Letters

Ordination of women

About the women question. It is like a lot of answers that are simple. Why did Ellen White become the prophet in our church? That's the reason it's time for women to be preachers. Because if men had done the job we would be in heaven.—N. J. Booth, Hagerstown, Maryland.

Today I overheard a conversation between two members of our church. When the ordination of women came up, the comment was made that the effectiveness of nearly every pastor is directly proportional to the involvement and participation of the pastor's wife in his ministry. As I think back I am convinced that this is about 95 percent correct.

This observation leads to a suggestion. Namely, we as Seventh-day Adventists could benefit by adopting a policy of our friends the Nazarenes. If I am correctly informed, they ordain their pastors as a team, husband and wife. This would defuse what has threatened to be a divisive problem.—T. E. Wade, Liberal, Kansas.

When the church gives equal rights (authority) to women (wives) for ordination to the ministry, the church becomes an advocate for the broken home (divorce) and for the one-parent family; for what does the man do if transferred to another city and the wife decides she cannot leave her place in the church?
From the voice of experience—
Resigned pastor, Congregational Church.

I was amazed that my friend Bernard Seton should go into print with such a paucity of argument for his position on the ordination of women ("Should Our Church Ordain Women? No," March, 1985). He is usually more substantive in his writing.

After acknowledging that Paul's statements concerning women not speaking in church applied to a local Corinthian problem, all Seton has left is a platform of silence.

Why do we use the bogeyman of childbirth as an argument against women pastors? We could find many similar reasons for not ordaining men—a man might marry a doctor who would not want to leave her practice. Or we could really get absurd—a man might get married, period, and have less time for and interest in his ministry! (Where have we heard that before?)

Seton notes, correctly, that men and women were created equal but different. Vive la différence! It follows that a woman's needs are different from a man's needs; ergo, she needs a woman pastor to pastor to those woman needs.—Raymond H. Woolsey, Boonsboro, Maryland.

On "Should Our Church Ordain Women? Yes" (March, 1985) it seems to me that to adopt the discussion of "the hermeneutical question" (page 14), places in serious doubt the integrity of the hermeneutic of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Since when is it a hermeneutical "fact that the New Testament succeeds the Old"?

Since when is it a hermeneutical principle that in "the church we must be eclectic" as we approach this or any other Biblical teaching?

Since when is it a correct hermeneutic to base a universal principle on one text of Scripture (Gal. 3:28)?

Since when is it a fair hermeneutic to present the inspired apostle Paul as two-faced when his consistency in teaching and practice (see Gal. 2:11-16; 2 Tim. 3:15-17) is impeccable?

As a lifelong student of hermeneutics, and instructor in hermeneutics at Colombia-Venezuelan Union College (1967-1970), I find the author's discussion of the hermeneutical question to be out of harmony with a Biblical hermeneutic.—Freberin P. Baerg, Sonoma, California.

Regarding "Should Our Church Ordain Women?" I recently read somewhere a most interesting fact. The first true missionary, ordained by no less a one than the risen Christ, was a woman named Mary the Magdalene, when He commissioned her to "go and tell" the disciples that He had risen.—Pastor, Mount Sterling, Kentucky.

Is there a better way to test the ordination of women or men than by observing the following counsel: "Those who think that they have a work to do for the Master should not commence their efforts among the churches; they should go out into new fields and prove their gifts."—Testimonies, vol. 3, p. 203.

"Men who think that they have a duty to preach should not be sustained in throwing themselves and their families at once upon the brethren for support. They are not entitled to this until they can show good fruits of their labor."—Ibid., vol. 1, p. 446.—R. Kent Knight, Fairmont, Minnesota.

Abortion

Thank you so much! I'm so happy and so proud of Dr. Richard Müller, our church, and MINISTRY for printing "Abortion: A Moral Issue?" (January, 1985). I've been starving for months for some affirmation that abortion is wrong. What are we as ministers of God doing if we are not speaking out on moral issues? I wish that at the coming General Conference session we would settle once and for all that life from conception to its natural end should be considered sacred and therefore protected. In the light of eternity our silence may be counted against us on this issue.—Pastor Chris Harter, Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

I would like to thank Richard Müller for his thoughtful and courageous article "Abortion: A Moral Issue?" As an Adventist pastor, I too have been frustrated by the seemingly indifferent attitude promoted in church publications toward this modern tragedy. While avoiding the extremism of the Roman Catholic and fundamentalist Protestant positions, the Seventh-day Adventist Church could champion the Biblical principle of life for the innocent and (Continued on page 8).
Church Fund-raising/4. Is guilt a good motivator when you need to raise money? Or is there a better way? Mel Rees shares a proved plan for positive fund-raising.

Danger in the Day Care/7. Dan Harman learned a lesson the hard way. His story may save you from similar grief.


More Than Silver/14. We all know that stewardship affects more than just the pocketbook. But how do you live that out in your vocation? Rex D. Edwards suggests some helpful criteria.

Ah, Storytime!/15. Gerald W. Paul’s latest contribution to the art of seeing things with a smile.

Being Organized Isn’t All That Efficient/16. Sandra Doran.

Temptations of a Virtuous Pastor/18. Is it possible for a pastor to be too kind to parishioners? Explore your motives with Michael Ladra and see if you discover some lurking pride.

Alcoholism—A Pastoral Challenge/20. Are you ready and able to confront the menace of alcoholism? Walter Kloss tells you how.

From the Editors
By Whose Authority/23. David C. James.

Equal or Fair?/26. Barbara Huff
Church fund-raising

How can a church raise the funds for its ministry without resorting to human pressure or guilt-inducing tactics? You will be amazed at this simple but powerful plan.

Keeping Church Finance Christian □ 7 Mel Rees

My friend and I were driving to a college board meeting. I was glad when he asked to ride with me on the two-hundred-plus-mile trip. A brilliant person, he punctuated the miles with bits of philosophy, reminiscences, and observations. I was savoring the last bit of information he had passed along when he asked, “Do you know anything about these church fund-raising programs?”

“A little,” I replied. Having been a director of such programs for ten years, I felt this was a modest reply. “Why do you ask?”

“Because I was sutured into being the general chairman of one at our church.” “Sutured” seemed an odd expression, but probably the right word for a doctor to use. And the more I thought of some of the methods used to enlist canvass leaders, the more appropriate it seemed.

I was about to ask his opinion of the program when an eighteen-wheeler died-seled past, making conversation futile. When we had safe running room again, I did ask.

“Never again” was his reply. The tone of his voice left no doubt about his opinion.

“When?”

“Because pressure is no way to raise money for the Lord’s work. And I’ll tell you something else. If they ever start one of those in my church again, they can count me out. I’ll come back when they are finished.”

I had come to this same conclusion for myself some years before, but his reaction to a program that had received such high praise for its success surprised me. I began to wonder how many other good church members felt the same way. He was right; pressure is often the name of the game in fund-raising.

Perhaps the very term fund-raising indicates what is wrong with the method. Accepting money for God’s work would be more appropriate. Earthly authorities raise money for the needs of their governments by assessing their subjects, but the whole principle of biblical finance is based not on raising but accepting funds given from the heart—freewill offerings.

When He gave Moses the task of building the tabernacle God directed him to “accept whatever contribution each man shall freely offer” (Ex. 25:2, N.E.B.). Centuries later, when David was preparing materials for a house for God, it is recorded, “The people rejoiced at this willing response, because in the loyalty of their hearts they had given willingly to the Lord” (1 Chron. 29:9, N.E.B.). They gave to the Lord, not to a building. There is no way a person can make a case for the pressures of church pyramid fund-raising from these experiences. The offering was heart-motivated and freewill—therefore acceptable.

Modern church finance has been marked (often marred) by a variety of schemes for raising money. I even heard of one church that secured pledges from guests at a wedding reception, when their hearts were a bit more than merry from the spirits served. When some of them reneged on their commitments, the church took them to court and forced them to pay! I recall another church where I was handed the materials used in their church building program. The membership was organized like an army with sergeants, lieutenants, majors, colonels—even a general. In the fierce competition for funds, the leader of the winning “wing” each week won a cash prize. According to the records, one captain had already won $300!

While most churches would not stoop to such questionable methods, many have fallen into other non-biblical
The most important ingredient in any church plan must be a thorough education of the membership in the principles of Christian stewardship. They should be taught to give to God rather than to things.

Every-member canvass

Without question, one of the most respected plans for raising money is the every-member canvass. This carefully planned, organized, and orchestrated method enlists the support of each member. Its salient points are professional direction, a thorough survey of the project and church potential, the enlistment of key members into leadership roles, a saturation contact of the membership, and an effective follow-up monitoring.

However, there is a factor in this plan that is opposite to God's plans: the pressures that form the basis for every procedure. The subtle pressures (and not so subtle) pressures overemphasize the merit motive and play upon social and guilt feelings, as if the end justifies the means. It does not. The grace of Christian benevolence, so essential to spiritual development, must be protected from every influence that would adversely affect it. Motive is more important than the urgency of the need or the merit of the objective. The only true motive is love and gratitude to God.

Consider some of the pressure points:

The canvass director: This professional director, brought from outside the membership, is not a spiritual leader. People should be led into the spiritual grace of benevolence, not just directed.

Guilt pressure: This feeling, conscious or subconscious, is developed when the church solicits outside help because of its own unwillingness to give freely. This guilt feeling produces a willingness to "go along" with whatever plan is presented.

Financial pressure: In major fund-raising drives (United Fund, Heart Fund, etcetera), a community financial leader is usually chosen to head the drive. This obtains the leader's financial involvement plus his or her influence with financial leaders.

There is some Biblical basis for this pyramid method. When David made preparations to build the Temple, he first testified to his personal commitment. After David's commitment we read of the commitments of "the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds. . . . Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly" (verses 6-9). But nowhere in this account do we find that funds were solicited. They were given willingly.

Social pressure: When one member visits another, soliciting a pledge, there is pressure, no matter how adroitly the interview is conducted. The following remarks were heard during one of these programs:

"When Brother ____ called I kept wondering how much he thought I should give. I got the impression that he wasn't entirely satisfied with the pledge I made. I suppose he'll think about it every time he sees me—I know I will."

Or this from a visitor:

"When I saw the new color TV and the new station wagon in the driveway, I felt he should have given more."

It is really unimportant what Brother ____ thinks. What God thinks is what is important.

Another problem with the canvass is that its actual success rate may not match expectations. Success stories are often based on signed commitments rather than on actual cash turned in. Sometimes the money comes in during the three-year period (the usual life of the program), but in many cases it does not. In fact, in two large conferences in which I worked, less than 50 percent of the money came in during the commitment period—an appreciable amount never did.

