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**Equality in the Spirit:**
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**Overlooked Themes in Amos:**
Many conservative Bible students who can quote key texts from Amos decry government programs for the poor but suggest no alternatives. Mark Gutman suggests that a lack of sermons and articles about needy people has probably contributed to ignorance of the "justice and righteousness" that Amos called for....

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For many decades, "givers" in North American and other economically developed nations

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**White Memorial Medical Center Agrees to Pay $14.1 Million to Settle:** In the wake of a multimillion-dollar settlement that implicates an Adventist-owned medical center for violation of kickback laws, we ask: Are highly-paid Church health-care administrators competent to the level of complexity of the modern medical-administrative task?

**Independent Adventist Church-planting Missions Discuss Possible Merger:** Two independent church-planting ministries
supportive of Adventist doctrines (but which do not subscribe to the Adventist Church administrative structure) appear ready to merge, as Mission Catalyst (specializing in English-language congregations) and Seventh Day International (planting mostly Hispanic groups) ponder their future together....

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Ohio Adventist Offers a Burial Site for the Boston Marathon Bombing Suspect

Submitted: May 7, 2013

By Adventist Today News Team
The CBS television affiliate in Youngstown has reported that an Adventist man in the area has offered space in a burial plot that his family owns in Crown Hill Cemetery, Vienna, Ohio, so that the body of Tamerlan Tsarnaev can be buried. The Adventist man told a television journalist that he believes God wants him to do this, although he does not want his name reported.

The man "believes in a strict interpretation of the Bible," CBS News stated, "particularly Jesus' call to love your enemies." He told reporters that he hopes that some good might come from his offer.

Tsarnaev "can no longer hurt anyone," he was quoted by CBS News, "and perhaps God can use this act of kindness to change somebody else's mind and keep anyone else from harming or trying to harm someone ... anywhere else in the world." He stated that he understands that some people would be upset by his offer, including members of his own family, "but it is the right thing to do."

Tsarnaev's body is still being held in a funeral home in Worcester, Massachusetts. A number of elected officials have stated that they do not want him buried in the state, even in an unmarked grave inside the walls of a state prison where executed criminals have been buried in the past.
"The acts that were carried out in Boston were heinous," the Adventist man in Ohio told CBS News. "I have prayed for the victims. I have prayed for the families of those who lost loved ones."

"Adventists have a different understanding of the state of the dead than the standard view among Christians and others, and this might make it easier for an Adventist to make this kind of offer," a veteran Adventist pastor told Adventist Today. "But I am simply speculating. This man is to be affirmed for taking the teaching of Jesus seriously at a time when it is not politically popular to do so."

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Tithe Income Growing, Shifting Away from North America in the Adventist Denomination

Submitted: May 6, 2013

By Adventist Today News Team

A new analysis of income to the Tithe Fund in the Seventh-day Adventist Church shows that over the last decade the share coming from North America has dropped from 61 percent to 41 percent. The share donated in Latin America increased from 18 percent to nearly a third of the worldwide total. The report projects that within five years the total Tithe income from Brazil will be larger than that from the United States.

Throughout the denomination’s history the majority of its funding has come from members in the United States, but that has come to an end. The new reality is not widely known and church administrators have only begun to think about its implications.

The central mechanism for Adventist Church finances has two key parts. Number one, members are taught to tithe—give 10 percent of their income—to a Tithe Fund. Number two, the fund is shared throughout much of the organization. In North America, more than 85 percent of the fund is spent by local conferences, with the largest share going to operate Adventist schools (K–16) and pay the salary and benefits of clergy. About seven percent goes outside North America to support missionaries and their work, while the remaining eight percent provides for the operations of the union conferences, division and General Conference.
Global tithe increased by more than 11 percent in 2011, the latest year for which an analysis is available. The analysis uses sophisticated math to enable an accurate comparison and aggregate view across currency differences from country to country, etc. The totals are reported in U.S. dollars and the report includes an overall index.

In the United States, income to the Tithe Fund increased by 3.9 percent during a year when the national economy grew by only 1.8 percent. It is one of six nations that have become the top sources of Tithe in the denomination, including Brazil, Canada, Australia, South Korea and Mexico. These six countries, out of about 200 nations, provide more than two thirds of the total income for the denomination, though they contain less than one in five members.

Tithe income in Brazil increased by 25 percent in 2011 and by 29 percent the year before. This kind of growth leads to a conclusion that if the pace continues as it did last decade, in about five years Brazil will become the largest single source of tithe in the denomination. Brazil’s economy is booming and rapidly developing while, at the same time, the Adventist Church is growing rapidly there.

The West Central Africa region showed the greatest increase in tithe income, year over year, with an improvement of 26 percent. Much of the increase in this region comes from Ghana, Nigeria and Togo, where booming economies, rapid development, and Adventist Church growth are all present. Southern Africa also had a significant increase of 21 percent in tithe income during 2011, with extraordinary rises in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Global Tithe Index is published by the Asia Pacific Research Centre at the Adventist Institute for International Advanced Studies, the university operated by the GC in the Philippines to educate church leaders throughout Asia and the Pacific region. The project is directed by Claude Richli, a church administrator with an MBA who is originally from Switzerland and has served in many parts of the world. The 2011 report marks ten years for the index and includes decade-long trends for the first time.

The entire 73-page report can be downloaded at the Web site: www.aiias.edu/hti/ There is also a searchable data base which allows readers to look up data on any nation in the world where the Adventist Church has a presence.

Share your thoughts about this article:
Texas Hospital is Now Jointly Owned by Adventists and Other Faiths

Submitted: Apr 30, 2013

By Adventist Today News Team

Huguley Memorial Medical Center south of Fort Worth, Texas, has over the past year become jointly owned by Texas Health Resources (THR) and Adventist Health System (AHS). On April 18 hospital executives, civic leaders and staff gathered for a ceremony unveiling its new name: Texas Health Huguley Fort Worth South.

“What began as a courtship and marriage has resulted in a happy honeymoon and the prospect for a happily ever after,” stated the Alvarado Star the next day. A year ago AHS formed a joint venture company with THR which “owns the controlling interest in the joint venture and AHS continues to manage the daily operations of the” institution.

