystems are essential to sustain human life.

Because our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20), Adventists believe we are to care for them intelligently.⁸ This view, combined with efforts to relieve suffering, has motivated Adventists to adopt a distinctive emphasis on human health modeled after the healing ministry of Jesus.

The concept of wholeness encompasses diligent care of emotional, physical, and spiritual needs. But these needs are deeply and irrevocably entwined with the environments in which we live. Healthy environments provide natural resources and processes that sustain human life. Collectively, these products are known as ecosystem services. Unhealthy environments provide diminished ecosystem services and can promote disease and infirmity.

Most of us take for granted the abundant ecosystem services that we depend upon daily. These include, among others, provision of food and water; pollination of native and agricultural plants; cycling of nutrients; moderation of extreme weather, including flood and drought mitigation; protection against erosion; regulation of plant pest and human disease organisms; decomposition and detoxification of wastes; purification of air and water; and maintenance of biodiversity. These services, given to us for free, have been valued globally at US\$33 trillion per annum, which reflects their irreplaceable value.⁹ Without these services, which we are rapidly degrading and cannot readily replace, our quality of life would be fundamentally diminished.

The present state of the creation is blemished, against the desire of the Creator.

Shortly after the fall of Adam and Eve, the consequences of sin increasingly blighted the creation. Change became evident at every level, with death featuring prominently in the cycles that governed the circle of life.

When we compare the present-day condition of the natural world with descriptions of Eden before it was cursed (Genesis 1:30) and after its restoration (Isaiah 11:6-9), there can be no doubt that the present state of the creation is blemished. In the words of Paul, “the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth” (Romans 8:22).

Eventually, God all but wiped the slate clean with the flood. This was necessary, in part, because “the earth was corrupt in God’s sight” (Genesis 6:11), which was due at least in part to humankind’s presence, “for the earth is filled with violence because of them” (Genesis 6:13). God intended the ark to perpetuate His created life forms, and after they exited the ark when the floodwaters receded, He vowed, “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans ... and never again will I destroy all living creatures” (Genesis 8:21). Clearly, God regretted human’s corruption of Earth.

Today, many scientists believe we are confronted with one of the planet’s greatest extinction events of all time, resulting in an ecological meltdown and biodiversity crisis largely of our own making. Some individuals, including Christians, dismiss the urgency of this concern. Nevertheless, there is overwhelming evidence that humans have, indeed, contributed greatly to the accelerating rate of species extinctions through habitat degradation, introduction of non-native (alien) species, excessive pollution, overexploitation, and the spread of disease.

Responsible management of the creation involves tradeoffs that call for our best judgment.

The reckless footprint of humans on planet Earth has substantially altered much of God’s creation. God provided the immense resources of this planet for our benefit, intending that they enrich our lives and help

us meet our needs. He also expects us to share these resources amicably among ourselves and with other created species. But conflict arises at two levels in how best to use these natural resources: decisions made by the individual and decisions made by local or national governments. Inevitably, the decisions we make reflect tradeoffs that call for our best judgments. The extent to which we use resources today may result in profound economic and quality-of-life consequences, but may be at the expense of non-human occupants of our planet. Resource use today may also affect the availability of those resources for future generations of humans.

Our values and attitudes greatly influence how we manage the tradeoffs, and this calls for our best efforts in identifying and following biblical principles. At opposite ends of a continuum are those who fully support an environmental agenda and those who deride it, with plenty of middle ground in between. Individuals who identify themselves as political, social, and fiscal conservatives – including many religious people – are more likely than others to dismiss personal responsibility toward the environment and resist government policies intended to protect the environment. Indeed, this group also shows measurably less concern about environmental degradation than the general public.¹⁰

Although formal discussion remains elusive, diverse views toward the environment certainly exist among Seventh-day Adventists. Officially, the Church has acknowledged in three formal statements that an ecological crisis exists,¹¹ and that it is “rooted in humankind’s greed and refusal to practice good and faithful stewardship within the divine boundaries of creation.”¹² But Church guidance stops here. For the most part, we are left to answer on our own questions regarding personal use of resources and how to respond when governments seek to impose regulations that

restrict resource use. The answers do not come easily, but as people of faith, Adventists seek to identify and follow biblical principles.

From Scripture, we can identify three overriding principles that can guide our decision-making.¹³ First, *God values all aspects of His creation*, having declared repeatedly that His creation was “good” (Genesis 1:10, 12, 21, 25, 31). Second, *God expects us to be good stewards of the creation*, as He authorized the first “Environmental Protection Act” (Genesis 2:25) and the first “Endangered Species Act” (Genesis 6:19), and admonished those who exploit and bring harm to His creation (Revelation 7:3; 11:18). Third, *God expects us to use resources in ways that are sustainable*, having affirmed that “a good man leaves an inheritance for his children’s children” (Proverbs 13:22). In sum, Adventists encourage all to live a simple, wholesome lifestyle, showing respect for creation and exercising restraint in the use of the world’s resources.¹⁴

These principles can guide our decisions when it comes to many activities that impact the environment. We can expect to be held responsible for decisions regarding the design of buildings and cities; how we produce, package, and distribute food; the products we purchase and the waste we generate; our choices in travel and entertainment; how we educate students regarding the environment; and how we care for our health. These principles should also inform the way we engage the politics of environmental care. Individual efforts cannot solve all of the challenges faced by our environment, and the political process is how democratic societies agree on solutions. To embrace sustainability, we may need to support policies that could limit natural resource use and may have unpopular economic repercussions. Sitting idly by, doing nothing to halt the accelerating damage to ecosystems, is not an acceptable option.

Good stewardship of the creation encompasses environmental education, conservation research, and natural resources management that include both individual action and responsible government regulation.

Environmental education generally begins in the home and in the local church, where nature – God’s “second book” – has traditionally been upheld. Reinforcement continues in elementary and secondary school, especially for those who participate in youth programs and summer youth camps, where communion with nature and the study of it are encouraged. In our own childhood, we enjoyed frequent outdoor picnics, nature hikes, and visits to nature centers, zoos, and museums, especially on Sabbath afternoons. We also enjoyed camping on a regular basis. Our growing fascination with nature, nurtured by our parents, deepened our respect for the creation and sheltered us during our formative years from negative influences.

Adventist tertiary education provides further opportunities to become better informed about environmental issues, although the extent of this depends largely on one’s focus of study, the classes taken, and extramural activities chosen. Many Adventist universities sponsor research and conservation programs. These programs encompass a wide range of projects, including studying endangered species, implementing conservation actions, and educating the public about environmental issues.

For the Christian, environmental education must include both evidence-based and faith-informed perspectives. Linkages between human activity and environmental consequences should be grounded in solid science, preferably free of cultural distortions. Sensitivity to environmental issues should be enhanced by the call to stewardship expounded by Scripture. Because of the latter perspective, Christians –

including Adventists – should become exemplary environmentalists.