It is true that many people receive a blessing as they become aware of their stewardship responsibilities and respond accordingly. Many of these experience unusual blessings during the canvass period. But too often the awareness and blessing do not extend beyond the period of commitment—and herein lies the real danger: when the wellsprings of benevolence stop flowing, they become clogged with the debris of selfishness. Giving should be systematic and continuous—not limited to a period of time, like payments for a new car.

No one can say that many of these programs are never financially productive. Many churches, buildings, schools, and other facilities testify to their productivity. However, in spite of this, one must question the element of pressure and the motivation associated with these programs. The observation of Luther P. Powell is apropos: "Nevertheless, there is something lacking in the spiritual life of the church when secular professional money raisers have to be employed. One's giving should be a manifestation of his faith, and it seems to be a reflection on the church that the faith it proclaims has not produced the necessary funds for maintaining and extending its program." *

The psychological efficiency and organization of the every-member canvass should not be downgraded. Its strengths are basic—planning, organization, communication, and solicitation. The question naturally arises, Can a church conduct a program that incorporates these basics and is still in harmony with God's plan? The answer is Yes. Many successful church programs have been conducted and serve as proof that God's way works best.

The Anonymous Commitment Program has all the basic positive elements without the negative side effects.

Anonymous Commitment Program

As a prelude to an introduction to this method one must recall that Jesus never endorsed any pressure structure. He repeatedly emphasized the privilege, right, and responsibility of the individual. By His praise of the "mite gift" of the poor widow, it would appear that His pyramid of influence was inverted; it flowed uphill instead of down. It was based on sacrifice rather than amount.

And although He said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your goods works," these were not to be paraded for the praise of the giver or concealed underneath the cloak of false humility. If He was to endorse a "top dollar man" approach, He missed a golden opportunity the night the
I heard of one church that secured pledges from guests at a wedding reception, when their hearts were merry from the spirits served. When some reneged, the church took them to court!

wealthy Nicodemus came to Him. What a chance to ask for a large gift for His fledgling work! This would have been impressive at the head of a donor's list. Instead, the burden of His message was "except a man be born again."

The Anonymous Commitment Program has all the basic elements of planning, organization, communication, and solicitation, but is a nonpressure approach. (See advertisement for a detailed procedure booklet in this month's Shop Talk.)

Organization
This approach differs in organization because it is simple and its material requirements are few. Three members form the committee in the small church, no more than eleven in the larger ones (the pastor and church treasurer are always ex-officio members of this committee).

This body: (1) estimates the financial potential of the church, (2) gathers all data needed to prepare the budget (or other project), (3) prepares and submits this tentative budget to the authorizing bodies, (4) prepares the final draft of the budget, (5) prepares the canvass materials, (6) enlists the canvass personnel, (7) directs the visitation, and (8) implements and monitors the financial part of the plan.

Good planning cannot be overemphasized. Jesus said that a wise man, intending to build a tower, sits down first and counts the cost. As far as is possible the general membership must be given the opportunity to become involved in planning and implementation. Once the plan has been authorized by the church body, it becomes the church plan. At this point each member, as a member of the group, is obligated to support it.

Visitation: In most fund-raising programs, it is recommended that only men be used as visitors. In this approach, anyone (man or woman) who is enthusiastic about the plan and actively supports it will make a good visitor. Personal testimony and enthusiasm far outweigh the most skillful sales presentation. Also the visitor does not ask for or accept any commitment.

The reasons for visitation are: (1) to explain the plan in detail and answer all questions regarding it, (2) to personally invite participation, (3) to explain the need for establishing a "rate of income" (so the implementing bodies will know what funds will be available to them), (4) to explain the anonymous commitment card, its purpose and use. The visitor leaves the card with the member, who is asked to prayerfully consider his or her proportionate share, indicate it on the card, and place it in the offering plate at the next general church service.

Because the commitment is anonymous, only the individual and God know whether or not a commitment was made. Thus the only pressure possible is the Holy Spirit speaking to a delinquent member like this: "Because you are responsible to God as His steward, and to the church as a member, don't you really think you should do your part?" Someone suggested that this is the most intense pressure—but it is the right kind—the communication between God and the soul.

While the member is left anonymous, he is not left anonymously comfortable (if he has refused to share in the group plan). For three successive weeks following the visitation an announcement is made listing the number of cards that have been returned in relation to the number left in the homes of the members. Those who have not returned their cards are urged to do so. If a person can sit through this series of reminders and remain anonymously comfortable, he has more serious problems than nonsupport.

Some interesting observations have come out of these programs. Most people give more than they pledge, because they tend to be conservative in making sacred pledges. Then, of course, there is the distinct possibility that the individual receives unusual blessings from his decision.

Another plus factor in the plan is that it works just as well in a budget program as it does for a building fund. This was not always true with other canvass methods in which a new church building had a much greater appeal than the budget.

Some may wonder why visitation is necessary—why not mail out the materials and let the member bring the commitment back? First, the member needs to understand the church project thoroughly and to have his questions regarding it answered.

Second, few members, although they are painfully aware of the costs of running their own homes, have any idea of the costs of operating a church. One of the principal aims of the visitor is not only to make it possible for the member clearly to understand the church program but to make it impossible for him not to understand.

Third, although some mail-out plans are quite successful (sometimes they are necessary in situations where it is difficult to enlist the membership in the undertaking or in large cities where visitation is impractical), some of the authors of these programs have said there is no real substitute for member contacting member in an "eyeball" situation. The most carefully prepared mail-out can never do the same job of answering questions and inviting participation as effectively as a fellow member can.

The most important ingredient in any church plan must be a thorough education of the membership in the principles of Christian stewardship. They should be taught to give to God rather than to things. Giving then will be regarded as a privilege, rather than a duty—a divine exercise.

Such persons will not wait for things to give to or wait to be asked to give. They will look at needs as opportunities to express love and gratitude to God for His manifold blessings.

By following God's plans we can develop Christians, and build and maintain buildings and programs—in that order. Our offerings will be acceptable, our plans assured of divine approval.

Danger in the day care

Do you know what the law says you should do if you suspect child abuse or molestation? The author of this article didn’t, and it led to some time spent on the wrong side of the bars at the local jail. His story and suggestions can help you avoid the same problem. □ by Dan Harman

Today’s headlines frequently highlight child molesting in day-care centers. Church-sponsored day-care centers and schools aren’t immune from the problem either.

Sponsoring such facilities exposes the church and the pastor to many dangers. I know; I went to jail because of a well-intentioned but wrong assumption.

No, I wasn’t accused of molesting. But let me start from the beginning.

The phone in my study rang. It was a church official telling me, the senior pastor, that the janitor saw a young playground supervisor with his hand down the front of a second-grader’s pants. “Looks like he was sexually handling the boy, pastor,” the church leader told me.

I called the school principal, and together we agreed to try to frighten the employee—a student in a local Christian college—and urge him to get counseling. We also agreed to fire him immediately.

The information was so sketchy and unprovable that we never thought of calling in the police. A good scare and being rid of him seemed the solution.

Hindsight is wonderful. Now we know what the law says and what we were obligated to do. But at that time the papers and television had not said much about the subject. We were concerned, of course, for the welfare of the students and their families; but we were also aware of the young man’s reputation and felt we could be part of healing a problem.

So much for good intentions. Not long afterward a police detective visited me; he informed me that he believed a suspected molestation had taken place and wanted to know why I hadn’t reported it. I told him of my ignorance of the law, and he said, “In California you have seventy-two hours to report a suspected molestation, or you are in violation of the law.”

My education was beginning.

In short order I was arrested, handcuffed, fingerprinted, and jailed. I spent three hours in the “drunk tank” while my wife rounded up the bail needed. In my more than thirty years of Christian ministry my only trips to jail had been visits to help inmates spiritually. This was a new experience—one I could have done without.

After many months of church outrage at my treatment, dozens of letters from church leaders all over the country, and the work of a really knowledgeable lawyer, I was informed that the district attorney had dropped the charges.

The day-care center and school survived. I survived. But wagging tongues, misunderstandings, doubts, and natural indignation by parents of children placed in our care have hurt the church.

Let me share a few things I learned. Maybe you and your day-care center or school can profit.

Get insurance for such facilities. We had liability insurance just in case something like this should happen. We haven’t had to use it, but if we had been sued, insurance was the only thing that would have saved the congregation.

Your congregation should have a
In short order I was arrested, handcuffed, fingerprinted, and jailed. In my more than thirty years of ministry, my only trips to jail had been visits to help inmates. This was a new experience.

working relationship with a good lawyer. Let him help you select a good insurance company.

Check out the legal implications of having a day-care center, school, or both. Most states aren’t as tough as California, but better safe than sorry. Check your responsibility. Remember, I was arrested not for hiding a molester, but for not reporting a suspected molestation.

Make sure your principal or day-care director is current on laws and procedures in handling suspected molestations. It isn’t enough that he is an educator, a Christian, a person who cares and who gets along well with people. He had better know the law in all matters that touch the ongoing work of the facility.

Maintain good communications among your staff. People who get along well together naturally look out for one another. We found out later that two members of the staff thought they had seen this same young man handling young boys in a too-familiar way, but both had hesitated to speak of it because of inhibitions. Afterward, of course, all of them agreed that in the future they would be more open. Indeed, just a few weeks after this happened, one of the children came to school with clear evidence of mistreatment at home. On reporting it, we were sadly relieved to find we had done the right thing.

Inform parents, children, and staff on how to handle such improper advances. A volunteer program may suffice, but it should be repeated every year. Several are being used around the country; your area Christian schools’ organization or even your local board of education can suggest those that are available. Look them over; your parent-support group (if you have one parallel to the public schools’ PTA) may wish to select and sponsor the course.

Finally, build a solid base of support within the congregation for the day-care center or school. As the months rolled on, I thanked God many times for the solid support that the school and I received as tensions soared and pressure mounted. God used the unity of the church to give me personal strength and to back the school staff. Build prayerfully, thoughtfully, and lovingly. People respond when they have confidence in the people and program.

One final word: Christian schools and day-care centers are a great idea. If one is “right” for you and your church, go to it. If God is behind it, nothing that opposes it will triumph. Please don’t make decisions about whether to operate a day-care center or school on the basis of possible problems. The church is here to touch people for Christ, and often a teaching and ministering institution like a day-care center or school is just the thing to advance His work.

Move ahead, but “be . . . wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”

LETTERS

From page 2

helpless unborn child.

No less a figure in Adventist history than Ellen G. White condemned this gruesome carnage (i.e., cessation of unwanted pregnancies by abortion).

[Editor’s note: The writer of this letter quotes from the book A Solemn Appeal (Battle Creek, Michigan: Steam Press, 1870), pages 100, 101. This book was edited by James White while he was General Conference president. Ellen White contributed several articles to the book, but the segment quoted was actually excerpted from the volume Exhausted Vitality, by E. P. Miller, M.D. we include the quotation below as indicative of early Adventist leadership’s views on abortion.]