Adventist Today asked AHS how this new organizational arrangement affects the status of Huguley as an Adventist hospital. AHS “continues to operate the hospital,” spokesperson Melanie Lawhorn told Adventist Today. “Ken Finch is still the CEO, the mission is unchanged, and AHS manages the daily operations. The president of the Southwestern Union Conference remains on the board.”

“The first year of the joint partnership has been productive,” the Alvarado Star quoted Rich Reiner, president of AHS. “Facilities enhancements have been made and more significant expansion is planned,” the newspaper reported. “By combining our resources and talents, we have already begun to more effectively meet the health care needs of those we serve,” it quoted Doug Hawthorne, THR chief executive officer.
Herbert Huguley, a dentist and real estate investor from Dallas, left his $6 million estate to the Seventh-day Adventist Church to build a hospital in memory of his parents. Huguley Memorial Medical Center opened in February 1977, according to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. “It’s a change for those who have been here through the 36 years,” admitted Finch about the new organization. “This is just the start of a lot of positive things that will be happening,” Reiner said.

THR is one the largest faith-based nonprofit health systems in the country with 25 hospitals in Texas, including Presbyterian and Methodist institutions. AHS is the largest Protestant health care provider in America with 44 campuses and 7,700 licensed beds. It cares for four million patients each year and employs 78,000 workers.

Asked about the benefits of this new organizational arrangement, Lawhorn told Adventist Today, “The hospital gets the best of both worlds ... the national brand and resources of AHS [and] the local recognition and resources of the Texas Health brand. If you’ve ever been to Texas, you know that the Texas Health brand is very strong and recognizable up and down the Interstate 35 corridor.”

It is generally believed by experts that health care institutions cannot survive as stand-alone organizations in the current situation in the United States where political and economic pressures seek to reduce the overall cost while science and demographics increase the cost. The new organization at Huguley may be seen as a creative approach to preserve the Adventist affiliation of an institution while gaining the benefits of also being affiliated with a strong local network.

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Adventists Note the Passing of Music Giant George Beverly Shea

Submitted: May 7, 2013

By Adventist Today News Team

The death of George Beverly Shea, the well-known singing evangelist for Billy Graham, in April was noted by Adventists across North America, especially among older generations. Adventist Today asked a number of musicians about Shea's influence on Adventist music and worship.

Shea was highly influential for Adventist singers involved in evangelism from the late 1940s through the 1980s, Pastor Jim Teel, worship coordinator for the Keene (Texas) Seventh-day Adventist Church, told Adventist Today. “He had a profound influence on Del Delker, in her singing and her song selection.” Teel worked with Delker and the King’s Heralds quartet for a number of years. "Shea had an influence on all who did evangelism, whether in meetings or on the radio or television."

Shea wrote "I'd Rather Have Jesus," which was "one of my most popular songs," Delker told Adventist Today. "He was very prominent. Everybody knew him." She recalled that she met him once when she went with a friend to hear him sing and was taken backstage after the concert. Shea recognized her name immediately, Delker said. "He gave me a kiss on the cheek."

"I admired him because he wasn't on an ego trip like some people," Delker stated. "He was a very humble person, although he was probably one of the best known religious singers in the world."

There are two songs written by Shea in the Seventh-day Adventist Church Hymnal pointed out John Boyd, who was chair of the music department at Southwestern Adventist University before he retired. Shea's greatest contribution was as a musical evangelist, singing altar call songs for Billy Graham, Boyd told Adventist Today. "His gift was a mixture of spiritual emotion with a basic message which could bring someone to Christ; not doctrine, just a
connection to Jesus.

"I don't personally feel that Shea had much influence ... in shaping Adventist musical choices," stated Dan Shultz, who edits the newsletter and web site of the International Adventist Musicians Association (IAMA). He traces the origins of the music made well-known among Adventists by media ministries "to a larger area of gospel music that also influenced Shea."

Shultz told Adventist Today that "our church had its own 'stars' and unique brand of gospel tunes from its very beginning. James White, his sister Anna and his son Edson, all published collections of early Adventist gospel-style music, beginning as early as 1849."

Homer Rodeheaver was a strong influence on changing styles of church music, Boyd stated. This is the stream within which Shea's music developed, "mainline gospel music." John Peterson "began to break out of the 'old school' mold ... from the 1950s through the 1970s. He paved the way for Ralph Carmichael, who pushed back the barriers between sacred and secular styles." There are three songs by Carmichael in the current Adventist hymnal. As contemporary music became big business it had more and more influence on Christian music, Boyd stated. "Musicians like Amy Grant became cross-over artists." "Contemporary Christian Music was a radical break from traditional gospel and hymn music," Shultz said. Among Adventists it "got started in the 1960s with the Wedgewood Trio and in the 1970s with the Heritage Singers." Adventist groups "were inspired by what was happening in popular music" where there was "a radical break from the form of popular music that had held sway through the 1950s."

"Some older Adventists still prefer their hymns, but the transformation in church music that started in the 1960s and 1970s is pretty well established," Shultz observed. This has happened as the Baby Boom generation who were young people in those decades has "moved into leadership positions in the ministry. Now, in the minds of younger Adventists, the music from the last decades of the 20th century is viewed as dated."

"Through the years, there has been little support from highest levels of leadership in the church for the more formal worship music and for musicians who could serve as church musicians in the tradition of other churches," Shultz told Adventist Today. "In a sense, although there have been attempts to moderate these changes in worship music," the new trends have been generally accepted among Adventists. For example, "the music at the Toronto General Conference Session [in 2000] encompassed traditional and other types of music [and] became very controversial." IAMA has published the history of music trends in the Adventist Church on its web site: http://www.iamaonline.com.
Share your thoughts about this article:

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Oakwood University Comes in First, Wins $50,000 in Home Depot Contest

Submitted: May 8, 2013

By Adventist Today News Team

Oakwood University, an Adventist higher education institution in Huntsville, Alabama, won the Retool Your School contest that Home Depot sponsored over recent months. Its 1,939 students came in ahead of larger schools, reported The Huntsville Times yesterday. Fisk University in Nashville, with an enrollment of 842, and Tuskegee University, with an enrollment of 2,684, tied for second place in the contest to see how many supporters and alumni would register online at a Home Depot web site within a limited number of weeks.