We cannot blame “society” for environmental problems, because the problems are caused by individuals. Thus, resolving environmental problems must begin with the individual, but can be enhanced by organizational and even governmental support. Given the global nature of modern trade and expanding economies, personal efforts can have a surprisingly distant reach. One useful motto is to “think globally, act locally.”

Although we endeavor to undo the harm we have caused our planet, total restoration will be complete only when God makes all things new.

God has entrusted us to care for His creation, and one day will reclaim it (Isaiah 3:5; 65:17-25; Revelation 21:1-7).¹⁵ Our responsibility until then is to care for the portion of creation entrusted to us. If we fail to take care of our planet in this life, should we expect God to give us a renewed one in the next?

At the end of time, God will make all things new. The Eden of the original creation will be restored. Scripture portrays a very different Earth from the one we’ve been given to manage – an Earth in which there will be no death or suffering, where human greed will no longer threaten natural resources, where predators will neither harm nor destroy (Isaiah 35; 65:17-25; Revelation 21:1-7). Until that day, our best efforts cannot fully undo the harm we’ve done, nor can they erase the blight of sin on this planet. We look forward with longing to the day when we will see biodiversity at its richest and ecosystems functioning in their most harmonious state.

Conclusion

Seventh-day Adventists recognize and support the Scriptural call to environmental care. Adventists engage creation care in multiple ways and at

both individual and corporate levels. Can the Adventist Church do more to promote creation care? We believe the answer is “yes,” and the time to do so is now. We need to increase discourse among ourselves and with others who share our concerns and goals. We need to support those who undertake worthwhile projects that advance environmental education and conservation management. We need to take advantage of the effective witness creation care can serve, incorporating it more effectively with other Adventist messages, including health, education, and evangelism.

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This article is a slightly revised version of the original that appeared as the concluding chapter of the newly-released book on Adventist concepts

of environmental stewardship, written by leading Adventist thought leaders and scholars. See *Entrusted: Adventists and Environmental Care*, eds. Stephen G. Dunbar, L. James Gibson, and Humberto M. Rasi (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2013). Used by permission.

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2. Genesis 1; see also Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #6 (<http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/fundamental/index.html>).
3. Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #20.
4. All Scripture passages unless otherwise stated are from the New International Version.
5. Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #20.
6. Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #21.
7. See, for example, H.J. Marlow, W.K. Hayes, S. Soret, R.L. Carter, E.R. Schwab, and J. Sabate, “Diet and the environment: Does what you eat matter?” *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 89 (2009):1699S-1703S.
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11. See the Appendices in *Entrusted: Adventists and Environmental Care* (endnote 1).
12. From “A Statement on the Environment,” the 1995 statement in Appendix B in *Entrusted: Adventists and Environmental Care* (endnote 1).
13. J.T. Baldwin, “Keepers of the garden: Christians and the environment,” *Dialogue* 14(1) (2002):8-11; A. von Maur, “How can we build and dwell as stewards of the natural environment?” Chapter 16 of *Entrusted: Adventists and Environmental Care* (endnote 1).
14. From “A Statement on the Environment,” Appendix B in *Entrusted: Adventists and Environmental Care* (endnote 1).
15. Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #28.

PROFILE

Margaret C. Ashby

Dialogue with an Adventist senior official of the Barbados Postal Service.

Interview by Lorena Mayer



Little would she imagine that one day she would be called to serve her country in a high-level position. But today, Margaret C. Ashby is a respected government official and an appreciated senior manager at the Barbados Postal Service.

Born in an Adventist home, Ashby enjoyed church life in a country where 6 percent of the population is Adventist. However, during her youth, she drifted away from God. These hard times taught her about a God that was very patient with her, and eventually she returned home.

Her new relationship with God not only became meaningful for her personally; her career in the postal sector, which had started in 1977, took on a whole new perspective as well. After years in a seemingly-unnoticeable job, God impressed her mind with the idea of going back to school. She did, even though she did not believe in her abilities, particularly in mathematics – a compulsory subject in her chosen area of study. God helped her, and she eventually graduated with a bachelor's degree in computer science and management and a master's degree in natural resource management, and climate change.

Here again, God opened doors for her in her country and is still doing

so also at the international level. Since October 2012, Ashby has been one of the two assistant postmasters general of Barbados and supports her country's delegation in its capacity as chair of one of the committees of the Universal Postal Union, a specialized agency of the United Nations. Ashby is married to Michael and has two daughters, Lisa and Lana.

She is an active member and personal ministries leader in her local church in Barbados.

■ *Margaret, tell us a little about your beginnings at the Barbados Postal Service.*

I had just finished my general education. I didn't dream big dreams for myself, because I was a slow learner and that was a real hindrance if I ever wanted to succeed in anything. So I joined the postal service. For more than 30 years, I was in the same entry-level position, in the area of customer service. There was no mobility, and I saw no possibilities for growth.

■ *You are now in one of the highest positions. How did that come to be?*

God did something special for me at some point. I was already married and had two little girls, but God made it clear that I needed to go back to

school. Now, that was a bit too much for me. I was really afraid of mathematics – a compulsory subject if I wanted to continue studying – and my self-esteem was not particularly high. I had also been away from God for a certain time, so my faith in Him was weak. Yet it was clear that God wanted me to go back to school and that He had a plan for me.

■ *In the meantime, you ended up with a computer science and management degree. Whatever happened to your fear of mathematics?*

The very first exam I had to take to be able to resume my studies had a strong mathematics component. I thought I would never make it. But God pointed me to a mathematics book we had at home. That helped me, certainly, but yet when I went in the examination room I found that I had to solve not just individual problems but a complex set. I looked at the paper and was sure I was going to fail. I could not imagine what to do. So I took my papers and was ready to hand them in, empty, within the first 15 minutes of the examination. When I stood up to leave, something hit me on my knees, and I fell back on my seat. God asked me, "Where are you going? Look at the questions



Representing the interests of her country concerning postal matters, in a plenary session at the Universal Postal Union.

again, don't look at the big picture. Go bit by bit." That's what I did, and I managed to answer all the questions. Once outside, I shared my answers with a colleague, sure that they were all wrong. But he said, "These answers are correct!"

■ *So what were the results?*

First, my paper got lost. They knew that I had completed the examination, but could not find my paper. After three weeks it was found. Then after many weeks, I was still waiting to hear my score. One evening, on my way to classes, I heard the teacher's voice and decided there and then that I just could not wait any more. With a boldness completely alien to me, I went to see her. She was in a class with around 30 students. I went in and asked her about my grade. She said: "There's no reason to worry, Margaret, you got a B!" I immediately replied: "That is impossible!" The whole class laughed.