“Few are aware of the fearful extent to which this nefarious business, this worse than devilish practice, is carried on in all classes of society! Many a woman determines that she will not become a mother, and subjects herself to the vilest treatment, committing the basest crime to carry out her purpose. And many a man, who has ‘as many children as he can support,’ instead of restraining his passions, aids in the destruction of the babes he has begotten.

“The sin lies at the door of both parents in equal measure. . . .

“And besides all this, the consequences of such a practice are most disastrous both upon the physical and moral nature of those whose souls are stained with this terrible sin.”

Clearly, one former Seventh-day Adventist leader had the moral courage and spiritual vision to condemn abortion as a means of birth control. Today do we lack the courage and vision, or have we merely accepted secular laws in place of Biblical principles?—Pastor Michael L. Tomlinson, Denham Springs, Louisiana.

Computers and secretaries

I read “How to Buy a Church Computer” (March, 1985) with great interest. As a church secretary, I feel the author overlooked the important step of including the church secretary in the planning and implementation of office computerization.

If the church secretary is not at all familiar with the use of computers, she will have to take special training and be willing to be included in the new approach to record keeping and administration. If she has some expertise with computers, then she could be a great help in choosing the one best suited for the church office.

I am thankful that I have been a secretary in two churches where I am valued as a vital vehicle in the operation of the church office and also as a friend and confidant to pastor and members alike. I consider my work as a ministry and am grateful to be a part of the work of God’s church. Some churches think of the secretary as a nonprofessional who answers the phone and does the bulletin, and never fully realize or recognize her work. This is one of the reasons why there is a shortage of dedicated church secretaries today.—Church secretary, Beltsville, Maryland.
In the Old Testament the Sabbath signified rest, liberation, and future Messianic redemption. The New Testament portrays Jesus’ claim to bring to fruition these meanings. And it gives evidence of the importance of Sabbathkeeping in the early Christian churches. —by Samuele Bacchiocchi

In the first article in this series, Dr. Bacchiocchi said people generally view the New Testament as either abrogating, transferring, or confirming the seventh-day Sabbath. He argued that the New Testament’s portrayal of the basic continuity of Christianity with Judaism and its allusions to the Creation origin of the Sabbath argue for its permanence. —Editors.

My third reason for believing in the permanence of Sabbathkeeping is the redemptive meaning Christ gave to the Sabbath in His teaching and ministry. The Jewish Sabbatical typologies of Messianic redemption help explain the implications of Christ’s Sabbath ministry. I can make only a brief allusion to these in this study; please see my other studies for a more extensive analysis.¹

Sabbatical typologies of Messianic redemption

In Old Testament times the Sabbath not only provided personal rest and liberation from the hardship of work and social injustices but also nourished the hope for a future Messianic peace, prosperity, and redemption. Three of the Sabbath themes that epitomized the Messianic Age are the Sabbath rest, the Sabbath liberation, and the Sabbatical structure of time.

The Sabbath rest. Jewish literature often presents the Sabbath rest as a prefiguration of the Messianic Age. The Mishnah, for example, comments on Psalm 92: “A Psalm: a Song for the Sabbath Day . . . a song for the time that is to come [i.e., Messianic Age], for the day that shall be all Sabbath and rest in the life everlasting.” ² Similarly Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer speaks of the Messianic Age as being “the seventh aeon [which] is entirely Sabbath and rest in the life everlasting.”³

The Sabbath liberation. By providing release and liberation to every member of the Hebrew society, the weekly and the annual Sabbaths effectively symbolized Messianic redemption. Isaiah 61:1-3, for example, employs the imagery of the Sabbatical release to describe the mission of the Messiah, who would bring jubilary amnesty and release to the oppressed. To explain the purpose of His redemptive mission, Christ quotes this very passage in His inaugural speech (Luke 4:18, 19).

It is noteworthy that the New Testament term for forgiveness (aphesis) is the same term used in the Septuagint to designate the annual Sabbaths, technically referred to as “the release” or “the
Christ offers His rest immediately after disclosing His Messianic identity. By offering what the Messiah was expected to offer, the rest typified by the Sabbath, He substantiates His Messianic claim.

year of release” (Deut. 15:1, 2, 9; 31:10; Lev. 25:10). Presumably the vision of the Sabbatical release from social injustices and financial indebtedness came to be viewed as the prefiguration of the future Messianic release from the bondage of sin.

The Sabbatical structure of time. The Messianic typology of the Sabbath years apparently inspired the use of the Sabbatical structure of time to measure the waiting time to the Messianic redemption. (Sabbatical structuring of time is called “Sabbatical Messianism” or “chronomessianism.”) Daniel 9, the classic example, gives two Sabbatical periods. The first is Jeremiah’s prophecy regarding the time until the national restoration of the Jews (Dan. 9:3-19). It consists of seventy years made up of ten Sabbatical years (10 x 7). The second period is the “seventy weeks” (sha-baim)—technically “seventy Sabbatical cycles”—which would lead to Messianic redemption (verses 24-27).

Later Jewish literature, such as the Book of Jubilees (chap. 1:29) and a fragmentary text discovered in 1956 in Qumran Cave 11 (known as 11Q Melchizedek) also contain Sabbatical Messianism. Other examples are present in the rabbinic tradition. For example, the Talmud says: “Elijah said to Rab Judah . . . ‘The world shall exist not less than eighty-five jubilees, and in the last jubilee the son of David will come.’”

This brief survey indicates that in Old Testament times the weekly and annual Sabbaths served not only to provide physical rest and social liberation but also to epitomize and nourish the hope of future Messianic redemption. The existence of a Messianic understanding of the Sabbath in the Old Testament helps us to appreciate the way Christ related His own redemptive ministry to the Sabbath. Examples from Luke, Matthew, and John will illustrate this point.

Redemptive meaning in Luke

Luke introduces Christ as a habitual Sabbathkeeper (“as his custom was”—chap. 4:16) who delivered His inaugural address on a Sabbath day. He read and commented upon a passage drawn mostly from Isaiah 61:1-3 (also chap. 58:6), which says: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” (chap. 4:18).

In this passage Isaiah describes by means of the imagery of the Sabbath years the liberation the Messiah would bring to His people. Jewish Messianic expectations had been nourished by this vision of the Sabbath years. It is noteworthy that Christ used this passage to present Himself to the people as the very fulfillment of those expectations. Jesus clearly indicated the latter by His brief exposition of the Isaianic passage: “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (verse 21).

Later Sabbath healings exemplify how Christ’s ministry fulfilled the Messianic liberation typified by the Sabbath. To describe the physical and spiritual liberation He brought to the crippled woman, Christ used three times the verb “to free” (lu-chem—chap. 13:12, 15, 16). The reference to the freeing on the Sabbath of “a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years” (verse 16) recalls Christ’s mission “to proclaim release to the captives.”

Acts of healing such as this are not merely acts of love and compassion. They are true “sabbatical acts” that reveal how the Messianic redemption typified by the Sabbath was being fulfilled through Christ’s saving ministry. For all the people blessed by Christ’s Sabbath ministry, the day became the memorial of the healing of their bodies and souls, the celebration of the exodus from the bonds of Satan into the freedom of the Saviour.

Redemptive meaning in Matthew

Matthew alludes to the redemptive meaning of the Sabbath in two pericopes: one about the disciples plucking ears of corn on a Sabbath (chap. 12:1-8), and the other, the healing of the man with the withered hand (verses 9-14). Matthew relates both incidents directly to Jesus’ offer of His rest (chap. 11:28-30). To appreciate the connection between the Saviour’s offer of His rest and the Sabbath, it is important to recall that in Old Testament times the Messianic age was expected to be “wholly Sabbath and rest in the life everlasting.” In Matthew’s Gospel, Christ offers His rest immediately after disclosing His Messianic identity (He is the Son who knows and reveals the Father—verse 27). By offering what the Messiah was expected to offer, namely, the peace and rest typified by the Sabbath, He substantiates His Messianic claim.

Matthew also indicates the connection between Jesus’ rest and the Sabbath by placing the former (verses 28-30) in the immediate context of two Sabbath episodes (chap. 12:1-14). As noted by several scholars, the two are connected not only structurally but also temporally (by the phrase “at that time”—verse 1). The time referred to is the Sabbath day when Jesus and the disciples went through the field. The fact that, according to Matthew, Christ offered His rest on a Sabbath day suggests that the two are linked together not only temporally but also theologically. The two Sabbath episodes clarify the theological connection, providing what may be called a “halakic” interpretation of how the Messianic rest Jesus offered is related to the Sabbath.

The story about the disciples’ plucking grain on the Sabbath (verses 1-8) interprets Jesus’ rest as redemption-rest. Christ’s appeal to the example of the priests who worked intensively on the Sabbath in the Temple and yet were “guiltless” (verse 5) emphasizes this. The priests were innocent because of the redemptive nature of their Sabbath services. They worked more intensively on the Sabbath (Num. 28:9, 10) in order to extend to the people the redemption offered them by God. Christ says His own Sabbath ministry is justified because it is “something greater than the temple” (Matt. 12:6). In other words, the
For the author of Hebrews, then, the act of resting on the Sabbath appears to be not merely a ritual, but a faith response to God. It means experiencing God's salvation rest by faith, not by works.

Redemptive meaning in John

John alludes to the relationship between the Sabbath and Christ's work of salvation in two Sabbath miracles: the healing of the paralytic (chap. 5:1-18) and of the blind man (chap. 9:1-41). Because He instructed the healed man to carry his bedding home, Christ was charged with Sabbathbreaking. In refuting this charge, He said, “My Father is working until now, and I myself am working” (chap. 5:17, N.A.S.B.). What is the nature of the Father’s “working” to which Jesus appeals to justify His Sabbath ministry? In the Gospel of John, the “workings” and the “works” of God are repeatedly and explicitly identified, not with a continuous divine creation, but with the saving mission of Christ. For example, Jesus says, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent” (chap. 6:29; cf. chaps. 10:37, 38; 4:34; 9:3; 14:11).

To appreciate the theological implications of Christ's defense, we need to remember that the Sabbath is linked both to Creation (Gen. 2:2, 3; Ex. 20:11) and to redemption (Deut. 5:15). By interrupting all secular activities the Israelite was remembering the Creator-God; by acting mercifully toward needy fellowbeings he was imitating the Redeemer-God. To defend the legality of the “working” that He and His Father perform on the Sabbath, Christ appeals to the Sabbath’s redemptive implications.

Christ is using similar reasoning when He appeals to the example of circumcision to silence the controversy over the healing of the paralytic (John 7:22-24). The Lord argues that the priests legitimately care for one small part of man’s body on the Sabbath in order to extend to the newborn child the salvation of the covenant. Therefore, there is no reason to be “angry” with Him for restoring on that day the “whole body” of a man (verse 23).