The contest specifically targeted the historically African American colleges and universities and a total of 67 institutions entered. Oakwood will be awarded a $50,000 grant by Home Depot for campus beautification and the other two schools will each get a $10,000 grant. Oakwood has announced that it will use the grant to construct a pavilion near a pond on campus, complete with an outdoor kitchen.

An Oakwood spokesperson pointed out that the project focuses on healthful living and students will be involved in the construction. It is not simply decorative. It will also be used for community events.

Kay Campbell, religion editor for the newspaper, explained that Oakwood had deliberately handicapped its performance in the contest by asking its supporters to not go to the Home Depot web site from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. "We encouraged our supporters
to only vote six days a week,” she quoted Tim Allston, the university’s director of public relations. He explained the Adventist doctrine of the Sabbath and said it was like the Children of Israel not collecting manna on the Sabbath.

Dr. Leslie Pollard, university president, pointed out that Oakwood also has contacts around the world from its widespread alumni and because it is sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church which operates the largest Protestant network of schools on the globe. Oakwood’s current student body comes from 42 of the 50 United States and 22 other countries, according to Allston.

Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle and the city council will recognize Oakwood University for its victory during the council session on Thursday (May 9). The Huntsville Times web site includes video of an April 11 convocation on campus and will likely include video of the city council session in a few days.

The university has also announced that its students with faculty team leaders will be involved in four mission trips during the coming summer break. One group will do a project in Kenya where Oakwood student volunteers have gone each of the last 13 years. A second project will be in Madagascar where Oakwood has a faculty and staff development agreement with a local school. The other two mission trips will work in American cities, Memphis and Orlando.

These projects will involve students in community service, feeding the hungry, working with children and cleaning up slums. Each project will also involve student assisting with evangelism campaigns. Community supporters can also participate, stated the university’s associate chaplain, Pastor Ronald Pollard.

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May 13, 2013

White Memorial Medical Center Agrees to Pay $14.1 Million to Settle Allegations of Illegal Kickbacks to Doctors

Submitted: May 8, 2013

By Adventist Today News Team

Last Friday (May 3) the United States Department of Justice announced that Adventist Health System/West, the nonprofit corporation that controls White Memorial Medical Center in Los Angeles, had agreed to pay $14.1 million to avoid going to trial on charges that it violated laws prohibiting payments to doctors to get them to refer their patients to the hospital. The allegations were first filed in 2008 by two doctors who will receive $2.8 million of the total under the "whistleblower" law.

By Monday the story had been picked up by the Los Angeles Times, the Wall Street Journal, The Sacramento Bee and a number of other news publishers in California and across the country. Government authorities "pay close attention to the financial relationships between hospitals and doctors out of concern that patients will receive unnecessary tests and treatments, often at the expense of taxpayer-supported health programs," the Times explained. "White Memorial violated anti-kickback laws by overpaying certain physicians and giving them other improper inducements in return for patient referrals."

Financial arrangements of this kind "cost taxpayer dollars and undermine the integrity of medical judgments," the Los Angeles newspaper quoted United States assistant attorney general Stuart Delery. "White Memorial said it cooperated fully with the government investigators and that the settlement related to financial relationships that were entered
into more than a decade ago," the Times also reported.

Out of the total settlement, $11.5 million will go the Federal government and $2.6 million to the California Department of Health Care Services, according to The Sacramento Bee, the major news organ in the state capital. The largest share will go into the Medicare Trust Fund.

The lawsuit alleged that doctors were given inflated payments for teaching at White Memorial which is the location of a number of medical training programs, as well as gifts of equipment and supplies. These payments were charged to be in violation of the Anti-Kickback Act, the Stark Statute and came under the terms of the False Claims Act, which allows individual citizens to sue to recapture funding provided by the government that may have been used by the hospital in illegal arrangements.

The U.S. Justice Department stated that the action was "part of the government's emphasis on combating health care fraud." It also said, "as part of the settlement, White Memorial has entered into a comprehensive five-year Corporate Integrity Agreement with the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to ensure its continued compliance with federal health care" laws and regulations.

"Clearly this is not a good witness for the Church and is outside the intentions of the Adventist Church for its health ministries," a retired administrator told Adventist Today. "At the same time, it must be kept in mind that these structures and polices are very complex. There may not have been any intention to do something wrong. There is much competition in health care these days, and an inner city hospital like White Memorial is difficult to keep funded."

Adventist Today has recently published extensive data about the high salaries paid some executives in some health care organizations affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "This may seem counter-intuitive," the retired administrator said, "but it may be that mistakes were made because we did not pay enough to get someone with greater capability than those who made bad decisions in this case. It would be stupid to assume that the high salaries and the wrong-doing are necessarily cause and effect."

______________Share your thoughts about this article:
Independent Adventist Church-planting Missions Discuss Possible Merger

Submitted: May 8, 2013

By Adventist Today News Team

Two independent ministries that specialize in planting new congregations participated in a meeting April 22 to "pray and talk about possibly working together," Pastor Ron Gladden, directional leader of Mission Catalyst, has told supporters in a letter. His organization has been planting Adventist churches independent of denominational control since the fall of 2004 and recently he discovered that Seventh Day International (SDI) has begun to do the same kind of work.

Mission Catalyst (MC) has worked primarily with new congregations in the English language that reach out to the majority culture in America, while SDI has planted Spanish-speaking congregations in immigrant communities. "Might God be honored if MC and SDI merged? Both parties are leaning in that direction," Gladden wrote in a letter clearly designed to test the reaction of donors.

Neither organization has any differences with Adventist doctrines. They agree that "the churches we plant are not officially affiliated with any denomination ... the local church is God's Plan A to reach people ... the primary customer is the person who will not go to heaven unless something changes before the end of his life [and] those who pay the bills, who are already convinced, and who already attend are the secondary customers."

Gladden stated that they also agree that congregations "must be self-determining when it comes to the things that cause health and growth" such as "staffing, money and
governance," and "any conference or network exists only resource and assist the local church in reaching its maximum redemptive potential." But, "those who are persuaded of our theological perspective are not spiritually superior to those who attend any other Christian church."