■ *Would you say that God wanted to teach you something through your fear of mathematics and low self-esteem?*

Yes, God wanted to show me that

there was nothing too difficult for Him to do. On the same night, while driving off campus, I heard a distinct voice coming from my back seat, asking, "Margaret, when will you trust me?" I looked back, ready to reply, but nobody was there. I realized that God was interested in me and that success was available to a slow learner like me.

■ *You must have learned your lessons well, because until recently you have been working as a facilitator in the area of self-esteem!*

I think I'm doing better in that area now. I was asked to facilitate training in the areas of self-esteem and customer service during a recent orientation course for new postal employees. I found this a very rewarding experience, as I was able to tell my story and share what I believe God can do when we acknowledge that we need help.

■ *How do they respond when you tell them about your faith?*

The Adventist church is well known in Barbados and, in general, most of the population is Christian, so it is not

difficult to discuss these issues.

■ *Are you called to work on Sabbaths?*

Generally, in Barbados, the postal service does not provide services on weekends, except when there may be a long holiday weekend. However, from the beginning I told them what I believed, and I stood firm in my decision not to work on Sabbaths. My colleagues have always respected my decision. They know they can count on me for everything else, and they appreciate that.

■ *So one day you made it to the top. How did it happen?*

I successfully applied for the vacant position of senior training officer at the Training Administration Division, the training arm of government. I would eventually return to the post office, 18 months later, to take up the position I currently hold. Throughout the competition processes – which led me to these two senior positions – I clearly saw God's hand prompting and leading me. I remember, for example, that when I received a letter informing me that I had been shortlisted to be interviewed for the position of assistant postmaster general, I realized that I would be out of the island, attending my daughter's graduation at Cambridge University in England. I contacted the government's Human Resources Management Agency and informed them of my prior commitment. To my surprise, they waited for me to return from England, and I did the interview then. When the letter came announcing my appointment, I was in awe. God had been there every step of the way. And I knew He would always be.

■ *You have not been in this position long, yet you are already representing your country in the United Nations system.*

Barbados is chair of one of the committees of the Council of Administration, which is responsible

for cooperation and development within the Universal Postal Union. These meetings take place twice a year with delegates from 192 countries. In this committee, we deal with development issues that are key for the growth of the postal sector on an international scale. It is an honor for Barbados to be able to lead the discussions in this area. I feel very privileged to be able to serve not only my country but also the other member countries of the Universal Postal Union.

■ *Which area of the postal sector interests you more?*

Innovation! I believe the Post has great potential for innovation. In certain parts of the world, that can also be its most challenging need. The Post has a long history, and we can build on that foundation knowing what works better, following the development of economy and society. I like thinking of creative marketing strategies that can take my Post office forward. Innovative creativity needs a

good methodology, and this combination is particularly appealing to me.

■ *What final message would you like to leave with the readers of Dialogue?*

First, I would like to say that being an Adventist is nothing to coward away from. I am very happy and proud to be an Adventist and be able to serve in the government of my country. God needs Adventists in every walk of life, and He has promised His guidance for anyone who is willing to follow where He leads.

Second, I would like to leave a message for students. I think that this is no accident that I'm being interviewed for a magazine for students. The worst thing you can do is to leave God out of the picture when you are studying. Many times you believe that the more time you spend with your books, the better you will understand things. But it is not so. The recipe for success is making sure that you have some responsibility at church and that you are putting your all in that responsibility. In addition, make it your habit to attend the scheduled services of the church. If you are a fast learner, you may do well on your own. But you can't begin to guess where God could take you if you decide to serve Him first. If you're not a fast learner, but God comes first in your life, He can put you over the top. Make sure you get involved in your church. God is there waiting. He has a special plan for your life.



Ashby in front of the Universal Postal Union's headquarters in Bern, Switzerland.

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PROFILE

Aruna Papp

Dialogue with the first Adventist Indo-Canadian female specialist in the fight against culture-rooted abuse of women.

Interview by Juanita Juliet Singh



On March 9, 2013, Aruna Papp established a record. She became the first Adventist Indo-Canadian woman to represent Canada as a delegate to the United Nations Conference on Global Violence Against Women.

For Papp, it was a long journey. Aruna (nee Irene Isaac) is the first of seven children of Pastor and Mrs. B.M. Isaac. Her father served the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a pastor and administrator in India before moving to Canada. While he labored hard to provide for the family, it was her mother who worked diligently to care for her children, have regular family worship, and shoulder the responsibilities for the extended family. Papp learned from her mother how to face life's problems with dignity and hold her head up with self-respect, and from both her parents she learned the meaning of hard work.

Papp grew up in India in a cultural environment, where the caste system – though officially abolished – is still embedded in every aspect of life. Surrounded by a culture that treats women negatively, she knew from childhood what it means to deny the dignity of women; this included issues pertaining to education, welfare, family life, and personal dignity.

Throughout her school and college years, Papp was disturbed and concerned about society's neglect of women. In her native land – a country that was thrust into global leadership by a female prime minister, Indira Gandhi, known as the Iron Lady of India – Papp saw girls and women brushed aside socially, economically, and politically, with little or no appeal. She saw abuse, honor killings, denial of basic rights, discrimination in the workplace, and many more darts constantly hurled at women because of their gender – not just in India, but other countries as well.

At 21, Papp migrated to Canada with her family. A few years later, circumstances thrust on her the challenge of helping female victims of abuse, a task that eventually led her to become the first Adventist South Asian to represent the Government of Canada as a delegate at the 57th session of the United Nations, and to address the issue of global violence against women.

■ *What motivated you to take up the cause of female victims of culturally-driven honor-based violence and honor killings?*

Born in India, early in life, I became aware that girls in India were not

valued. By the time I was 8, I had seen two newborn girls dumped in the garbage. One day my aunt and I were out to deliver lunch to my uncle, who was harvesting wheat. On the way, we saw a group standing around a garbage pile. I pushed my way in to have a look, and I was shocked to see a newborn female child discarded sometime during the night before. My aunt explained that girls are seen as a curse in our culture.

A few years later, in Delhi, waiting for a bus that would take us to church, I broke away from my family to investigate what the crows at the edge of the street were pulling at while making a big ruckus. I was aghast to see the crows tugging at a newborn female child. What stunned me was that people kept walking by, and no one stopped for that baby. My father pulled me away, for our bus had arrived, but I was screaming my head off for the baby. At 14, I witnessed yet another horror against females: a beautiful neighbor, educated and employed, was set on fire by her brothers for refusing to marry the man they had selected for her.

These images were seared into my psyche, but I trusted that my father would not allow any harm to come to us girls, because my parents believed

in God and that it was God's will they had six daughters and a son. However, I also knew he would not tolerate any daughter who brought shame to his name.