For Christ the Sabbath is the day to work for the redemption of the whole man. The fact that on the Sabbaths of both healings Christ looked for the healed men and ministered to their spiritual needs (chaps. 5:14; 9:35-38) bears this out. His opponents could not perceive the redemptive nature of Christ’s Sabbath ministry because they “judge by appearances” (chap. 7:24). For them the pallet and the clay are more important than the social reunion (chap. 5:10) and the restoration of sight (chap. 9:14) that those objects symbolized. Therefore Christ found it necessary to act against prevailing misconceptions in order to restore the Sabbath to its positive function.

In the Sabbath healing of the blind man recorded in John 9, Christ extended to His followers the invitation to become links of the same redemptive chain. He said, “We must work the works of him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no man can work.” The “night” apparently refers to the conclusion of the history of salvation, a conclusion that is implied in the adverbial phrase “until now” (chap. 5:17). Such a conclusion of divine and human redemptive activity will usher in the final Sabbath of which the Creation Sabbath was a prototype. To bring about that final Sabbath the Godhead “is working” for our salvation (verse 17), and “we must work” also to extend it to others (chap. 9:4). So in John’s Gospel, as in Luke and Matthew, Jesus fulfilled the redemptive promises of the Sabbath by offering on that day physical and spiritual restoration to needy persons.

Redemptive meaning in Hebrews

By linking together two passages, Genesis 2:2 and Psalm 95:7, 11, the author of Hebrews reflects the same redemptive meaning of the Sabbath that we have found in the Gospels. He argues that the divine rest promised at Creation was not exhausted when the Israelites under Joshua found a resting place in Canaan. His evidence is that God again offered His rest “long afterward” through David (Heb. 4:7; cf. Ps. 95:7). The fuller realization of God’s promised Sabbath rest has dawned with the coming of Christ (Heb. 4:9). It is by believing in Jesus Christ that God’s people can at last experience (“enter”—verses 3, 10, 11) the “good news” of God’s rest promised on the “seventh day” of Creation (verse 4).

What is the nature of the “Sabbath rest” that is still awaiting God’s people? Is the writer thinking of a literal or figurative type of Sabbathkeeping? Verse 10 describes the basic characteristic of Christian Sabbathkeeping, namely, cessation from work: “For whoever enters God’s rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his.” Historically, the majority of commentators have interpreted the cessation from work in a figurative sense, namely as “abstention from servile work,” meaning sinful activities. To them, Christian Sabbathkeeping means not the interruption of the daily work on the seventh day, but the abstention from sinful acts at all times. In supporting their view, they appeal to Hebrews’ reference to “dead works” (chaps. 6:1; 9:14).

Such a concept, however, cannot be
The New Testament provides both implicit and explicit indications of Sabbathkeeping in the Christian communities. The evangelists report no less than seven Sabbath healing episodes and ensuing controversies.

Read back into Hebrews 4:10, where a comparison is made between the divine and the human cessation from "works." It would be absurd to think of God ceasing from "sinful deeds." The point of the analogy is simply that as God ceased on the seventh day from His creation work, so believers are to cease on the same day from their labors. This is a simple statement of the nature of Sabbathkeeping. The term sabbatinos (chap. 4:9) provides further support for this literal understanding of Sabbathkeeping. Extra-Biblical literature consistently uses sabbatinos to denote Sabbath observance. 15

The author's concern, however, could hardly have been to emphasize merely the physical "cessation" aspect of Sabbathkeeping. Such an emphasis would only yield a negative idea of rest and would encourage the very Judaizing tendencies that he endeavors to counteract. So, though the author speaks in verse 10 of the literal "cessation" aspect of Sabbathkeeping, he wants to show to his readers the deeper meaning of Sabbathkeeping. We can see this deeper meaning in the antithesis the author makes between those who failed to enter into the Sabbath rest because of unbelief and those who enter by faith. ("Unbelief"—apeitheias, verses 6, 11, K.J.V.—is faithlessness that results in disobedience; "faith"—pistis, verses 2, 3—is faithfulness that results in obedience.)

For the author of Hebrews, then, the act of resting on the Sabbath appears to be not merely a ritual (cf. "sacrifice"—Matt. 12:7), but a faith response to God. Such a response entails making ourselves available to "hear his voice" rather than hardening our hearts (Heb. 4:7). It means experiencing God's salvation rest by faith, not by works; being saved through faith, not by doing (verses 2, 3, 11). On the Sabbath, as John Calvin aptly expresses it, believers are "to cease from their work to allow God to work in them." 16 Presumably, this expanded interpretation was meant to help Christians understand its deeper meaning in the light of the Christ event.

This brief survey has shown that Luke, Matthew, John, and Hebrews agree that Christ's coming fulfilled the Messianic typology of the Sabbath. Through His redemptive mission, Christ offers to believers the promised Sabbatical "release" (Luke 4:18) and "rest" (Matt. 11:28). In the light of the cross, then, Sabbathkeeping has two meanings. It provides not only a physical cessation from work but also an opportunity to experience God's creative and redemptive rest. This Sabbath rest also has an eschatological dimension, as indicated by the exhortation to "strive to enter that rest" (Heb. 4:11). Its fullest realization awaits that final Sabbath when, as eloquently expressed by Augustine, "we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise." 17

SABBATHKEEPING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

My fourth reason for believing in the permanence of the Sabbath is that the New Testament records the fact and manner of its observance.

The fact of Sabbathkeeping

The New Testament provides both implicit and explicit indications of Sabbathkeeping in the Christian communities. Implicitly, it is suggested by the unusual coverage given by the evangelists to the Sabbath ministry of Jesus. It is generally recognized today that the Gospels were composed not as mere biographies of Christ's life but as theological handbooks to help promote the Christian faith. The prevailing concerns of their time determined which of Jesus' words and deeds the evangelists chose to write about.

The evangelists report no less than seven Sabbath healing episodes and ensuing controversies. This indicates the great importance attached to Sabbathkeeping in their respective communities at the time they wrote their Gospels. They gave ample coverage to Jesus' example and teaching regarding the Sabbath because those young Christian communities needed the norm He established for determining its new meaning and manner of observance.

We can find several explicit indications of Sabbathkeeping in the Gospels. Matthew, for example, explains that the "disciples were hungry" (chap. 12:1) when they plucked ears of corn on the Sabbath. The evangelist was concerned to explain that the disciples did not carelessly break the Sabbath. This suggests that "in Matthew's congregation the Sabbath was still kept, but not in the same strict sense as in the Rabbinate." 19

Another indication of Sabbathkeeping found in Matthew is Christ's unique warning regarding the destruction of Jerusalem. He said, "Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a sabbath" (chap. 24:20). Jesus mentions the Sabbath here not polemically but incidentally, as a factor unfavorable to a flight of Christians from Jerusalem. This implies that Christ did not foresee another day of worship replacing it. And it suggests, as stated by A.W. Argyle, that "the Sabbath was still observed by Jewish Christians when Matthew wrote." 19

Luke also provides explicit indications of Sabbathkeeping. He describes how the women, after seeing their Lord laid in the tomb, hastened home to prepare "spices and ointments" because "the sabbath was beginning" (chap. 23:54, 56). These women were devoted to their Master. In spite of their devotion they felt they could not embalm His body because this would have meant violating the Sabbath. So "on the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment" (verse 56), waiting for the dawn of the first day of the week to continue their work. Luke's report of the women's careful observance of the Sabbath indicates the high regard in which it was held at the time of his writing.

In the book of Acts, Luke refers repeatedly to Paul's custom of teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath (chaps. 13:14; 16:13, 14; 17:2; 18:4). The fact that before his conversion Paul went searching for Christians at the synagogues of Damascus implies that at least some Christians were still attending Sabbath services at the synagogue. This practice apparently continued approxi-
The Sabbath pericopes in the Gospels reflect an ongoing controversy between the Christian congregation and the Jewish synagogue. The controversy centered on the manner of Sabbathkeeping.

The manner of Sabbathkeeping

How did New Testament believers observe the Sabbath? As recorded in Acts, apparently at first most Christians attended Sabbath services at the Jewish synagogue (chaps. 13:14, 42-44; 17:2; 18:4). Gradually, however, Christians established their own places of worship. This process had probably already begun at the time of Matthew’s writing, because he speaks of Christ entering “their synagogue” (chap. 12:9). The pronoun “their” suggests that by the time the Gospel was written the Matthean community no longer shared in the Sabbath services in the Jewish synagogue. Presumably by then they had developed their own places of worship.

The distinction in Sabbathkeeping between the Christian and the Jewish community soon became not only topological but also theological. The various Sabbath pericopes reported in the Gospels reflect an ongoing controversy between the Christian congregation and the Jewish synagogue. The controversy centered primarily on the manner of Sabbathkeeping. Was the day to bring physical and spiritual liberation to needy people (verses 12, 16).

The episode of the healing of the man with the withered hand also expresses this humanitarian understanding of the Sabbath (Mark 3:1-6; Matt. 12:9-14; Luke 6:6-11). A deputation of scribes and Pharisees pose the testing question regarding the legitimacy of healing on the Sabbath. Jesus responds by asking a question of principle: “Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?” (Mark 3:4; cf. Luke 6:9).

In Mark and Luke, Christ’s answer substitutes the verbs “to do good” (agathopoien) and “to save” (sozion) for the verb “to heal” (therapeuon) used in the question. Christ’s concern to include not only but all kinds of benevolent activities within the intention of the Sabbath law lies behind this change. To illustrate this principle, according to Matthew, Christ added the concrete example of rescuing a sheep fallen into a pit on a Sabbath day (chap. 12:11, 12).

This broad interpretation of the Sabbath as a day to do good and to save represents a radical departure from the contemporary Jewish practice of Sabbathkeeping.

Willy Rondorf views this new Christian view as “the beginning of the moralistic misunderstanding of Jesus’ attitude towards the Sabbath.” Such a charge is unfair. Even if the evangelists’ accounts could be discredited, their interpretation still represents the prevailing understanding of the Sabbath at their time. Moreover, the early Epistle to Diognetus (dated A.D. 130-200) also attests this new humanitarian understanding of the Sabbath. It charges the Jews with speaking “falsely of God” because they claim that “He [God] forbade us to do what is good on the Sabbath days—how is not this impious?”

As we have seen, the Gospels bring out Christ’s fulfillment of the Sabbath’s redemptive typology in several ways. This typology forms the foundation of the new humanitarian understanding of Sabbathkeeping. New Testament believers viewed Christ’s redemptive mission as fulfilling the rest and redemption typified by the Old Testament Sabbath. They regarded the Sabbath, then, as a day to celebrate and experience the Messianic redemption-rest by showing mercy and doing good to those in need. What does this mean to Christians today? By means of the Sabbath, and on it, Christ invites us to celebrate His creative and redemptive accomplishments by acting redemptively toward others.