Pastor Richard Garcia, president of SDI, and Gladden both also agree that "leaders don't wait for permission to obey God's prompting." Although he is clearly a mainstream Adventist in his beliefs and preaching, Gladden left denominational employment when the two union conferences he had been managing church planting projects for over several years decided that he was too innovative and fired him.

"In just a few months" SDI has planted "six churches in four states," Gladden wrote. "They hope to start churches in every ethnic and language group." Mission Catalyst is mostly centered in the West and SDI is in the South and Eastern part of the United States.

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Adventist Today


May 13, 2013
Equality in the Spirit

Submitted: May 9, 2013

By Debbonnaire Kovacs

Chapter 9 in The Monastery of the Heart is titled “Equality.” In it, Chittister begins by saying that we like to think equality is the characteristic of our age—that we are all equal now, with equal importance and respect, and equal opportunities. But, she contends that in fact “inequality is the greatest sign of our time.”

. . . it is also our world that enslaves the poor to the drudgery of survival, that ranks women as lower human beings than men, that distributes the goods we produce according to race, that worships at the feet of the gods of money, and lives in gated communities in order to keep the rest of the world out. To this world, Benedictine spirituality says clearly, “No.”

She points out that elders, who have lived longer in the heat of life are considered as elders or wisdom figures, as signs that

. . . life grows sweeter with time, . . . holier with experience, . . . richer of heart as the heart grows deeper into God. But age and seniority are also not its gods. . . .”the Spirit often reveals what is better to the younger.” The principle is a clear one: “The Spirit blows where it will.” We cannot damp down the fire of the Spirit on the basis of anything but the greater movement of the Spirit itself.

I find it noteworthy that Chittister does not say “We must not.” She says “We cannot.”

I think it’s a principle at which the Adventist denomination as a whole would do well to step back and take another look. And a few more prayers.

Enough said.
Share your thoughts about this article:

Log In to Post a Comment. Log In | Register
Overlooked Themes in Amos

Submitted: May 9, 2013

By Mark Gutman

No Sabbath School lesson or sermon or article can cover everything about its topic. Newspapers and radio and TV must choose some items to report and ignore most. Sometimes we benefit from noticing what was not reported. The Boston Marathon bombing that killed three (and injured another 282) has been covered extensively by U.S. media, while the Bangladesh building collapse that killed more than 800 people quickly disappeared from the news. The less-publicized Bangladesh disaster, though, brought to our attention a problem that more publicity could help. [1]

As I worked my way through the recent Sabbath School lessons on Amos, I wondered which verses or themes would be featured and which would be ignored. Not surprisingly, “Prepare to meet thy God” was highlighted, along with “held accountable,” “punishment will result if these obligations are not fulfilled,” and “a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.” Social justice was also mentioned: “God’s concern about the just and compassionate treatment of less privileged.”

Unfortunately, the quarterly didn’t promote specific actions, other than a blasé mention of “help the needy.” The lack of specifics leaves the idea of “social justice” as easy to breeze past. If we donate money for church budget, which covers community service, we’ve probably covered social justice, right? Besides, we don’t want to forget that our main need is to spread the gospel, and social issues can get us sidetracked. We boil the justice and
righteousness that God wants (Amos 5:24) down to punishing bad people (“justice”) and staying out of trouble ourselves (“righteousness”).

In Speaking Christian, Marcus Borg, quoting Amos 5:21–24, explains that “righteousness and justice are often synonyms in the Bible.” In Amos, he tells us, “justice and righteousness are equivalent terms.” He elaborates: “But justice in the Bible most often means much more than this [i.e., retributive justice or punitive justice], indeed something quite different. When the Bible speaks of God’s passion for righteousness and justice, it does not mean that God’s primary passion is the punishment of wrongdoers. . . . Often justice and righteousness refer to the way ‘the world,’ the social order that humans create, should be. It can be – and most often is – unjust, shaped by the wealthy and powerful in their own self-interest. God’s dream, God’s passion is for a different kind of world. This kind of justice is not punitive justice, but distributive justice – the fair distribution of the material necessities of life.”

Our concern for justice often fails to show much interest in the problems of the have-nots, a group that is not equipped to shape the social order more their way. The problems that Amos and other Bible prophets spoke out against still exist. Over the last few decades the problems have worsened. Wealth and income are increasingly concentrated in the top 1% (or even the top 0.1%), [3] and the safety net that helps those with less wealth and income is shrinking.

There is a tendency for the “haves” to conclude that people who aren’t rich have only themselves to blame. After all, anyone with some drive can find a way to move up the financial ladder. Lack of material wealth is often considered to be an indication of spiritual or moral poverty as well. Helping such people will teach them to be dependent on handouts instead of digging deep and learning to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. So people who are doing well in the current economic setup post comments on Facebook and other social networking sites that decry such programs as welfare and Obamacare.

The welfare program and Obamacare are not perfect. Far from it. They are attempts to help those who are struggling. I’ve seen several posts on Facebook that cheer the problems of those systems, apparently hoping that they’ll be shut down. I don’t remember seeing posts that show concern for poor people or people who are unable to get good medical care. It is easy to forget that many people were brought up in poverty and are unable to find good work. Millionsmore (in the U.S.) are uninsurable or have medical bills that have ruined them financially.
Wealthy people generally are not short of insurance or good medical care, and poor people have little lobbying ability. Who is going to lobby for those who can’t? Ones who are doing just fine without welfare and Obamacare may have concerns about losing some of their “just fine” if others get help. “Let them work for it the way I did.” Rags-to-riches stories become weapons to attack people who haven’t also pulled themselves up by their own bootstraps. People who don’t pull themselves out of their financial problems are obviously not very spiritual or savvy or motivated.

The Matthew 25 picture of the last judgment shows good people as the ones who were helping others. The Good Samaritan story gets across the same message. But we must be realistic. Matthew 25 and the Good Samaritan are not “hot” topics. They’re yawners. They don’t draw clicks. They don’t stir people up. They don’t get viewers or sell for advertisers. If you want a crowd to attend your meeting, use Daniel, Revelation, Genesis, vegetarianism, or even women’s ordination. Don’t waste your time with the topic of helping your neighbor. The church and the government can take care of that, provided they don’t do too much.