I began attending school at age 10; at 13, I lost one year of school after having been sent home for an appendectomy. Back in school at 14, I failed to get into the swing of studies and exams. At 17, my marriage was arranged. Unfortunately, the marriage turned out to be abusive and loveless, and ended 18 years later. When I was 21, we migrated to Canada, along with my parents and siblings. In Canada, I was fortunate enough to find a job as a short-order cook at York University in Toronto. Seeing the opportunities Canada had to offer my two young daughters and me, I felt that if I were educated, my abuse would cease.

At York University, the community liaison officer told me that there was a large community of South Asians surrounding the university, and that domestic violence in this community was a serious problem. She also informed me that as a full-time worker, I would not have to pay tuition to attend classes. That was good news indeed; it thrilled me beyond words. Soon I met other South Asian women who were also living in abusive situations. Together, we decided we would not allow the abuse to be passed on to the next generation, even if it meant bringing dishonor to the men in the family. It was then that I began working with abused women. I believe I was led by a higher power, for doors once shut are now open, and fears have given way to courage and hope.

From my own journey, a mission was born: first, to get back into school, earn a degree, and free myself from the bondage of cultural entrapment; and second, to reach out to other women who had also been taught that sons are more important than daughters. I wanted them to learn to break the cycle of violence,

by teaching their daughters that they are as important as sons. It has been a long and painful journey, but I have no regrets, and I am blessed.

■ *Briefly tell us about your 30-year involvement in this mission.*

In 1981, I started the Toronto Asian Community Centre, followed by South Asian Support Services in 1991, and Gordonridge Family Services in 1992. These agencies began to document the plight of women and children in the South Asian immigrant community. In 1990, my research on the issue of domestic violence in the South Asian immigrant community was published. While doing this research, I realized that mainstream agencies did not understand culturally-rooted violence, and that social service providers needed "cultural competency training." So I established a company named Community Development and Training and began working as a consultant and trainer.

I am also a research associate with the Frontier Centre for Public Policy, in Alberta, Canada; here I conduct research on the issues relating to immigrant communities, particularly the South Asian community. As a consultant and educator, I travel nationwide and abroad, training frontline service providers for victims of honor-based violence. The focus of my training is risk assessment and risk management. My clients are social work agencies, lawyers, universities, regional police, and the Canadian Police College.

Thirty years ago, the South Asian community felt that exposing their problems would bring dishonor to the community. But today, the situation is different. Women are encouraged to seek help, to believe there is life after divorce, and to trust they too can be successful. To abused women, this change in thinking is very crucial.

My parents, likewise, moved from viewing me as a cause for shame to being proud of the path I've chosen for

myself as the right path. They lived long enough to recognize my work and witness the peer support and governmental recognition I have received. Of the 13 awards I've received from governmental and nonprofit organizations, I'm most proud of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the South Asian Community and the Grant's Desi Achiever Award 2011 from the South Asian community.

On a personal level, I have been happily remarried for 28 years to David Papp, whose father was Hungarian and mother was Scottish, but who grew up in Toronto. David and our daughter are my source of strength. With love and respect, they support my work and advocacy.

■ *What hurdles have you faced in your work?*

The great hurdles were my own demons – my guilt and fears. I suffered guilt walking away from a marriage arranged by my parents, and worried about the impact this would have on my children. I felt deeply guilty for not sacrificing my life for the honor of my family. I feared my decision would dishonor the good name of my father and hurt his influence in his church. I also faced abandonment from my family and community.

After attending the funerals of women killed for honor, I would get very discouraged. Pioneering this work was frightening because I had no role model to follow. At times my life was threatened, and that was worrisome.

■ *What put you in the spotlight that drew the attention of the Canadian government to enlist you in its effort to address this issue of honor-based violence?*

The agencies I had established and my first research, published in 1990 – "Cultural Conflict in Counseling South Asian Women Who Are Victims of Abuse" – shattered the image of the South Asian community as "model immigrants" and caught the

attention of the media. No one could deny research based on the testimonies of 1,800 women. Once the media got involved, it became difficult for the government and the community to ignore the problem. Over the years, other agencies were established. Still, though mainstream agencies were also documenting abuse in the South Asian community, they were afraid to speak out, lest they be viewed as racist or be seen as perpetuating stereotyping. Hence, I became a natural spokesperson, as one from the community who had lived in abuse most of her life.

In the past two decades, there have been 18 honor killings in Canada, and many such killings in the U.S. Research suggests that honor killings and honor-based violence is epidemic in many other countries around the world. The victims of honor-based violence are mainly young girls growing up in two different cultures. In schools, through their peers, and through the media, they learn that they have the right to make decisions for their own lives, and that they can choose their own careers and their own life partners. But when they enter their homes, they walk into a very controlling cultural environment. In families in which honor culture is the norm, girls are punished for being too westernized – wearing pants, talking with boys, having friends from outside the community, and/or attending social events with girlfriends. Trivial gossip or rumor about their behavior can put their lives in danger.

■ *What research is available in support of the cause of abused women in culturally-controlled environments? Or is your research a kind of groundbreaking effort in this area?*

Today, extensive research is available on the issue of domestic violence, the impact of culture and harmful cultural practices, and the impact on children who witness abuse. However, there is a paucity of research on honor-



Inside the UN: Papp is wearing what looks like a necklace. It is in fact a medal of recognition from the South Asian local community. She is shown with the other two delegates and the minister for the Status of Women - Canada.

based violence and cultural barriers to seeking counseling.

In Canada, my research was among the first of its kind: a client-centered research, grounded in frontline experiences. The little research available then was more theoretical. The work I was doing allowed me to obtain information from clients firsthand, identify the problem, and suggest solutions. This groundbreaking work impacted the Canadian government's policy development.

■ *How do you or the Canadian government assess the effectiveness of training in raising awareness, in warding off potential violence, and/or in damage control management?*

Assessment is done in many ways. First, through data collection: the police, health-care providers, and social services agencies document every incoming call relating to domestic violence.

Second, through surveys. Participants attending my training seminars and workshops fill out surveys, one at the start of training and another following training. Many agencies that organize these seminars send out online surveys to assess the effectiveness of training and to invite suggestions to be addressed in follow-up

trainings. Training is ongoing to cover the vast number of social workers, the police force, and other professionals working with culturally-volatile communities.

The best way to assess what we are doing is to take note of the huge increase in the volume of female clients. When I first started working in this area, women were afraid to ask for help; today, every social service agency will tell you that they are overextended. It means that women are calling for help. This does not mean that we have reached every potential victim; a lot more work remains to be done. However, violence against women in the immigrant communities is no longer a secret.