Our first two articles have presented four of the reasons I believe in the permanence of Sabbathkeeping in the New Testament. We have found that the ongoing relevance of the Sabbath is implied in the New Testament by its marked continuity with the Old Testament revelation, by specific allusions to the Creation origin of the Sabbath, by the redemptive meaning expressed through Christ’s Sabbath ministry, and by implicit and explicit indications of the fact and the manner of its observance. We conclude then that in the New Testament the Sabbath is not nullified but clarified by Christ’s teaching and saving ministry.

In the next two articles Dr. Bacchiocchi examines Paul’s attitude toward the Sabbath. The next article looks specifically at Paul and the law.—Editors.


The terms “Sabbatical Messianism” and “chronomessianism” are used by Ben Zion Wacholder in his informative article, “Chronomessianism: The Timing of Messianic Movements and the Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles,” Hebrew Union College Annual 46 (1975): 201ff.

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This article points out that while stewardship includes fund-raising and other money matters, it “comes most sharply to focus in the Christian’s daily work when he views it as divine vocation.” Stewardship has implications for both the Christian’s choice of his vocation and his performance of it.

by Rex D. Edwards

Our church members have tended to think of stewardship as the giving of money for the support of the church and its activities. They know that in theory it comprises more than this. Yet in practice, the officer appointed to stewardship in the local church is usually also the treasurer and bears as well the responsibility of raising enough money to prevent the church from ending the year in the red.

This is a worthy and necessary service. Though our Lord ranked spiritual treasures above material goods, this does not suggest that God approves sloppy business dealings in a church under the cover of piety or that He desires His professional servants to be less than adequately paid. When in gratitude for God’s gifts church members share their wealth or their “widow’s mite” to provide the financial underpinning by which the work of the church can go forward, they truly exercise stewardship.

But stewardship is broader. In the full sense it springs from the Christian doctrine of Creation. It centers in the conviction that “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof” (Ps. 24:1); that all we have, whether of material, mental, or spiritual treasure, is the gift of God; and that we hold these gifts in trust. God has delegated to us a high responsibility in that He has commissioned us to “have dominion” not only over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air (Gen. 1:28) but over great power plants, wide expanses of mechanized industry and agriculture, electronics, aeronautics, atomic energy, and much else.

Stewardship, then, means much more than merely giving to the church and to church-related or charitable causes, though this giving legitimately comprises an aspect of it. Stewardship covers the getting, the spending, and the saving, as well as the giving of money. It means the Christian use of all our economic resources and the investment of time, talent, energy, and, in short, of life itself in the way most consistent with the will of God.

In this comprehensive sense we hold a stewardship of leisure time as well as of daily work, of family and business as well as of church relations, of mind and hidden thought as well as of the overt output which the world observes. To be a steward of God’s gifts in the fullest sense is to be a Christian in the whole of life to the fullest possible degree.

Nevertheless, in spite of this comprehensiveness of scope, stewardship comes most sharply to focus in the Christian’s daily work when he views it as divine vocation.

Stewardship in daily work

What does it mean to be a Christian in one’s daily work? Some emphasize injecting the devotional life into business, industry, and politics. The gatherings of businessmen or Congressmen for prayer breakfasts illustrate this approach, as do the providing of meditation chapels in hospitals and large plants and the lending of the names of well-known business, professional, or political leaders to the support of evangelistic campaigns or to the “religion in American life” emphasis. All of these serve a good end if they are done with sincerity and Christian devotion and not to enhance profits or prestige.

Others hold a second and perhaps more common understanding of what being a Christian in one’s daily work means. They suggest that a Christian acts with moral integrity and with eagerness to serve the needs of men in whatever calling he pursues. Thus the physician seeks to relieve pain and to prolong life; the teacher to elicit mental and personal growth in his pupils appropriate to their capacities and level of development; the social worker or counselor to promote the adjustment of the maladjusted; the housewife to make a good home for her family and rear her children with healthy bodies and strong characters. Being a Christian in the complex processes of making or selling products may be more difficult because of the sharp competition and temptations to shortcuts in modern life. But a sense of service in what is made or sold and a thoroughgoing honesty in the process should characterize the Christian. Likewise, the lawyer who will not make false statements or contravene justice on behalf of the guilty, or the legislator who speaks and votes according to the dictates of an enlightened Christian conscience exercises an important form of stewardship within his daily work.

(Continued on page 28)
Ah, storytime!

When the Lord said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me," He didn't mean that storytime in church should be an insufferable tedium. You won't find Gerald Paul's story of stories to be such either. □ by Gerald W. Paul

common ambivalent tribute often heard at the minister's farewell party is, "We may forget your sermons, but we'll always remember your children's stories!" As a longtime preacher I've told my share of Aesop's fables with a Christian moral, personal yarns blessed with a Biblical text, sagas, anecdotes, parables, allegories, vignettes, autobiographical sketches, object lessons, and the occasional whale of a tale.

Just out of theological college, I determined to review the entire Bible in a single children's session. I condensed Bernhard W. Anderson's Drama of Salvation into a five-minute Reader's Digest type of "Drama in Real Life." Creation, the Fall, and salvation through God's law, prophets, and Son—I didn't skip a single theme as I painted with broad strokes on a huge canvas. Then, with my Methodist twist, I wound up the drama by having the children march off the stage to their classes singing "Whosoever Will May Come." After the service a faithful elder called me aside and said: "You forgot one thing in your children's story. The unfolding of God's saving drama took thousands of years, but you whittled it down to a few minutes. You're selling God short."

When I told my stories in the early sixties the authoritarian climate of religion kept the children quiet throughout my pompous preachments, which all too often sailed over their heads like high-flying cirrus clouds. I perceived communication in church as one way: I had the story, and the children needed to hear it. Taking my cue from Psalm 119, I saw my role as that of storing up the Word in their hearts so that they might not sin against God.

On other occasions I set aside the big theme and went to work on the fine points of a single text. On Easter morning I waxed eloquent with the children on the chancel steps. Beginning with "They found the stone rolled away," I moved by free association to the proverb "A rolling stone gathers no moss," Ali Baba and his magic "Open, Sesame" formula, and Demosthenes, the stammering Greek who is said to have become a great orator by putting stones in his mouth. By imposition, if not exposition, I was able to mention Uncle Bill's kidney stones, the widening circles resulting from a stone thrown into a pond, the stones David used to kill Goliath, the stones the scribes and Pharisees didn't throw at the adulteress, and the stones that martyred Stephen. Rolling so many stones into my story used up my allotted time quickly. But by simply repeating the text "They found the stone rolled away," I was able to end the interminable with a semblance of grace.

At my first service in a northern Ontario parish five children came forward and stood at attention in front of the table. Having decided to shift from the textual to the contextual, I read through the long story of Noah—from faithful boat builder to patient skipper, from rainbow recipient to drunken landlubber. Five-year-old Judy fainted. Fortifying my stance with the motto "The show must go on," I tried not to notice her predicament. As concerned parents padded ever so softly up the aisle, picked her up, and hurried away, I continued, "Also he sent forth a dove from him . . ." On the way out, a member of the property committee congratulated me on "keeping my head when all about . . ."

During my romance with Biblical theology, I would seek out appropriate Biblical artifacts to reinforce the credibility of my story. I brought a slingshot to illustrate the story of David, an apple for the Garden of Eden episode, and a harp for stories from the Psalms. In a rural parish I had a lamb brought into church for my story of the lost sheep, caged canaries for the "birds of the air" passage, and a frozen rainbow trout as a subcompact substitute for Jonah's marine transportation. I was all for bringing some piglets into the sanctuary to receive the evil spirits, but the farmers wouldn't hear of it. "With pigs," they cautioned, "you never know what they'll do."

(Continued on page 28)
Being organized isn’t all that efficient!

If you’ve despaired of ever being the “organized pastor,” take heart! In the midst of the efficiency experts and time management people, a lone voice speaks up in praise of a little creative clutter. In fact, the author suspects that some of the conventional organizational wisdom is actually counterproductive. Here are the things you’ll never hear in a management seminar.

by Sandra Doran

he organized pastor. Somewhere in the back of all of our minds he exists, dressed in a sharply pressed suit, its pockets lined with date books, calendars, and “to do” pads. Arising at 6:00 A.M. for his personal worship, he plunges into the day with schedule properly prioritized and minutes appropriately designated. Yet despite his crystal-clear image in our minds, somehow the organized pastor always manages to elude us in reality. Bright new techniques for cleaning up our organizational act quickly become tarnished additions to the pile of unimplemented “plans” quietly accumulating in the corners of our studies.

So how does a minister—or any other “self-employed” professional—deal with the daily inundation of paper and problems? “Never let a piece of paper go through your hands twice,” urge the efficiency sages. “Learn to delegate,” demand the experts. Good advice? Perhaps. But I’m becoming convinced that some of these catch phrases of conventional efficiency wisdom are little more than nicely worded myths that can actually destroy organization and hamper overall effectiveness!

Have you ever heard these well-meaning bits of advice?

Myth No. 1: A cluttered desk means a cluttered mind. This one usually comes from some impeccable individual passing through your study in a flurry of exactness, taking in the whole aura of your workplace in one cynical sweep. The implication is that an inverse relationship exists between the amount of paper on your desk and the sense of order with which you organize your universe. Followed to its logical conclusion, such logic insists that the more barren and glistening the surface of your desk, the more control you have over your life.

The problem, of course, is that outward order is not necessarily a sign of inward precision. For me, one of the simplest methods for assuring the accomplishment of any task is simply providing some type of visual reminder. If a book must be returned to the library,

Sandra Doran writes from Ballston Spa, New York.
outward order is not necessarily a sign of inward precision. For me, one of the simplest methods of assuring the accomplishment of any task is simply providing some type of visual reminder.

I'm more likely to get it there if I set it out on a desk rather than nearly sliding it into the bookcase. The same is true of any number of things. Right now I have on my desktop, in full view, material for a newspaper article I must write, an envelope to be stuffed and mailed, two pictures to be sent to my brother, a newspaper clipping advertising a meeting I'd like to attend, a check to be mailed, three notes reminding me of various projects to which I've committed myself, and a borrowed book entitled Playing the Guitar.

If I were to go through and "clean things up," I'd probably miss the deadline for the newspaper article, forget to send my envelope, keep my brother waiting on his pictures, never make it to an interesting meeting, be delinquent in paying my bills, overlook half of my latest commitments, and forever strike an "F" chord with a hollow twang on the guitar.

Myth No. 2: Accomplish major tasks first. Go back to the small things when you have the time.

The idea is that certain important things must be accomplished require definite blocks of time. If you are forever dealing with trivia, your time will be fritted away. I've found, however, that deliberately postponing "little things" merely means that they never are done at all. If I receive something in the mail which must "eventually" be answered and stuff it in a drawer to await a more appropriate time, in all likelihood that time will never come. Even if I do remember to accomplish the task two weeks later, I haven't saved any time, and I have probably inconvenienced somebody somewhere by my delay.