The squeaky wheels get the grease. In 2012 I used that line in a column about health matters. If liquor and tobacco receive all the focus of health presentations, people who don’t exercise or sleep enough won’t recognize how they’re hurting themselves. If theology and last-day events are the main promotion, concern for hurting human beings can be overlooked without much twinge of conscience.

“As I worked my way through the recent Sabbath School lessons on Amos, I wondered which verses or themes would be featured and which would be ignored.” We can do the same exercise in our approach to life. What are we missing? In Matthew 23, Jesus told the Pharisees that they were majoring in minors, leaving out what really mattered: justice, mercy, and faithfulness. The Message Bible, reflecting Borg, renders that as “fairness and compassion and commitment” (23:23). Most of the time I’ve read or heard Matthew 23:23 quoted, it’s to emphasize that we’re supposed to tithe. But Jesus was saying that the Pharisees were big on tithing and low on fairness and compassion.

If we’re not careful we end up imitating the Pharisees. Big on doctrine and talk and criticism; low on concern and action for those who need it. And the less that sermons and articles mention the problem, the less likely anything is to be done about it. It is easy to spend time confirming our biases and never noticing that people need our help. You may have stayed out of jail, but what are you doing about helping your unemployed neighbor find decent
medical care. We may not be legislators who can pass major legislation, but we can find ways to help bring about a “justice and righteousness” that actually helps those who don’t have lobby power. As Amos and Jesus requested.

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http://video.pbs.org/video/2365003112/ By the way, my Sabbath School class teacher featured the Bangladesh story and the problem, and sent around an email about taking action on the problem.

Captivated by the title “Love to Eat, Hate to Eat,” as daughter of a physical education teacher and a lifelong Adventist, I began thinking how often our conversations center on food and eating. Our family would discuss meat-eating vs. vegetarianism, how eating could affect an athlete’s performance (“Imagine what he could have done had he actually eaten well!”), weight issues, and even the merits of raw sugar over plain, old, granulated sugar. (The book, though published more than a decade ago, remains in print and is readily available in Christian book stores and online.)

Health and body image played into a relationship with food that made eating too important, and what we ate became right or wrong—good or sinful. I struggled with eating habits that I knew bordered on the unhealthy, and I would feel sinful when sweet temptation won.

I was ready for a book like this! I found that Love to Eat Hate to Eat is much more than a diet plan and a set of rules. In fact, no diet appears in the book at all. Instead the author shares her views on how she believes God wants us to think about food, and she goes about it from a Christian perspective. As I read I realized that its message can be applied to all manner of addictive challenges and temptations.

I especially enjoyed the second chapter, which says God is in the business of changing us into Christ’s likeness, and that he will use extraordinary measures to guide us to that likeness.

The author spends a significant portion of the rest of her book encouraging her readers to
develop a strong relationship with God. It makes sense. He is the life changer! And right off she gives four eating steps to sanctification. Guess what? She begins the list by asking us to recognize the reality of unsanctified eating.

She is both encouraging and cautionary; encouraging trust in God and cautioning about the pitfalls. The tool that forms the basis of the work one must do is presented in the form of 12 questions arranged as an acrostic/memory device: DISCIPLINED E (The last E stands for Eating, so you say the acrostic DISCIPLINED Eating.)

Let me share the first one as an example: “Doubt: Do I doubt (for whatever reason) that I can eat this food without sinning?”

Later there is a chart to use for specifically recording successes and failings, amount of exercise, prayer time, Bible reading, and even vegetable servings, fruits, protein, grains, and water—all introduced and explained. When I started reading this, red flags rose! Making lists and checking them off is pretty works-related to me. I could see myself using it and patting myself on the back! However, when I really dig into the reasons she recommends them, I see the lists as a tool for the practice of the habits that need to replace the old, sinful ones. If I look at it as a help instead of a grading instrument, I can go back to an appreciation of God’s rightful place as Sovereign in my life.

So I plan to study it further for the help it can give me not only in relating to those “forbidden” sweets in my life, but in other areas where God is nudging me to recognize my need to allow his change. I would be like Jesus.
Adventist Entities Receive Public Recognition

Submitted: May 9, 2013
By Debbonnaire Kovacs

[Note: For the first time, a feature article will contain personal pronouns. I normally don’t do this, but this time I’ve included a bit of opinion near the end. I hope my readers will accept this temporary laxity from the rules of reporting. Debbonnaire Kovacs]

Several Adventist organizations and individuals have received important awards and grants lately. I thought it would be nice to put out a little round-up of a few that have come to my attention. If you know of any not mentioned here, let me know at atoday@atoday.org, with “for Debbonnaire, more awards” in the subject line.

This first section is a short article by Herbert Atienza, Media Relations Specialist for Loma Linda University:

$4.5 Million Grant to Loma Linda University School of Dentistry from First 5 Riverside
Will Give Children Access to Dental Care

LOMA LINDA, CA – May 6, 2013 – A $4.5 million grant to Loma Linda University School of Dentistry from First 5 Riverside County Children & Families Commission, also known as First 5 Riverside, will expand access to much-needed dental care for children through five years of age.

The First 5 Riverside grant, to be distributed over four years, is expected to allow dental health screenings for about 5,500 children a year, and treatment for about 700 children a year, over the term of the grant.

Loma Linda University School of Dentistry’s Riverside County Dental Program will use the grant to offer comprehensive dental screenings and direct treatment for Riverside County’s youngest children.

“It’s a huge thing for us to be able to provide these services to children in Riverside County,” says Dr. Carla Lidner Baum, assistant professor at Loma Linda University School of Dentistry and the grant’s project director.

“Primarily, we want to make sure that children do not suffer from pain and infection from decayed teeth, but we also do try everything possible to avoid having to extract the decayed teeth. We want to restore and maintain the child’s baby teeth, if at all possible, because if a child loses their primary teeth too early because of decay and need for extraction, then it often happens that the permanent teeth will grow into all of the wrong positions in the mouth, and the child will have crooked and misplaced teeth for life,” she says.
First 5 Riverside officials say the collaboration with Loma Linda University School of Dentistry helps First 5 Riverside further its goals of providing the growing numbers of families in Riverside County access to oral health care for their children.