■ *You represented the Government of Canada at the 57th session of the UN on March 9, 2013, on the issue of global violence against women. What responsibility and empowerment does this recognition place on you?*

At the UN, I met women from around the world and had the opportunity to hear about the work they are doing to eliminate violence against women and children. That was empowering. Awareness campaigns abound globally, so being part of the global team is encouraging.

Representing Canada at the UN was a great privilege. I spoke on how honor-based violence differs from other forms of violence women are subjected to. Canada has put out a booklet, “Discover Canada Guide,” in which the government states clearly that barbaric cultural practices will not be tolerated.

■ *What impact would you say your grade school Adventist teachers, especially women, had on the early formation of your view on the equality of women and men?*

I recall my time in the Adventist boarding school in Hapur, India, as “happy time,” a new world in which I felt welcomed by my teachers. It was affirming to be asked to sing specials with my sisters for church, for the teachers took note of our singing talent. I looked up to Miss Roseline Rawat, the girls’ dean, as a role model of how girls must grow up: educated, dignified, and self-respecting. I admired the way she commanded respect and treated us girls with equality. I also admired Mrs. Birol Christo, the principal’s wife and teaching headmistress. As the “campus mother,” Mrs. Christo visited the dorm regularly to teach us how to dress neatly and walk straight and how to practice table manners and not to slump in our chair at meal times. Under the influence of such teachers, I felt I could blossom into womanhood and push back the notion of girls being second-class citizens.

■ *As an Adventist professional, what role does your faith play in your work?*

My faith in God and the Scripture gave me my guiding principle in life: “Do unto others what you would like them to do unto you.” In my professional life, I am very visible to my peers and the media. Everything I do or say is scrutinized. I don’t worry about it, because I begin each day anew, making sure I live that day as an ethical and spiritual person, so



Papp at a UN meeting with other delegates.

when I put my head down at night, I know I have done the best I could. I try to live my faith one day at a time.

It is my prayer that one day my Adventist Church will truly recognize the presence of violence against women in the homes and become a part of the solution. We can begin with our church joining the UN in designating November as Violence Prevention Month, a month in which we can openly discuss the impact of violence in the home and empower members of the church to help victims of violence.

■ *What counsel can you offer to college/university women as watchwords to safeguard themselves against possible violence toward them?*

If I had an opportunity to speak to young people today, I would address the young men first and tell them that being abusive, insulting, and demeaning is not a hallmark of manhood, neither is it a way to gain respect.

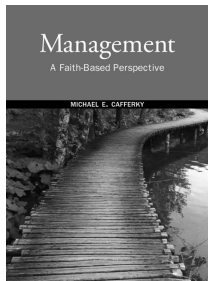
To young women, I would say: “Do everything you can to become whole: be physically fit, emotionally sound, spiritually mature, and get the best

education/career that is possible. In this way, you will be strong to stand up to your abusers, be they employer, parent, sibling, or spouse.”

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BOOKS



**Management:
A Faith-Based Perspective**
by Michael E. Cafferky (Pearson
Education, 2012; 619 pages; hardback)

Reviewed by Annette M. Gibson and
Charles H. Tidwell, Jr.

One of the pedagogical issues for both the Christian business teacher and the student is the dearth of formal materials to assist in the integration of faith and learning in the classroom. This issue finds a beginning resolution in Michael Cafferky's *Management: A Faith-Based Perspective*. Through this book, Cafferky, professor of business and management at Southern Adventist University, shows how management may be integrated with "a faith-based perspective founded on values and teachings common" to Christians. The foundation of the text is Cafferky's assumption that the reader understands, first, the importance of approaching management with an understanding of one's own perspective, and, second, that the perspective of religious faith is valid when dealing with "things in life and work that have meaning and where values are key influencing elements" (xv).

The methodology adopted is "to integrate faith and learning about management at the chapter level" (xx) with a section on the Bible and a section on contemporary management scholarship in each chapter. This parallel approach allows the reader to see what the Bible has to say on a particular management topic while at the same time discover what current management thought has to say on the same topic. The goal is that after understanding the two perspectives, students and teachers alike will carefully consider what their own religious faith will lead them to do in a similar management situation (xxi). Cafferky cautions the reader not to expect Scripture to speak to every management question and not to expect that what is presented is always unique to the Christian religion. He does, however, hope that by using this approach, the reader will carefully consider which management theories are acceptable to a Christian as he or she practices management in today's world.

Of particular importance in understanding the outline of the book is the explanation of Cafferky's management pyramid model (p. 5). The model illustrates three key elements – "being and becoming," "thinking and feeling," and "action" – in a pyramid, provides numerous biblical texts to illustrate these elements (p. 7), and then expands these elements from

the individual to the organization and ultimately to the community (p. 8). For example, in applying the management pyramid model to the concept of the individual, "being and becoming" describes who we are (identity, spirituality, values, character, worldview, etc.). "Thinking and feeling" incorporates one's awareness of self, others, and the situation, while "action" are the steps taken that affect not only the person taking the action but also other people, organizations, and the larger community. Cafferky refers to this pyramid as the framing device for the entire book.

The text covers the management topics expected in a basic management text: management history; environmental issues; cross-cultural management; moral and social responsibility; planning and decision-making; strategic thinking; human resource management; communication; motivation; leadership; change, power and conflict; and managerial control and accountability.

A unique chapter is the one titled "Spirituality, Faith, and Management" (Chapter 15). Here Cafferky identifies a number of aspects of spirituality and highlights the differences between religion and spirituality. The chapter, however, was not as well structured as expected and did not adequately summarize the role of spirituality and faith in the workplace. For the final chapter of the text, a more complete wrap-up of the importance of spirituality and faith in management would have been helpful.

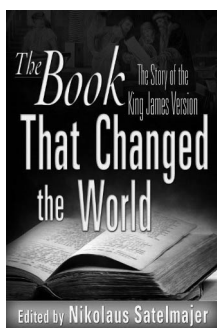
Of more interest (and help from the perspective of an instructor) was the appendix on the assumptions of management. This discussion of what is assumed by most management textbooks and how those assumptions fit into the Christian worldview will be particularly helpful for both students and teachers who wrestle with the integration of Scripture and traditional management philosophies.

Each chapter opens with a brief case that highlights the central issue of the chapter, and ends with a good summary of the chapter. Substantial references in the endnotes to each chapter are especially helpful to instructors if they wish to follow up on a particular quote or item. Each chapter also contains good discussion questions and exercises. Finally, there are 10 short cases at the end of the book that are integrated into the chapter topics through a table provided on the inside cover of the text. Instructors will find these cases and the table extremely helpful when discussing these concepts in the classroom.