Before tackling any major project, I like to evaluate my workload and accomplish as many little things as I can, clearing my desk and mind for the larger focus.

Myth No. 3: All you can do when plagued with a "poor memory" is sigh and apologize a lot. How many times have you found yourself saying, "Sorry, I forgot that book again . . ." or, "I meant to call about that earlier in the week . . ." Don't keep lamenting a foggy brain connection! If tested strictly on recall in an objective setting, you would probably find yourself no less endowed with a good memory than others who always seem to be on top of things.

Forgetfulness is not usually related to a genetic gap, but rather to a lack of specific attention. Two sure methods can keep details from sliding into your mind's inactive file. Let's say you're asked unexpectedly to do something a week later. If you are in a situation where paper and pen are handy, jot yourself a note, and then hang onto the piece of paper until you can put it in full view on your desk. A note will do no good if it remains in the inside pocket of a suit jacket until the cleaner removes it.

If no paper and pencil are handy, you must resort to the second method. Focus on the task you've been asked to accomplish. "Fix" it in your brain by finding some hook on which to hang it. If you're at a picnic minus your date book and you agree to tell a children's story at church next week, picture yourself talking to a group of boys and girls; reinforce the mental image every time a child passes by. For final insurance, associate the image with your own children, so that telling them a bedtime story that evening will remind you to make a written note of your commitment.

If you throw something away you'll need it. The counterpart of "If something can go wrong, it will" is "Empty your wastebasket and you'll discover you need half its contents an hour after the garbage man comes." To ward off such a catastrophe, I slip envelopes into books, use surveys for scraps of paper, file fliers into drawers, and amass heaps of "To Whom It May Concern" potpourri. Anything to avoid coming up empty-handed when the lack of a certain piece of paper suddenly becomes life-threatening.

But saving 599 things just in case one becomes necessary tends to do no more than add confusion to life. Chances are that even when you have saved the desperately needed item, you won't be able to produce it when you need it! Wouldn't it be much more efficient to take a few minutes whenever any piece of paper comes into your life to decide whether or not it is worth saving? If it is, consciously decide where it belongs. Otherwise, get rid of it.

Myth No. 5: The best system is to file everything away so you'll be able to find anything you need at a moment's notice. A maxim that rings true more often is "out of sight, out of mind." Don't be so quick to put that sermon idea in a file. Leave it out on your desk for a couple of weeks. Allow the idea to develop in your consciousness. Hold on to that book review for a while. Once filed away, it will be lost in a maze of manila.

Myth No. 6: Having absorbed the information in this article, you will automatically be transformed into "the organized pastor." Just as a fad diet cannot substitute for careful and consistent dietary discretion, so a cursory reading of one article cannot take the place of serious planning and personal work at organization. This is particularly true if disorganization seems to have been handed you along with the tone of your voice and the size of your feet. Organization takes two things: commitment and practice. Why not start with this magazine? When you've finished reading it, what are you going to do with it?

Forgetfulness is not usually related to a genetic gap, but to a lack of attention. Two sure methods can keep details from sliding into your mind's inactive file.
Temptations of a virtuous pastor

We know that pastors can be tempted by power, lust, and the love of money. But can our desire to be gracious, caring, positive, and loving also bring temptations? by Michael Ladra

Paul says his ambition was to please God (2 Cor. 5:9, N.A.S.B.). That's a noble ambition for a pastor today, but not easy. The strongest and subtlest temptations confront him. In fact, I believe that a pastor’s virtues may be his worst temptations!

Karl Barth, the theologian and pastor, was one of the principal leaders in the church’s resistance to the Nazi government. He once said that he knew a man who was a vegetarian, who did not smoke or drink alcohol, who lived very sparingly, and who loved children. The man was Adolf Hitler. Virtues tempt us to overlook things.

And pastors? We are helpers, and lovers, and comforters. We are administrators, enablers, and counselors. Don’t forget moral, truthful, and dependable. And our members are pleased, and impressed, and complimentary.

But is God? Virtues are no substitute for faithfulness in serving God. Obvious, I know; still, our virtues tempt us to overlook it. Paul reminds every pastor that he is called first to please God: “Am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God?... If I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10, R.S.V.). “It is the Lord who judges me” (1 Cor. 4:4, R.S.V.), he says, and so he makes it his aim to please Him (2 Cor. 5:9, R.S.V.). He labels the opportunists who rendered “eyeservice” and did not do “the will of God” from the heart menpleasers (Eph. 6:6). His ministry was controlled by the conviction that he had “been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but to please God who tests our hearts” (1 Thess. 2:4, R.S.V.).

A pastor, then, is more than an enabler of the people’s vision and ministry—especially if enabling means discovering the congregation’s desires and then helping people reach them. The Scriptures portray leadership as being out in front of the people, lifting vision, and not in the middle, accommodating it. Thus our Lord’s ordination sermon to Joshua stressed strong and courageous leadership: “‘Be strong and of good courage; for you shall cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give them’” (Joshua 1:6, R.S.V.).

Winston Churchill was one of the great leaders of this century. Almost everyone recognizes that his leadership, both in policy and “preaching,” was decisive in Britain’s recovery from Dunkirk and eventual victory. Churchill said leadership means not to be completely in harmony with everyone else. Actually
It takes courage to be a preacher. If we are not prepared to do and say unpopular things, we will be servants of the people, but not servants of God. Lovers of the people, but not lovers of God.

that is a Christian insight into leadership. After all, Jesus says He wants a people who are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. People who walk to the beat of a different drummer. That means a pastor, if he is going to lead, must be a bit out of step.

Of course, there are risks associated with this. That's the rub. Churchill also said, "Politics are almost as exciting as war, and quite as dangerous. In war, you can only be killed once, but in politics many times." He might well have said that about the pastorate. I know pastors who are the walking dead. They have been riddled with bullets. And from their own people, not the world.

I have a friend who is the pastor of one of the largest and fastest-growing churches in Denver. Everyone sees him as top on the world. Except his friends. They know different. He has been leading his church into evangelism lately, and there are some who don't like it. Never mind God's Word. Never mind His absolutes. Never mind His agendas. Witnessing is just too uncomfortable! Oh, no one criticized witnessing; they found other "flaws" to complain about. It hurt. Over breakfast he painfully poured out his sense of failure. I know he shouldn't feel that way, but he's a lover. And lovers are sensitive. And it's hard to turn sensitivity on and off like a light.

As pastors we have the most exciting job in the world. Every day we have the privilege of ministering God's grace to the brokenhearted. We offer God's forgiveness to those tormented by guilt. We minister God's power and hope in the hospital room and at the graveside. We are associated with dedicated, devoted, determined people. And we are paid to study God's Word in order to feed the congregation. It is a marvelous privilege!

But there is another side. When we read God's Word we find imperatives. Well, that is an open question today. Grace is taken to mean imperatives can be ignored. Forgiveness means it does not matter what we do. A lot of Christians, pastors included, have lost the grammar of the imperative. It is a strange dialect today. The imperative mood is said to be the mood of the legalistic, task-oriented, judgmental, nonrelational fanatic.

But are there imperatives? Are there "musts" for the lover of Christ? Jesus gave a very direct answer. He said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15, R.S.V.). He repeated Himself in verse 21: "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me." And then a third time, just to be sure no one missed it. He said: "He who does not love me does not keep my words" (verse 24). Fanaticism? Legalistic, nonrelational, task-oriented fanaticism?

To love God is to obey Him! That is an underreported fact. We hear a great deal about how God loves us and that we are saved by grace and not the law. And that is very true. But it is also true that Jesus said that to love Him is to obey His commandments.

A young woman married in college and immediately had several affairs so that she did not know for sure who the father of her first child was. Her husband graduated and took a job out of State, and within months she was having another affair. She did not know who the father of her second child was either. She and her husband were divorced. She remarried and joined a church. She told the pastor she wished her husband was more spiritual because she wanted a Christian family. Not long after that the husband made an appointment with the pastor. He had caught her in bed with another man. He was broken. When confronted, she said she wanted the younger man and not her husband. When asked about her Christianity, she replied that God loved her and understood her needs.

Is that what grace means? God loves her, but did she love God? Are imperatives imperative to loving God? Must a lover of Jesus be faithful to one husband? Must we forgive each other, love and serve each other? Didn't Jesus say that He must heal, must die on the cross, must please the Father? Must we witness (Matt. 28:9, 20)? Must we do mission (chap. 25:31-46), work for justice (Amos 5:21-24), use our gifts and talents to build up the church (1 Cor. 14:12)? Commandments and loving God. Musts and pleasing God. Imperatives and following God.

But isn't the gospel good news? Yes, but it includes imperatives. Ask the rich young ruler. Jesus told him to go and sell all that he had and give to the poor. Ask Peter. The Lord told him to forgive not seven times but seventy times seven.

It takes courage to be a leader and especially a preacher. If we are not prepared to do and say unpopular things, we will be servants of the people, but not servants of God. Lovers of the people, but not lovers of God. This does not demand that we omit the subjunctive mood of hope or the indicative mood of forgiveness and mercy or the future mood of promises. But to omit the imperative mood from our grammar of leadership and preaching is to fail to love and please God!

Faithfulness often means loneliness. Ask Moses or Elijah. Our only consolation is that loneliness is mistaken arithmetic. Elijah thought he was the only one left, but God said there were seven thousand just like him.

It can be costly. Ask the prophets or the disciples. Ask Jesus, who, though immensely popular at first, lost His popularity because of His preaching. The apostle John records: "Many of His disciples, when they heard it, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?' . . . After this many of His disciples drew back and no longer went about with Him" (John 6:60-66, R.S.V.). Gracious, loving, merciful Jesus lost numbers.

And the pattern continues in church history. Martin Luther sacrificed his security when he nailed ninety-five imperatives to a church door in Wittenberg. It was not the world that threatened him most, but the church. More recently, Karl Barth, Swiss theologian who was a pastor in Germany before World War II, faced a similar experience. One Sunday in the mid-1930s he was preaching on the text assigned by the
Alcoholism—a pastoral challenge

Is your church prepared to help alcoholics come forward and find healing? Are you as a pastor able to confront this menace? Or would you prefer that all alcoholics remain anonymous? This how-to article will help you face the problem and help the sufferers. ☑ by Walter E. Kloss

No pastor is immune to the effects of the raging epidemic of alcoholism. Tentaclelike, the symptoms and pathology reach into every parish in the nation. The disease disables 15 million Americans annually, including 3.5 million adolescents, and distorts the lives of one in four. It truly is the number one public health problem.¹ This disease devastates the total being—physical, psychological, and spiritual. But the primary site of this illness is in the human spirit. All the rest—shakes, weeping, horrors, vomiting, hallucinations, delirium tremens—are physical and psychological reactions to an underlying spiritual illness.