“Oral health is critical for children’s overall health and their ability to be successful in school. Oral health concerns are a big reason for children’s absence from preschool or kindergarten, and children in pain are not prepared to learn,” says Harry Freedman, executive director of First 5 Riverside. “Loma Linda University School of Dentistry shares our commitment to improving the oral health of the children in our community, and we are very pleased to partner with them.”

Dr. Lidner Baum says the grant will allow dental health professionals to perform screenings and perform triage. The program works with local schools, Head Start programs, and child care centers to screen the children, with the most urgent cases being referred to the Loma Linda University School of Dentistry Clinic, as well as regular dental offices throughout Riverside County.

First 5 Riverside is a division of Riverside County Department of Public Social Services. Funded by Proposition 10 tobacco tax revenues, it supports health and early childhood education services designed to help children, prenatal through age five, develop a strong foundation for success in school and throughout their lives.

Adventist Television Producer Receives Award

Our next honoree is Joan Warner, who began with a dream that was pretty big from the start: “to take the Three Angels’ Messages to the greater Nashville area and the world through public access television and the internet.” In March of 2012, she and a few friends stepped out in faith and launched a program called *HealthHope*. They wanted to create a show that would portray the message of both healthy bodies and healthy spirits, in the context of Adventist doctrine.

On February 26, 2013, Nashville Education, Community, and Arts Television (NECAT), a public access television network in Nashville which includes 170 producers, presented awards for accomplishments made by the producers of various local programs. One of those awards was received by *HealthHope*.

In just the last nine months of 2012, the small group of faithful volunteers produced 21 shows, each of which took about five hours to tape, which is done at the Public, Educational, and Government Television Studio at Nashville State Community College. Some of the volunteers have to drive long distances after work just to get to the studio and begin the five hours! So it makes sense that the award they received was for “Most Shows Produced by a New Producer in 2012.”

As Joan Warner is quoted as saying in the May, 2013 *Southern Tidings*, “[I]t takes a group of people to be a dedicated and talented production company. . . otherwise I can’t be a producer.”
HealthHope has a spin-off, Truth & Wellness, and both have been given more airtime. They are now aired 12 times per week. There are also plans for a third show, Eternity Now, to begin this year, and eventually even a children’s show.

Alabama Elementary Teacher Receives Golden Apple Award

The Golden Apple Awards are apparently highly prestigious and are given to educators in different states and regions by different entities, however it’s hard to find much detail about their history. [www.goldenapple.org](http://www.goldenapple.org) and says that the foundation was the brainchild of Martin J. Koldyke, “who felt that excellent teachers did not receive adequate recognition for their contributions to building a stronger, better-educated society.” However, this site is only about Illinois education, and it is clear that educators in many states receive Golden Apple Awards as well.

In our story, the Alabama News Network visited Bethany Christian Academy to present the award to 3rd and 4th grade teacher, Reggenia W. Baskin “for an outstanding job in the classroom.” She was nominated by students, parents, and community leaders, some of whom were interviewed on camera. They expressed gratitude for Baskin’s love of God, creativity, energy, and passion for teaching. Baskin herself said “I was saved to teach and I must teach to save.”

According to *Southern Tidings*, the final question in Baskin’s interview “moved her to tears: ‘What do you want your students to leave you having learned?’ Baskin’s response was heartfelt and emotional. ‘I want them to know the joy of serving others. I want them to truly emulate Jesus. I want them to know that they have not truly lived until they have added to the being or wellbeing of others.’”

The May 2013 *Southern Tidings* reports both the above stories with a wealth of information, available in PDF form at [www.southernunion.com](http://www.southernunion.com).

Oakwood University Wins $50,000 Grand Prize In Home Depot’s “Retool Your School” Competition

Last, but most assuredly not least, is Oakwood University, which has been competing for several months now in a hotly contested social media voting competition for this year’s $50,000 Retool Your School grant, offered by Home Depot to Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The
schools in the race with Oakwood included larger public, private, and more popular HBCUs. However, on Friday, May 3, the Home Depot judges, including Keshia Knight Pulliam, who played Rudy on the 1980s *Cosby Show*, announced the winning results. The total of social media votes cast was over 2.6 million, and not-very-big, not-so-well-known Oakwood University was the grand prize winner. (For a list of other winners, visit [www.retoolyourschool.com](http://www.retoolyourschool.com).)

According to Oakwood news sources, “Across the country and especially throughout ‘HBCU-dom,’ the question was asked repeatedly, ‘Who is this Oakwood University? How is this school of just 1939 students getting all these votes, against a number of larger public, private and more popular HBCUs?’”

You can hear President Leslie Pollard give his answer to Oakwood’s “secret recipe” by watching the video at this site: [http://www.oakwood.edu/news/1946-q-how-did-oakwood-university-win-the-coveted-home-depot-50000-top-prize-on-may-3rd-a-on-april-11th-chef-president-dr-leslie-pollard-revealed-the-secret-recipe](http://www.oakwood.edu/news/1946-q-how-did-oakwood-university-win-the-coveted-home-depot-50000-top-prize-on-may-3rd-a-on-april-11th-chef-president-dr-leslie-pollard-revealed-the-secret-recipe) However, I can supply at least a partial answer. (Also a hint: in part, it has to do with Sabbath. . .)

I am on the media lists of all Adventist colleges and universities, so I receive press releases and news bites on a regular basis. Tim Allston, Public Relations Director at Oakwood, sends me by far the highest number of things to choose from as compared to other colleges and universities—often several per week. For the duration of the Retool Your School voting, he added a tagline to “remember to vote every day” to every email he sent me, and knowing Tim, he probably put constant reminders on every email, personal and business, on Facebook, on Twitter, and no doubt all over the Oakwood campus. I say this only to say that I wonder what would happen if we were this openly excited about other things we want to get across to people, like faith, hope, and the constant love of God. I’m not saying we should drive people nuts—naturally this vote drive was a short-term, intense period. I just think it bears some pondering.

