THE TREASURE-HEART CONNECTION

by Ray Minner

Matthew and Luke both considered Jesus’ counsel on the treasure-heart connection compelling enough to be included in their Gospel accounts. Jesus clearly taught that it is in our nature to sponsor with our money the true desires of our hearts, a truth so ingrained in us that it hasn’t changed in the two millennia since He said it.

So when we hear of a Sabbath School class that has invested approximately $100,000 in missions since 2002, it does arrest the attention, and it does prompt the question, “What class could do that?”

According to Barbara Ellis Jones, Acceptance Sabbath School has racked up just such an accomplishment—not that they sit around congratulating each other—they’re too busy choosing the next project and raising the money for it!

Established years ago by the late Charlene Robertson, Acceptance, which meets at 10:15 in the Gospel Chapel, has grown to 98 members at present, with 40 to 60 people in class on any given Sabbath. They go for the whole Sabbath School program, conducted by a group of seven superintendents who preside on a rotating schedule, complete with song service, special music, and often a mission report. The stable of teachers presently consists of Dr. Jack Blanco, Tony Dahlberg, Dr. Jan Haluska, and Ray Minner, each taking a turn every four weeks or so.

“We’re almost like a small church,” says Barbara. “We have a cross section of age groups, a number of professionals, a number of retired persons, even university students. It makes for a lively mix. That was one reason Bill and I began attending.”

But we digress. The hearts of those members are producing treasure...and the treasure is being sent all over the world.

For a time the class concentrated its mission giving in the church’s official missionaries, Braden and Johanna Pewitt and their ministry among the mountain tribes of Cambodia, but for just a sampling of other projects they have sponsored, scan down this list:

• $25,000 for a church in Mozambique.
• $10,000 for a church in India. Wayne Janzen went over there to help with the project.
• $10,000 for a generator at a hospital in Chad. Stan Wheeler from the class went to Chad to install it.
• Startup costs, including equipment, for five radio stations in Alaska.
• Established a radio station in Chatsworth, Ga.
• $7,500 for a one-day school.
• $6,000 for a one-day church in Haiti.
• Supplied new pews for a church in Kenya.

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Can you explain the ministry of Jesus in the sanctuary? We have long known that Adventists understand death as a “sleep,” and that our loved ones await the Resurrection in unconsciousness. But exactly what texts support that belief?

It was an unexpected challenge like this from a family member that prompted Dr. Joe Milholm to propose an adult Sabbath School class centered around the 28 Fundamental Doctrines of the Adventist Church.

“Too many of us think we know what we believe, but when pressed, sometimes we aren’t exactly sure why we believe it,” says Milholm. So together with a few other leaders in June 2010, he founded a class designed to explore every one of the distinctive beliefs of Adventists, to offer a grounding and working knowledge of these doctrines to those who may feel insecure about their own preparedness to defend their faith . . . in the community, in the workplace, or in their own minds.

Joe, Lonnie Mixon, and Marius Serban have been the primary presenters since the class began, but sometimes guests presenters are invited in to speak more authoritatively in areas of their expertise. “Take as many weeks as you need,” they are told. The absence of a schedule or deadlines facilitates flexibility, obviously giving more time for a less hurried presentation of more complex subjects.

The class has just begun a series of studies on Daniel and Revelation presented by Dr. Roger Miller. Milholm expects this series to continue through the end of 2011 as they review the intricate interaction of those two amazing books.

Included in the study of the beliefs themselves are the additional perspectives of Adventist Heritage and Comparative Religions. “We thought it would be helpful to bring in an overview of what other churches believe about these doctrines, as well as how Adventists arrived at our own unique understanding,” says Milholm. “We recently discussed Dispensationalist theology, a subject somewhat unfamiliar to many Adventists, but very big in the Evangelical churches here in the Bible belt. We find it useful to at least understand what our neighbors believe.”

Pastor Sam Chetty has briefed the class on his experiences in Hinduism before accepting Christ and becoming a Seventh-day Adventist.

Attendance fluctuates between 25 and 70, Milholm says, depending on the other obligations of class members which sometimes conflict with the meeting time, but there is no question that the class is meeting a need felt by many.

If you sense the need to deepen your understanding of Adventist beliefs you may want to drop in and see for yourself. They meet at 10:15 in the back of the Fellowship Hall off the Atrium.
The Turkey we know today, a beautiful country torn between its rich antiquity and aspiring modernity, is speckled from one end to the other with mosques and minarets and loudspeakers which summon the Muslim faithful to prayer five times a day. In the middle of the First Century that same landscape, then known as Galatia, was an early cradle of Christian belief and devotion.

It is important to realize that as the apostle Paul was writing his testimony to the Galatians, none of the four Gospels had yet been circulated—or even written! This was true groundbreaking material. In Galatians we get our first glimpse of a dynamic warrior for the truth as it is in Jesus going to the barricades to defend the faith from those who ostensibly embraced it, but who were simultaneously working to undermine it.