Alcoholism jeopardizes the victim’s link with God, smothers faith, destroys self-esteem, undermines moral values, and closes the heart’s door to grace. If left untreated, it cripples and destroys the basic elements of spiritual life. Sadly, only 35 to 40 percent of sufferers ever experience recovery.²

Clergy, along with other professionals, have not been effective healers in this field. But ministers have more to offer, both in preventing alcoholism and aiding in recovery, than any other professionals.

Pastors as healers

Several factors make the clergy potentially very effective healers for alcoholics. First, we have easy access to homes. No other professional caregiver enjoys such a close relationship with individuals and families. Second, we are approachable. Research has consistently shown that the majority of people needing help turn first to a minister. Third, pastors are viewed as family educators and exemplars. And fourth, we speak regularly on issues of social and moral responsibility. These four elements form the basis of a positive therapeutic relationship that we can use to deal with alcoholism. But we will need more than just a relationship if we want to be really helpful. We will need education and understanding.

In light of the seriousness of the alcoholism problem, it seems strange that many ministers graduate from seminary without having had any instruction in dealing with it. The first step to becoming an effective healer is to understand the disease. It is important for ministers to recognize alcoholism for what it is—a treatable disease. The next step is to accept the alcoholic as a helpless victim, not a hopeless sinner. We must treat him or her as someone who can be helped, not like a criminal who must be put out of fellowship, out of sight, and out of mind.

Family relationships

Understanding the relationships that develop within the family of the alcoholic is important also. Alcoholism is a social disorder, a family disease in which roles play an important part. The main role, of course, is that of the alcoholic—the dependent, isolated denier who needs to drink. Then there is the

Walter E. Kloss, Ph.D., is director of pastoral care, New England Memorial Hospital, Stoneham, Massachusetts.
Getting an alcoholic involved in treatment may require the pastor to confront the family with the reality of the disease by intervening in the denial system.

victim—the person who assumes responsibility for and does the work of the alcoholic, and by so doing, protects the user from the consequences of the disease. The provoked one is the family member who acts out anger in various ways, and attempts to coerce the drinker to quit, but only adds to his or her guilt. The enabler plays the key role in the family system and actually unconsciously perpetuates the alcoholic's abuse and continued denial. The enabler is the guilt-ridden “Mr. Clean,” who assumes the role of savior.

Typically, the spouse of the abuser gets caught up in the role of enabler. In an attempt to keep peace or preserve the marriage relationship, the enabler covers up problems: calling in sick when the user can't make it to work, making excuses to the children when a drinking parent's behavior is questionable, turning the other cheek when the drinking spouse becomes abusive. This enabling behavior becomes part of the denial system and encourages the drinker to continue abusing alcohol. Avoiding direct confrontation does not help; it perpetuates the problem.

Pastors often forfeit their opportunity to be healers by assuming the role of savior and becoming enablers. By attempting to reduce the tension and pain in a family system victimized by alcoholism, clergy often join hands with the enabling spouse and in effect become part of the problem. The appropriate clergy role in the recovery process is to lead the alcoholic and family into a treatment program and to help them stay there.

Effective treatment

Treatment for alcoholism focuses on the recovery and growth of the spirit. It moves the alcoholic: (1) from an “I'm the boss” attitude to an awareness of God as the Source of help; (2) from “I don't need help” to reaching out to the Source of help; (3) from “There is nothing wrong with me” to confession: “I am an alcoholic”; (4) from “I'll do it my way” to an act of faith—“I'll do it Your way”; (5) from “I'm unforgivable” to grace, making amends and restoration—“Please forgive me”; (6) from the loneliness of “I don't need anyone” to the security of a healing community—“I can't do it alone”; (7) from the hopelessness of “I am worthless” to a sense of personal value and vocation—“I want to share with you what I have been given.”

Recovery rises out of intense suffering and pain. It comes in response to treatment that fosters honesty, true values, and responsibility. The alcoholic learns through moral and spiritual education that faithful and unselfish work, reverence for family and others, selfless love, obedience to truth and to one's Higher Power, produce a rewarding life. Spiritual conversion plus abstinence equals recovery. This treatment works. Statistics show that 65 to 75 percent of alcoholics who want to recover do when they follow this treatment plan.

Getting an alcoholic involved in treatment may require the pastor to confront the family with the reality of the disease by intervening in the denial system. This will inevitably increase to himself and return home. Offering dignity, love, and acceptance, the father warmly restored his son to the family.

In our parishes countless prodigals—victims of this menacing epidemic—silently struggle alone, searching for understanding and acceptance. They are powerless and need help. As pastors, we are in a unique and coveted position. We can direct our hurting people to expert professional and volunteer resources. We can educate and motivate our churches and parishes to become healing communities that give affirmation and support to the prodigals. We can offer dignity and restoration. We need to join hands with other concerned caregivers—physicians and nurses for physical needs, psychiatrists and social workers for psychological and social needs, and spiritual healers, both lay and clergy, for spiritual needs.

Organizations equipped to help you in helping alcoholics include Alcoholics Anonymous for the abuser, Al-Anon for the family, Al-Ateen for the children, and local referral centers for professional

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1986 World Ministers Field Conference on Archaeology and Evangelism

In July 1986 the Madaba Plains Excavation project will host a seven-day field conference on archaeology and evangelism in Amman, Jordan, in conjunction with our excavation season at Tell el-Umeiri.

The conference, which opens Sunday evening, July 20, and concludes the following Saturday evening, July 26, is uniquely designed for busy Adventist pastors, evangelists, and clergy of all faiths.

The key speaker for the conference is internationally known religious television personality George Vandeman of It Is Written fame.

Pastor Vandeman will conduct nightly lectures on the interrelationship of biblical history, archaeology and contemporary evangelism.

These timely presentations will be part of an interest-packed program that draws on the expertise of a number of evangelists, archaeologists and scholars. Dig patron H. R. H. Prince Raad Ibn Zied will give the keynote address on Sunday evening. Other Jordanian speakers will include: Dr. Fawzi Zayyadine (Amman and Its Environs) and Dr. Nabil Khairy (The History and Archaeology of Petra).

During the day delegates to the conference will join the excavation team working at Tell el-Umeiri and undertake a wide range of excavating and field laboratory experiences under the guidance of Lawrence T. Geraty, Dig Director.

An extensive study tour of archaeological highlights in Jordan and Israel is to immediately follow the conference.

The tour director is Abraham Terian, Professor of Intertestamental and Christian Literatures at Andrews University.

Dr. Terian will also conduct a lecture series at the conference on the geography of Bible lands.

The cost of the conference and tour (total 18 days—July 19 till August 8) is $2530 and includes: round-trip economy-class air fares from New York or Chicago, full board during the conference, half board during the tour of Israel with first-class hotels (double occupancy), all entrances, sightseeing, ground transportations, conference supplies and excavation fees.

Reservations should be accompanied by a $250 deposit; the balance is due April 1. Make checks payable to: Madaba Plains Project, Atlantic Union College.

Madaba Plains Project, Jordan

For a comprehensive brochure on the conference or for bookings, write to:
W. John Hackwell, Administrative Director, Madaba Plains Project, Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, MA 01561 or call us at (617) 365-4561
From the Editors

By whose authority?

As pastors our responsibility is to preach the word—but whose word? The tendency to substitute personal authority and interesting stories flies in the face of Jesus’ example on the way to Emmaus.

I appreciate the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. Directed originally to ministers in the early Christian church, they seem to have been preserved especially to encourage and counsel all who minister. These Epistles uphold the central place Scriptures should have in our own lives and in the services in which we lead our congregations. Second Timothy says, “All scripture is . . . profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (chap. 3:16, R.S.V.). And it charges us to “preach the word” (chap 4:2, R.S.V.; see also chap. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:13).

This only makes sense. After all, Scripture is God’s primary means of communicating with man. It is meant to convey His essential messages. And those messages are timeless and universal. They are as certainly intended for people today as for those to whom they were originally sent. When we preach Biblical sermons we deliver those messages to our congregations.

What determines whether or not a sermon is Biblical? It’s not simply the number of texts in the sermon. To be Biblical, a sermon must depend upon the Bible’s authority. And it must draw its main idea or message from the Bible.

A subtle temptation comes to many of us. We have a wealth of spiritual experience. And we know our church’s doctrines, which we believe to be Biblical. It’s easy for us to simply draw from one or the other in building our sermons, and then find appropriate texts to support our conclusions. But in doing this we may be “using” Scripture. We may be depending upon ourselves and our own knowledge rather than looking for the answers God has for His people in His Word.

Certainly we needn’t begin from scratch when we address a particular need. Our acquaintance with Scripture and with spiritual life means we have the advantage of a good starting point for our study. But study we must, even if just to confirm that our message is indeed Biblical.

Does the fact that our message must originate in Scripture rather than with ourselves preclude creativity in our sermons? No. While we must be careful to convey God’s messages and not our own, our sermons require our creativity in at least two ways. Guided by the Spirit, we must use our creativity to apply scriptural principles to the needs of our people. And we need our creativity to communicate God’s messages to His people in an effective way.

On the road to Emmaus Jesus Himself exemplified good Biblical preaching. The occasion for His “sermon” was a need His “congregation” had. How did He approach the situation? To what authority did He appeal? He could have given a personal testimony. That would have been very effective! But, as He did throughout His ministry, Jesus drew His sermon from the Scriptures. “And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27, R.S.V.)

Jesus—Himself the Word of God, the very One about whom the Scriptures were written—turned to the Scriptures to convey God’s message to His people! May we be as self-effacing and true to our calling.—D.C.J.

In search of an image

We often hear it said that the Christian minister today is in search of an image. For many centuries he had a unique and honored place in society, but in the last generation there has been a rapid erosion of his position, though the conditions for this critical deterioration have been building for a long time. With the secularization of society, many of the functions once performed by Christian ministers have been taken over by others—educators, social workers, psychoanalysts, counselors of various kinds. Even within the church the new stress on the responsibility of the laity has led some to question whether a full-time ministry or even an ordained ministry of any kind is necessary.

This radical questioning may lead to good results if it forces us to look beyond the sociological accidents of ministry to its theological essence. At any given time the form of the ministry is determined partly by the cultural factors operating in society and partly by the theological givens that lie at the root of the ministry. How many different kinds of bishops, for instance, there have been from the days of the pagan Roman Empire down to twentieth-century America! We believe that the apostolic commission has continued through the many changes, but often enough the theological meaning of ministry has been obscured by its cultural trappings. Eighteenth-century English bishops stayed in London for nine months of the year so that they might fulfill the duties to the House of Lords, chiefly by supporting the party that had appointed them to their sees. They are not easily recognizable as successors of the apostles! So it is no bad thing when the Christian minister is compelled from time to time to reconsider his fundamental raison d’être.