*Adventist Today* congratulates all these faithful servants of God and wishes them much success and even more blessing!
Victory Over the Beast, Chapter Five: Fear God and Be Unafraid

Submitted: May 9, 2013
By Ervin Thomsen

Chapter 5

Fear God
and be Unafraid

“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come.”
(Revelation 14:6)

What is the key to overcoming the fear of the last-day deceptions of both Babylon and the beast? It is to totally trust Jesus Christ to satisfy all your needs through a relationship with Him. All the deceptions that make us susceptible to sin are rooted in unhealthy fears. “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. He who fears has not been made perfect in love” (1 John 4:18). When the adoration and worship of God become the chief occupation of our lives, we may relinquish all our burdens and fears. This how the sufficiency of the everlasting gospel is God’s antidote to protect us from unhealthy fears, used by our enemy to keep us under his spell.

- To fear God is to trust Him in all of life’s circumstances, including our adversities and trials. When we trust Him fully, there is no way we will allow our covetous desires to lead us to give our allegiance to idols, because we believe God’s truth that He “shall supply all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

- To give glory to God is the antidote to pride, which is the core sin of Babylon. Babylon-like living is utterly self-centered, and when we glorify God because of the sufficiency of the gospel, we thereby decentralize self through the cross of Christ, experientially. “God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Galatians 6:14). “I am crucified with Christ” (Galatians 2:20).

- To worship Him is the antidote to the worship of the beast. To worship the beast, since he is an antichrist, is to place your trust in any substitute or replacement for the redemptive work of Christ. To worship God is to serve Him with our praises as He fills our lives with the sufficiency of His resources.

The Fear of God and the Covenant Connection
As we look at the many uses of the word *fear* and all its connotations as found in scripture, I believe we will realize that there is a strong and most positive connection between the character of God as a covenant-keeping God, and godly fear. Consider the following Scripture passages:

- “And the covenant that I have made with you, you shall not forget, nor shall you *fear* other gods. But the Lord your God you shall *fear*; and He will deliver you from the hand of all your enemies” (2 Kings 17:38, 39).

- “The secret of the Lord is with those who *fear* Him, and He will show them His covenant” (Psalm 25:14).

- “They shall be My people, and I will be their God; then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may *fear* Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My *fear* in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me, Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good” (Jeremiah 32:38-41).

Our God uses *godly fear* as a most appropriate and loving appeal to enter into a covenant relationship with Him. So when the first angel announces, “*Fear God, and give glory to Him,*” it is really a summons to enter into a covenant relationship with God as the only sure and solid preparation for the judgment.

Only people in covenant-relationship with God can live without the unhealthy fear of dreading the coming judgment. When you *fear* God, you will not fear the judgment, for you will trust in the only sure way of salvation provided by our covenant-keeping God. It is *not* all up to us. In your new status as an acquitted and loved child of God, legally adopted according to the terms of God’s covenant, you will have abundant confidence that no one will accuse those whom God has justified. Because God is for you, who can be against you? (see Romans 8:29-39).

**Good Fear versus Bad Fear**

When God created us, in His wisdom He also built into our lives an alarm system to protect us from danger and hurt. One of the primary sensors of this alarm system is the emotion of fear, serving as a warning light similar to lights on the instrument panel of an automobile. But an enemy has tampered with this internal alarm system so that many are unable to distinguish “good fears” (healthy fears) from “bad fears” (unhealthy fears). When our alarm system continually rings [or the warning lights are continually blinking], we lose the ability to filter out false alarms. Satan takes full advantage of this malfunction of our alarm system by imprisoning us with distortions of our sense of reality through the many bogus fears he has implanted in our lives:
dread, alarm, dismay, fright, panic, terror, nervousness, foreboding, worry, anxiety. No wonder the Bible in more than 300 places warns us to “fear not.”

An enemy has damaged our internal alarm system with his lies, and God wants to repair that alarm system with His truths. Thus Oswald Chambers could write that when “you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else.” [1] Through the power of the everlasting gospel we can overcome all the false alarms of the enemy. One of those false alarms is the fear and foreboding of last-day events, the time of trouble.

If up to this point you have believed, perhaps unwittingly, that fear of the impending time of trouble is one of your primary weapons of defense against last-day deceptions, then Satan has truly tricked you. There are those who would claim that an increase of fear is exactly what is most needed to get us ready for the 2nd coming. Nothing could be further from the truth. The gospel, as worked out in Christ’s life, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, is all we need to prepare for the second coming of Christ. Ellen White noted that “the very best preparation you can have for Christ's second appearing is to rest with firm faith in the great salvation brought to us at His first coming. You must believe in Christ as a personal Saviour.” [2] This gospel enables us to discern between healthy and unhealthy fears.

Satan uses fear to unsettle faith in God. He is continually looking for opportunities whereby he can take advantage of the fears we experience. In every fear he is trying to cause us to take our eyes off our Heavenly Father, suggesting that God is not good enough, powerful enough, adequate enough to handle our specific situations. Then he will suggest that we take matters into our own hands, because we cannot, after all, trust God. [3]

Christian author John Ortberg describes unhealthy fear like this: “Fear whispers to us that God is not really big enough to take care of us. It tells us we are not really safe in His hands. It causes us to distort the way we think about Him...Fear has created more practicing heretics than bad theology ever has, for it makes us live as though we serve a limited, finite, partially present, semi-competent God.”[4] When our fears become too big for God to handle, we have laid the foundation for idolatry, which is the making of false gods [made in the image of our expectations] to handle our problems and inadequacies rather than turning to the true God.

The genuine fear of God is not to be feared, for it enables us to have a heart-to-heart relationship with God of close and intimate communion. As we worship and adore Him we will discover that He wants to take away all our burdens, soothe all our fears, and give us unspeakable peace and rest. Even in the midst of painful circumstances that do not make sense, we can have the unshakable confidence that "behind a frowning providence He hides a shining face." [5]

How to Fear God and Not Be Afraid

“Fear God and give glory to Him” (Revelation 14:7). On the surface this text sounds so negative, but when you look at it from the totality of all of Scripture, this is a most positive injunction. You can actually fear God and not be afraid. Why? Because the fear of God draws us into a close, heart-to-heart relationship with Him. Though this to some may seem like a paradox, yet the fear of God is actually a “good” fear. Look for a moment at these Scriptures:
• “And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul” (Jeremiah 32:40,4).

• “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!” (Deuteronomy 5:29).

• “I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you” (Psalm 34:4, 9, 11).

And yet we cannot ignore texts such as these (for all Scripture is inspired by God).