Management: A Faith-Based Perspective is not a text for those who do not want to think. Fortunately, Cafferky has not done the thinking for the student! However, he has set the stakes in the ground for integration by providing information that will require both careful teaching (by the instructor) and careful thought (by the student). Instructors will have material at their fingertips to use for deliberate classroom discussions, and students will have ample opportunity to argue the points from various perspectives. But isn't

this what the integration of faith and learning requires? If so, Cafferky has given his readers a good starting point.

Annette M. Gibson (Ph.D., Washington State University) is professor emeritus, former Hasso Endowed Chair of Business Ethics, and former dean of the School of Business Administration at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Charles H. Tidwell, Jr. (Ph.D., University of Calgary) is dean emeritus and former dean of Affiliation and Extension Programs at Andrews University.



The Book that Changed the World: The Story of the King James Version

edited by Nikolaus Satelmajer (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press, 2012; 153 pages; paperback)

Reviewed by Remwil R. Tornalejo

Composed of 11 chapters, authored by different assigned contributors, and divided into four sections, this book commemorates the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Holy Scriptures. The first section provides a brief history of the King James Bible (KJV), also known as the Authorized Version. It proposes that the KJV is a sort of “refinement” of the Wycliff Bible, the Tyndale Bible, and other early English translations that preceded it. The opening chapters also take into account the political and religious situation in England during the late 13th century, which played an important role in the quest for a Bible translation without any religious or denominational bias.

The second section discusses the far-reaching influence of the KJV in the life of the people of England, where it originated. This influence, of course, extended far beyond the life of the church, affecting the growth and dynamism of literature, language, politics, music and art, and social history of the English-speaking world. The contributors point out that the KJV has shaped the core values of western civilization, especially its democratic values.

The book offers a thought-provoking idea in attributing the present decline of Western civilization to the “continuing post-Enlightenment assault on the authority of the Judeo-Christian Scriptures.” In other words, the undermining of the Bible – which has served as the framework of the moral fiber of the past and present society – has led to moral and

social decadence, which might eventually lead to the collapse of Western civilization.

The third section presents the role of the KJV in the African-American church. It is quite touching to ponder that even perhaps in the darkest period of the history of the American people – the period of slavery – the King James Bible touched the lives of those who were deprived of their dignity and freedom. It notes how these slaves – the majority of whom were unable to read the language – heard from preachers the eloquence of the King James Bible, followed its beautiful stories, committed to memory many rhythmic passages of the KJV, and cherished a hope of better days to come in a better land. Indeed, many abolitionists eloquently “advocated freedom using word and thought soaked in the language and imagery of the King James Version.”

The section also deals with the impact of the KJV on the fledgling Seventh-day Adventist Church. According to Woodrow Whidden, one of the factors that endeared the KJV to Adventists is the version’s Protestant heritage with which Adventists strongly identify. The formulation of Adventist doctrines and theology is highly indebted to the KJV, although the theological position of the Adventist church is not “KJV dependent.” The church and its scholars, committed to the Book, do accept the value of other versions.

The fourth section of the book discusses how the KJV was embraced by people during the days when not very many were literate. It points out that the oral beauty of the KJV – with its rhythmic cadence – has captivated the hearts and minds of people, and it is not surprising that KJV verses, more than any other piece of literature, have found a permanent place in famous speeches, plays, and other works of literature. This particular legacy of the KJV lives on.

The final chapters of the book move beyond recognizing the far-reaching influence of the KJV to inviting readers to make the Bible part of their daily lives and commit it to memory, whatever version one prefers.

Although much of the information in the book’s introductory chapters is not new, the authors and editors could have avoided overlapping discussions of several topics. Yet the book on the whole has many positive contributions. Foremost is the enduring emphasis the Word of God has made on past and present society, which is currently in the midst of challenges posed by a pluralistic and post-modern culture.

Altogether, the book is a good read.

Remwil R. Tornalejo (Master of Theology, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies) is an instructor in the historical-theological department, AIIAS, Philippines.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

In response to a request made from the floor by a delegate to the 59th General Conference Session at Atlanta in 2010, the General Conference Administrative Committee appointed a Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC). The committee consists of representation from the world field, clergy, academics, and lay members. Both genders and a broad range of perspectives are represented. The committee has met two times, with the next meeting scheduled for January 21 to 25, 2014. On July 23, 2013, by a vote of 86 to 8, TOSC issued the following consensus statement on a theology of ordination. This statement will now go to the Annual Council in October 2013 and eventually to the 60th General Conference Session to be convened in 2015 in San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A. Documents relating to the work of TOSC are available at the website of the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research at <http://www.adventistarchives.org/about-tosc>.

Lisa M. Beardsley-Hardy
Editor-in-Chief, *Dialogue*

Consensus Statement on a Seventh-Day Adventist Theology of Ordination

RECOMMENDED, To adopt the document, “Consensus Statement on a Seventh-day Adventist Theology of Ordination,” which reads as follows:

In a world alienated from God, the Church is composed of those whom

God has reconciled to Himself and to each other. Through the saving work of Christ they are united to Him by faith through baptism (Eph 4:4-6), thus becoming a royal priesthood whose mission is to “proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9, NKJV). Believers are given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20), called and enabled through the power of the Spirit and the gifts He bestows on them to carry out the Gospel Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

While all believers are called to use their spiritual gifts for ministry, the Scriptures identify certain specific leadership positions that were accompanied by the Church’s public endorsement for persons who meet the biblical qualifications (Numbers 11:16-17; Acts 6:1-6; 13:1-3; 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9). Several such endorsements are shown to involve “the laying on of hands.” English versions of the Scriptures use the word *ordain* to translate many different Greek and Hebrew words having the basic idea of *select* or *appoint* that describe the placement of these persons in their respective offices. Over the course of Christian history the term *ordination* has acquired meanings beyond what these words originally implied. Against such a backdrop, Seventh-day Adventists understand ordination, in a biblical sense, as the action of the Church in publicly recognizing those whom the Lord has called and equipped for local and global Church ministry.

Aside from the unique role of the apostles, the New Testament identifies the following categories of ordained leaders: the elder/supervising elder (Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17, 28;

1 Timothy 3:2-7; 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Peter 5:1) and the deacon (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8-10). While most elders and deacons ministered in local settings, some elders were itinerant and supervised greater territory with multiple congregations, which may reflect the ministry of individuals such as Timothy and Titus (1 Timothy 1:3-4; Titus 1:5).

In the act of ordination, the Church confers representative authority upon individuals for the specific work of ministry to which they are appointed (Acts 6:1-3; 13:1-3; 1 Timothy 5:17; Titus 2:15). These may include representing the Church; proclaiming the gospel; administering the Lord’s Supper and baptism; planting and organizing churches; guiding and nurturing members; opposing false teachings; and providing general service to the congregation (cf. Acts 6:3; 20:28-29; 1 Timothy 3:2, 4-5; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; 2:2; 4:5; Titus 1:5, 9). While ordination contributes to Church order, it neither conveys special qualities to the persons ordained nor introduces a kingly hierarchy within the faith community. The biblical examples of ordination include the giving of a charge, the laying on of hands, fasting and prayer, and committing those set apart to the grace of God (Deuteronomy 3:28; Acts 6:6; 14:26; 15:40).