So we get to see the amazing, compelling personality of Paul, the former zealous persecutor Saul, give birth to the tradition of marching forward with the banner of the cross, into the fray of doctrinal misunderstanding and opposing those who would conceal the axes they were hoping to grind—a tradition that would be honored and practiced by Martin Luther and the other lights of the Reformation, and by our own Ellen White.

Of course, with the benefit of millennia of hindsight, we can attest that the very notion of the Judaizers’ infecting the body of Christ with their own agenda of exclusivity is repugnant to us, as it was to Paul. But how do we know that in that place and time we ourselves might not have been vulnerable to false teaching? Our response to more recent manifestations of a false gospel (specifically, legalism) is not particularly reassuring!

Dr. Carl Cosaert of Walla Walla University guides us through these 14 expositions of Galatians with thoughtful glances at the source of Paul’s authority and the authenticity of his experience, the residual effects on church unity when heresy comes to stalk, justification, faith and the law, our role as both slaves to Christ and heirs of the promise, and the other precious themes of this essential letter. We see the iconic Paul and equally (almost?) iconic Peter in direct conflict, and we see that just maybe there is an appropriate place for disagreement and confrontation in the body of Christ. And we see how the love of Christ empowers the resolution of this conflict.

Dive into these lessons. Experience the tensions in the early Christian church among a fledgling body who at this point had still not heard from John’s Gospel the inclusive words of Jesus, that “whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

“Don’t be deceived!” Paul warns. “Carry each other’s burdens . . . Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap the harvest if we do not give up.”

Paul’s favorite benediction is for us as we spend time in these lessons: Grace and peace.
EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, Adoration 1 will start at 8:45 a.m. All other service times will remain the same.

SIGN UP FOR A CHURCH DIRECTORY photography appointment by calling 396-21341 or online at www.collegedalechurch.com. Appointments are available October 10-13, 16-18, and 23-27. Bring non-perishable food items and receive $5 off your order.

MILDRED WALTERS is grateful to all those in the church family who showered her with cards, flowers and affection on the occasion of her 102nd birthday. On that date, she was privileged to have her photo taken for the church directory, and also with all her children.

ROSALIE FREDERICK and her son, Andre, are very thankful to you for your comforting words of condolence on the death of my mother, Sarah Ryan. Your presence at the services was truly appreciated. At times like these, the company of friends is incredibly comforting. Thank you for the food, many cards and the generous charitable donations.

THE BLUE MOUNTAIN ACADEMY Reunion will be held Sunday, Oct. 2, at noon in the Fellowship Hall. Join them for vespers and a potluck meal. You will have a chance to hear about what’s happening at the school. RSVP to Kathleen Sutton at (610) 562-4214 or ksutton@bma.us.

JOIN THE FESTIVAL OF PRAISE with the Voice of Prophecy at 3:00 p.m., October 22, at McDonald Road Church. The program will be hosted by Fred Kinsey and Connie Vandeman Jeffery.

FAMILY FALL FESTIVAL

The Family Fall Festival will take place on Sunday, Oct. 16, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. at the Farrow Family Home. The afternoon will start with worship followed by music, hayrides, face painting, pumpkin decorating, family games and more. Supper will also be served, and families are asked to bring the following: A-F 2 large bags of chips; G-L 2 dozen cookies/brownies; M-S large raw veggie or fruit tray; T-Z one large bag of apples.

IN MEMORY

Archie Fox, husband of Lorraine, passed away September 10. Services were September 14.

Charles Johnson, brother of Geraldine Lowe, passed away September 5 in Buffalo, NY.

Cathy Patterson, wife of James and mother of Terry Nauman, Boyd Patterson, Betty Jo Motes, and Wade Patterson, passed away September 2. Services were held September 17.

Adult Sabbath Schools
8:45 a.m. Adult Classes
Open Circle: Seminar Room
Roundtable: Fellowship Hall C

9:00 a.m. Adult Classes
Anchor I: Gospel Chapel
Haitian: Spalding Band Room
Minner/Henning: Prayer Room
Spalding: Senior Center

9:30 a.m. Adult Classes
Fountain (collegiate): White Oak Rm, Thatcher South

9:45 a.m. Adult Classes
Can We Talk? Soul-stirring Conversations with God (for women): Academy, Rm 105

10:00 a.m. Adult Classes
Living Free: Insights: Academy, Rm 109
Falling In Love With Jesus (for women): Academy, Library

10:15 a.m. Adult Classes
Acceptance: Gospel Chapel
Akers/Follett Seminar Room
Anchor II: Choir Room
Bad Girls of the Bible: Academy, Rm 103
Books of the Bible: Library
Collegiate: Fellowship Hall A/B
Common Ground: Senior Center A
Fundamental Beliefs: Fellowship Hall C
Ministry in Medicine (collegiate): Hulsey Wellness Center
Prayer for Connect: Academy, Rm 102
Renewal: Senior Center B
Young Adult: A.W. Spalding Music Room

10:30 a.m. Adult Classes
One Accord (collegiate): Hulsey Wellness Center, Amphitheatre