• “With promises like these made to us, dear brethren, let us wash off all that can soil either body or spirit, to reach perfection of holiness in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 7:1—Jerusalem).

• “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31 KJV).

• “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Corinthians 10:31).

Would you as a believer be willing to live with a paradox, in which two apparently mutually exclusive statements are still true? Mike Yaconelli, the late founder of Youth Specialties, wrote about the two sides of fear.

“I would like to suggest that the church become a place of terror again; a place where God continually has to tell us, ‘Fear not;’ a place where our relationship with God is not a simple belief or a doctrine or theology, but it is God’s burning presence in our lives. I am suggesting that the tame God of relevance be replaced by the God whose very presence shatters our egos into dust, burns our sin into ashes, and strips us naked to reveal the real person within…The church needs to become a gloriously dangerous place where nothing is safe in God’s presence except us. Nothing—including our plans, our agendas, our priorities, our politics, our money, our security, our comfort, our possessions, our needs…Our world is longing to see people whose
God is big and holy and frightening and gentle and tender…and ours; a God whose love frightens us into His strong and powerful arms where He longs to whisper those terrifying words, ‘I love you.’” [6]

God never intended that we, as His very own children, should live in fear. Fear is really Satan’s gift to us as a result of the Fall. After he sinned, Adam’s first words to God were, “I heard your voice…and I was afraid” (Genesis 3:10). It is this unhealthy fear that God wants to remove through the gospel. The very first words spoken by Jesus to John in Revelation are “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last” (John 1:17). The book of Revelation closes with a description of those who go to the lake of fire—“But the fearful (KJV, cowardly NKJV), shall have their part in the lake of fire” (Revelation 21:8).

Through the years I have heard many explanations by individuals who somehow want to minimize altogether the concept of the fear of God in Scripture. They note, for example, that the God of the Old Testament, a God of fear and terror, is different from the God of the New Testament as portrayed in life of Jesus. Another explanation for the fear of God is that God had to adapt His methods and use a great deal of fear and terror in order to deal with a spiritually backwards people in the Old Testament. Or, that fear really means ‘super-respect.’ Yet a closer examination of Scripture causes us to see the two sides of fear.

In Hebrew, *yirah* (Jonah 1:16), *yare* (Mal. 3:16) and *pachad* (Job 3:25a; Psalm 119:120) mean reverent fear, terror, or dread, normally translated simply fear. There are other words in Hebrews for mere respect, reverence, or honor, such as *kabad* (Ex. 20:12). In Greek fear/terror is *phobos* (Matthew 28:4, 1 Pet. 2:17c), whereas reverence or honor is *timao* (1 Pet. 2:17a/d). With this distinction in both Hebrew and Greek, is it really possible to still assert that fear always means reverence or respect? As if God through His Spirit could not select the right word hundreds of times!...Does fear mean merely super-respect? It does in some cases. But fear is fear, and respect is respect. Why did Jeremiah, Isaiah and other Old Testament prophets use fear when there were perfectly good words for respect, honor, and reverence? Are we wiser than the Holy Spirit, or are we just resisting the truth. “You [O God] are resplendent with light...You alone are to be feared” (Ps 76:4, 7 (NIV)).[1]

So instead of trying to explain away the fear of the Lord, or hoping that by our emphasis on one trait of God’s character, we will somehow supersede another perhaps less desirable trait [as we would like it], let us see the working of all the traits of His character in a glorious synergy. Rather than it being love versus fear, let it be both love and fear. John Newton, author of the hymn Amazing Grace, wrote “’twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.” [8]

Unprocessed ungodly and unhealthy fears increase our susceptibility to the deceptions of both Babylon and the beast, who would suggest that giving in to their methods of do-it-yourself-religion will solve your problems and take away your fears, when in reality their suggestions only destroy your spiritual immune system residing in your identity. The first step in overcoming the subtle temptations of the enemy to idolatry, god-replacing substitutes and pursuits, is to recognize such unhealthy fears inside us. Fear is, in its initial stages, not a sin, but fears, nurtured and cherished, will gradually and surely, if not conquered, lead us to idolatry. If we do not trust
our God in times of stress, then we will most likely invent our own strategies for taking away stress in case God doesn’t come through. At times like that, we live by trust in His God’s word.

· “You are my hiding place, you shall preserve me from trouble; you shall surround me with songs of deliverance” (Psalm 32:7).
· “I God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid what can man do to me?” (Psalm 55:11).

The internalization of the truth about our God-given identity is, without a doubt, God’s way of overcoming all our fears, especially fears about the uncertainty of future calamities. “But now, thus says the Lord who created you, O Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by your name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior” (Isaiah 43:1-3).

Life Applications

Can you think of occasions when the ‘fear of man’ caused you to sin? Describe the experiential sequence of how this took place.

What is one major fear that you live with at the present time? Ask yourself, what are the hidden lies of Satan that keep this fear alive?

Can you think of any fears that you need to repent of?

Which of these fears are currently operational in your life? Which fear is the most controlling of your life at this time?

· Fear of rejection
· Fear of failure
· Fear of punishment
· Fear of exposure
· Fear of shame

Analyze this statement: “The heart can be very cruel when God's fear and love are removed.” [9] Why is this so?

Texts to Remember

“*The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid*” (Psalm 27:1)?

"*Only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things he has done for you*" (I Samuel12:24).
Truths versus Lies

As you let the truths of God replace the lies of the enemy, you will enhance your immunity against all of Satan’s deceptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lies or half-truths</th>
<th>Truths</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As I watch the signs of the end of the world, the best preparation for Christ’s coming is to live in the fear, always being on ‘high alert’ for the latest breaking news about end-time events.</td>
<td>As I watch the signs of the end of the world, I will not fear because Jesus, my Advocate, has already fully acquitted me because of my trust in Christ’s atonement for my sins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I must continually be afraid of what God might do to me if I don’t measure up.</td>
<td>I can fear God without being afraid of Him, because His perfect love casts out all fear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>God uses fear of punishment to keep me in line.</td>
<td>The ‘fear of God’ enables me to draw close to my heavenly Father, and when I am close to Him He keeps me safe from sin.</td>
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*(write out any other lies that are based on fear)* *(replace all such lies with the truths of God’s word)*

[4] Ibid. 43.
[8] *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, 100.