Ordained individuals dedicate their talents to the Lord and to His Church for a lifetime of service. The foundational model of ordination is Jesus appointing the twelve apostles (Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16), and the ultimate model of Christian ministry is the life and work of our Lord, who came not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45; Luke 22:25-27; John 13:1-17).

ACTION REPORT

Adventist student receives prestigious award in Australia

by Johnny Wong

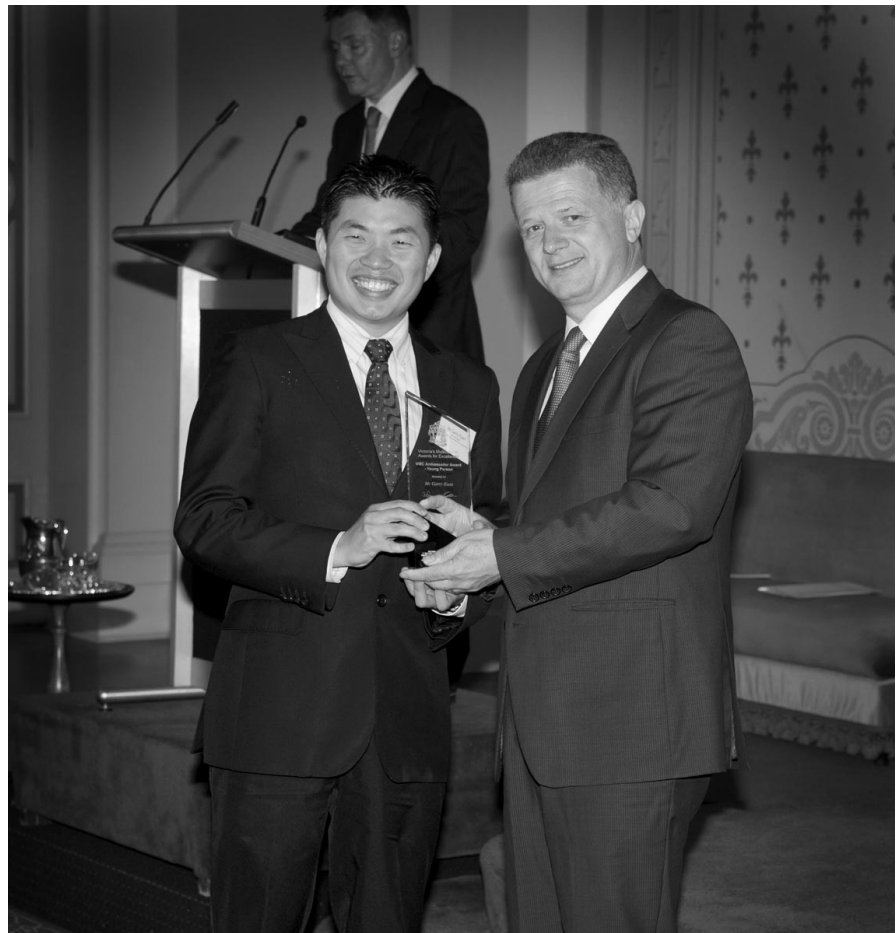
Garry Kuan, an Adventist graduate student from Malaysia, has received the 2012 Victoria's Multicultural Award for Excellence in Australia. The VMC Ambassador Award (Young Person) recognizes achievements in multicultural affairs and community services by a young person. The ceremony was hosted by the governor of Victoria, His Excellency the Hon. Alex Chernov and Mrs. Elizabeth Chernov in Melbourne, Australia, in December 2012. The award was presented by the Hon. Nicholas Kotsiras, minister of multicultural affairs and citizenship, and the premier, the Hon. Ted Baillieu. Kuan, the only international student to ever receive such a prestigious award, is currently a member of the Gateway Adventist Centre Church.

Earlier, in May 2012, the Council of International Students in Australia (the national body representing Australia's 500,000 international students) named Kuan International Student of the Year, a first for Adventist students in Australia.

Kuan's church elder, John Kitevski, says, "Garry is like a modern-day Daniel in Babylon. He not only excels academically but also is a soul winner for Jesus." How did this come about? How did a busy doctoral student majoring in sports psychology and tied down with the heavy demands of academic life, also excel in community service and soul winning?

Kuan came to Melbourne about five years ago. While a student, he attended Mark Finley's Discover series and was convinced anew of the urgency and the essentials of the Adventist message. After his re-baptism, Kuan

had a fire and passion to share Jesus at Victoria University, where there was not a single other Adventist student. He saw Gateway Adventist Center (GAC) planting churches at Melbourne and Monash Universities



and wanted the Lord to do the same at his university.

Community service and soul winning

Convinced that Ellen White was right when she wrote that “the Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good ... then He bade them to follow Him,”¹ Kuan decided to do precisely that: engage with the community and share God’s love with students on the campus and win them for Christ. He started a student club known as the Australian Christian Fellowship (ACF) in early 2008. With the help of the associate pastor, church leaders, and members, ACF commenced with free lunches and fellowship meetings. Since September 2008, ACF has been operating weekly “care groups,” which gather every Friday evening for fellowship and care.

In 2010, because of his passion to help students on campus, Kuan was nominated as president of the International Students Association (ISA) at Victoria University. The highlight of his achievement was his ability to revitalize the university’s Multicultural Week. This event had been discontinued in 2008, but he was able to re-establish a festival experience in which more than 20 cultures were represented by students and community groups. This event is now

listed as one of the 10 core events of the university’s annual calendar. In 2011, Kuan was also elected to the University Council, the governing body of the university, chaired by the chancellor. He also serves as a member of several university committees.

Along with ACF, Kuan runs a free weekly violin class, teaching violin to students, staff members, and communities around Melbourne’s western suburbs. Through these classes, he has taught more than 100 people, from age 5 to 70. ACF also runs different activities on campus, such as day trips, English conversational classes, career seminars, cooking demonstrations, and Bible seminars.

For his contribution to the student body and general community, Kuan received several earlier awards. In November 2011, he was given the Atsushi Fujita Research Student Award in Taiwan, acknowledging his outstanding research in the field of sport and exercise, and psychology and motor learning in Asian-South Pacific Sport Psychology. In January 2012, Melbourne selected Kuan as one of the 20 inaugural participants in the city’s International Student Leader’s EDGE program. In July 2012, he was awarded a young researcher scholarship and invited to present his thesis to leading sport scientists at the pre-Olympic convention in Glasgow. After that,

he helped prepare several Australian Olympians for their Olympic events. While none of the athletes in his study won medals, two athletes came in top 10 in their categories, which was much better than expected.

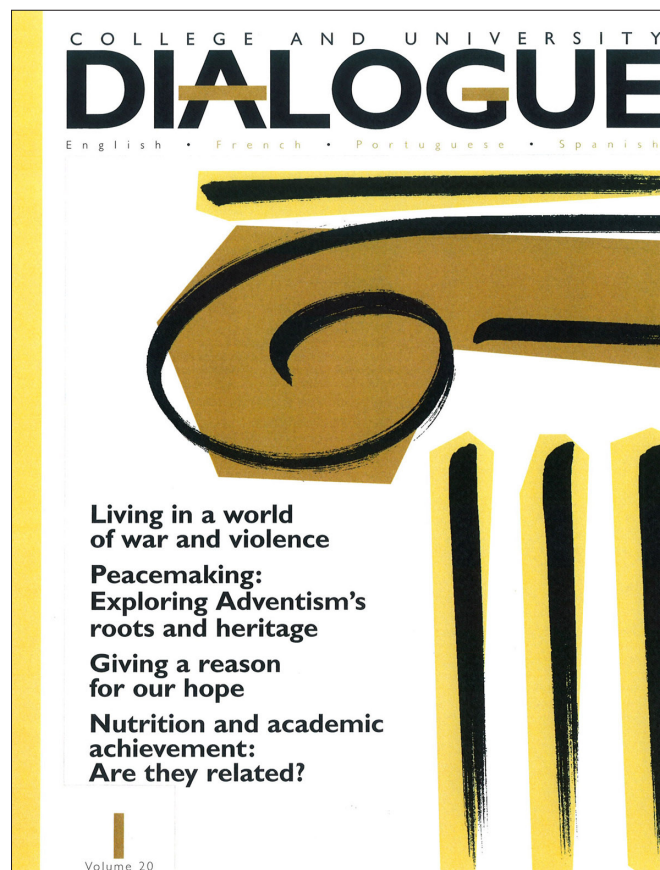
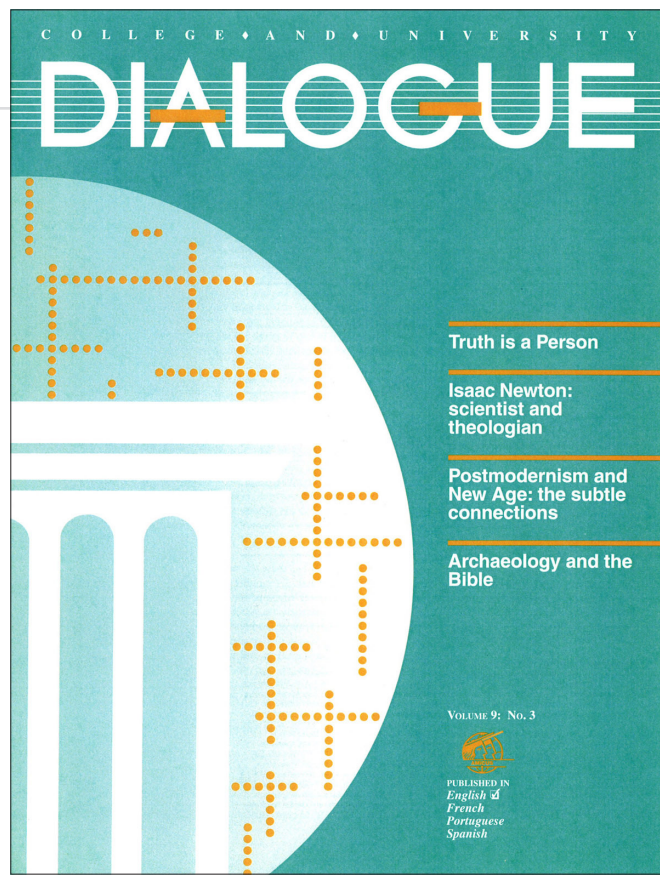
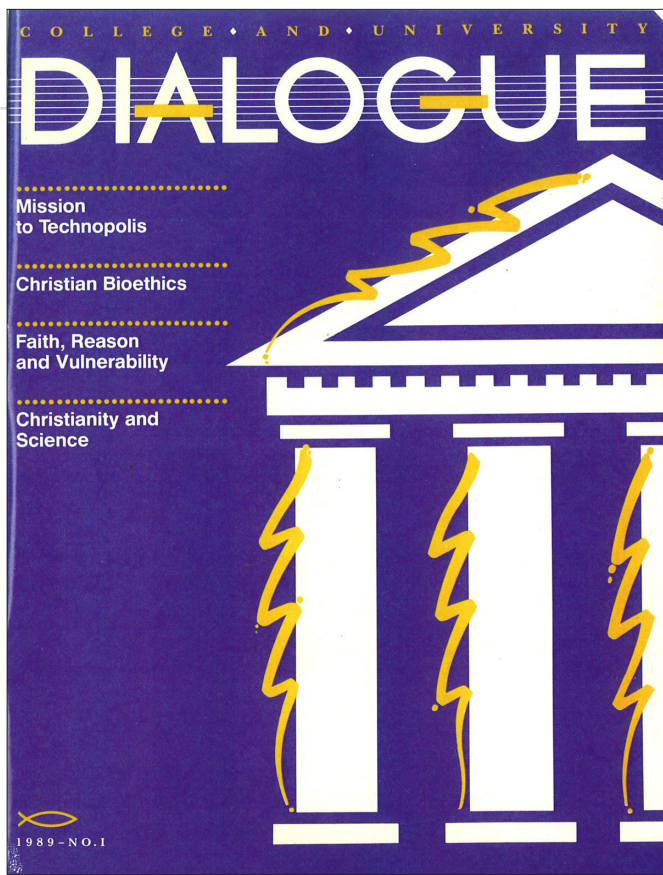
Kuan’s community service did not stop at sports and social activities. Since the Australian Christian Fellowship started, Gateway Adventist Centre has launched church planting activities in the west area of Melbourne. Gateway West Church – funded by Global Mission – was formed in August 2012, with Kuan as a key founding member. The church has grown to 22 members in four years.

The example of Garry Kuan and his fellow team members in witnessing demonstrates one key point for all Adventist students in secular universities: academic excellence need not get in the way of spiritual witnessing.

Johnny Wong is the pastor of Gateway Adventist Centre, Melbourne, Australia.

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C O L L E G E A N D U N I V E R S I T Y
DIALOGUE

E n g l i s h • F r e n c h • P o r t u g u e s e • S p a n i s h

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