This means that we have to consider ministry in relation to the church, bearing in mind that the church, though it is a human institution and therefore susceptible to sociological analysis, is...
more than a merely human institution. It originated in the calling of God; it is a sign in the midst of the world of the kingdom of God and is therefore a mystery demanding a theological rather than a sociological approach.

In the context of this theological entity, the church, we must seek to understand the Christian ministry. As Hans Küng has remarked, it is possible to discern "both constants and variables" in the ministry. For the most part the constants are theological, though, of course, even in the theology of ministry a development of understanding can take place. The variables belong to the changing cultural settings. These variables are highly important if the ministry is to be effective. But they offer a wide diversity even in the many environments within a single city. Thus the question of effectively ministering in a given situation is a highly particular and individualized one.

But there is another reason for concentrating on these constants. As we noted earlier, the position of the ministry in society at large has been increasingly threatened. As this has happened some have attempted to make ministry look as much as possible like some of the secular professions that seem to be competing with it. Christian ministers today are tempted to imitate the roles of experts in many fields. And we should work with them in matters of common concern. But other professions will not provide a satisfying image of the ministry. The Christian minister has his own distinctive functions, and these must be fully determinative. Of course, these distinctive functions assume that God is a reality, that the church has a dimension that goes beyond the human and the creaturely, that Jesus Christ provides a salvation that no merely secular agency can.

Daniel Day Williams wrote: "To bring salvation to the human spirit is the goal of the Christian ministry." This sentence expresses the distinctive work of Christian ministry, the fundamental constant that remains through all variables. But if the basic beliefs upon which the idea of salvation depends have been eroded away, Christian ministry has no future. Better training, more up-to-date methods, and more efficient organization will accomplish nothing of importance if we have lost confidence in the fundamental task itself—that of bringing to men the salvation of God.—R.D.E.


The future of MINISTRY

Living things either progress or regress. Nothing is static! This is just as true of journals. Ministry has come a long way since its launching in 1928. In circulation it has grown from a few hundred at its inception to 17,000 sent to Seventh-day Adventist ministers and a quarter of a million on alternate months sent to non-Adventist clergy today. These figures do not include those Adventist ministerial journals in languages other than English that borrow some from our English Ministry.

In order to improve our journal, the Ministry staff felt the necessity of stepping aside for a while from the intrusions of the workaday world to contemplate where we have been and where we are going. Our retreat involved presentations, discussions, and lively small group experiences, all saturated with prayer.

One of our first tasks was to develop a statement of mission. In doing that, we became acutely aware of our widely diversified audience. Approximately half of our regular subscription list of 17,000 goes to Adventist ministers outside North America. Thus we must serve a wide variety of cultures. Our ecumenical outreach in the alternate monthly issues reaches religious leaders of all faiths. Meeting the needs of our varied readership presents an interesting challenge.

J. David Newman, our executive editor, sent questionnaires to a number of pastors in several Adventist conferences. Replies to these questionnaires indicated that articles speaking to the pastors' personal lives and their families were highly appreciated. Also a desire was expressed to have the pressing issues of the times, both inside and outside the church, treated in a balanced and open way.

After considering these suggestions and giving attention to the original objectives of Ministry, which were formulated nearly sixty years ago, we drew up the statement of mission that is printed on page 25 in this month's issue.

As you study this statement of mission please note that the purpose of our journal—first and foremost—is to exalt Jesus Christ; to awaken in our readers a greater love that will bind their hearts and lives to Him in service to others both at home and in the ministry. In exalting Christ we want to make more prominent the nearness of our Lord's second coming and to examine more critically the foundational truths of the gospel.

Another purpose of our journal is to build bridges of understanding and trust between peoples of differing faiths, theologies, and cultures. It is our desire to recognize our mutual humanness and work together on our problems. We believe that in so doing we will see that after all we are not so different!

After forging our statement of mission, the remainder of our time was spent in setting specific objectives. We assigned the following percentage allotments relative to the type of articles used: the minister's personal needs, 25 percent; his/her professional skills, 20 percent; theological and Biblical studies, 15 percent; the minister and his family, 15 percent; current issues, 15 percent; and the minister's spouse, 10 percent. In follow-up meetings we planned our schedule of subjects for 1986. Beginning with next January we believe you will find improvements in Ministry both in content and in layout and design.

We seek reader response to our statement of mission. Inform us as to what kinds of articles you would like to see in Ministry. We want to get to know you better and meet your felt needs, both in your personal lives and your ministry. If you are interested in writing for us, send for our Writer's Guidelines. We recently have doubled our article payment rates. Even though our increase won't make you rich, it could buy you a new suit of clothes!—J.R.S.
MINISTRY is an international professional journal published monthly by the Ministerial Association of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is directed primarily to the Adventist ministry, and secondarily, on a bimonthly basis, to clergy of other communions.

Its principal purpose is to assist pastors in proclaiming the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ within the context of the three angels' messages (Rev. 14:6-12). It will do this by:

1. Addressing their spiritual, mental, physical, and social needs;

2. Contributing to the growth and stability of their family and marriage relationships;

3. Giving help to their spouses as they relate to the ministry and the life of the church;

4. Presenting current research in the areas of Biblical and theological studies;

5. Providing resources that contribute to their effectiveness in evangelism, preaching, counseling, administration, and other areas that will help them to be agents of nurture and church growth;

6. Informing them of current issues in the church;

7. Providing dialogue between pastors, theologians, and administrators.

In providing these services, MINISTRY intends to serve as a prophetic voice calling the church back to the Biblical fundamentals that constitute Adventist truth, ideals, and values. It will encourage ministers continually to grow stronger in Christ that they may model faith for, and encourage its development in, the flocks that they shepherd.
Have you ever wondered how to make your children feel special without being accused of unequal treatment? Is it possible that “equal” treatment is often unfair?

When you look at the responsibilities that you as a mother face, do you ever feel a little weak-kneed and confused? Even though you have read volumes that contain beautiful and helpful philosophies about raising children, you may be inclined to think, This probably good for “normal” kids, but my kids are different. They are PK’s—Preacher’s Kids.

Although pastors’ children do have some special needs and problems, so do many other children. Our kids aren’t really so different. As a mother of two grown and healthy PK’s, let me share with you four practical policies for reducing tensions in the home.

1. Don’t try to treat all your children exactly equally—especially when it comes to material gifts, rewards, and possessions. Endeavoring to meet needs and showing love and fairness is what really counts.

Engraved in my memory is the time in my adolescence that my mother, for no special occasion, bought my married sister a sweater. I remember asking, “Why didn’t you buy me one too?” She looked at me patiently and then said frankly, “You didn’t need one.” That simple incident seemed to settle in my mind that all things are not rewarded equally, but parents (and God, I learned later) would supply my needs.

When parents try to keep a scorecard of exactly what was given to whom and how much was spent on each person, there is bound to be dissatisfaction. The more we try to be exactly equal and draw attention to it, the more likely we are to create rivalry between children. And parents who keep scorecards too often end up sitting in their rocking chairs counting the number of phone calls, letters, and visits that each grown child pays them, then using these scores to pit one child against the other. Such parents grow old, miserable and alone.

The sooner children and parents learn that having things equal is not necessarily fair, the better off they will be. If one of your toddlers fell into a mud puddle, would you have to give all the children a bath just to be treating them equally? Many times it’s not fair to be equal!

Of course, terrible inequities do exist in families where one child is favored above the others. But that is not what I’m referring to. I’m thinking rather of the simple little things that may seem like inequalities when they are really based only on differing needs.

A family with grown children was planning to spend a holiday together. The children were coming from different areas, all some distance from home. Three of the children had good jobs and could afford to fly, but the fourth one could afford only a bus ticket. Coming by bus would considerably cut the time spent at home. The father was concerned about his child’s extremely long bus ride but thought that he could not help with the air fare, for then he would “have” to help all the children, and he couldn’t afford that. Had no one been keeping score and if there had been a helping attitude in the family, it’s likely that everyone would have chipped in to help, and they would have had a happier celebration together.

2. Don’t forget that each child has special needs and special moments that need to be honored.

I recall the time a family with two children came to visit, and coincidentally it was the little girl’s tenth birthday. I was delighted for an excuse to celebrate, and when we took the family to browse in one of our favorite shopping areas I gave Karen some money to spend as a birthday present. It was obvious, however, that little brother was used to receiving a gift on his sister’s birthday. It wasn’t exactly a tantrum that he threw, but it was obvious that I was the villain, so to rescue our outing from a disaster I reluctantly gave him some money too.

At bedtime the same day it was demonstrated again that Karen wasn’t allowed any privacy or any time to be treated special. She reveled in the idea of sleeping on our daughter’s water bed. She was all cozy and grown-up and snuggled into bed with a book when little brother began crying. He was lonesome. Karen had to give up the specialness of her grown-up moment to go sleep with her little brother. No one seemed to recognize her needs or her specialness at the moment. Had she been shown how special she was, little brother would soon have learned that his day would come and his needs would be met too. As it was, one could sense the bitter disappointment in Karen and the victory in little brother. He seemed to be saying by his nonverbal, I won that one too.

Besides developing special moments, each child, from preschool on, needs to realize that he has a special place in the world. Build on the gifts that are obvious...
and continually explore with your children new ideas and new possibilities for their lives. Let each child know that he is special—and that you know he will succeed in whatever he does.

3. Honesty only, always.

By your example promote honesty—always. Probably one way deceit is practiced and thus taught is by Mother telling the children, “Don’t tell Daddy I bought this—he would get mad.” Then pretty soon, Mother or Dad is telling one child not to tell the other children about a gift purchased or a favor shown. We’re not talking here about fun secrets and family surprises. This is the old scorecard syndrome again. The problem is, eventually it’s hard to keep track of who told what to whom, and finally no one trusts anyone.

Several years ago Larry, the oldest son in a family, married and went away to college. Money was scarce, and in a letter Larry wrote home he mentioned that when the next payday came he was going to buy some new shoes. It was not mentioned as a request, just as a matter-of-fact statement. The loving mother, who was also pressed for money, wanted to respond to Larry’s needs, so she immediately went out, bought a pair of shoes, and sent them to her son. In a letter explaining that the package was coming, however, she made a request that caused much pain to Larry and his wife. She told them not to mention the shoes in a letter, for the rest of the family didn’t know she had bought them. She wrote, “Put an X on the bottom of the letter so I will know that you got them.”

Larry was unable to write and thank his mother for her love gift for fear of breaking confidence. His wife was puzzled and found it difficult to trust the family if sacrifices and gifts had to be concealed in a deceitful way.

The policy of being open and up front and of being kind and tactful when sensitive issues have to be addressed (instead of ignoring them) is an important way to keep harmony in the family.

4. Encourage your children to identify and talk about their feelings and the way they should respond to those feelings.

My six-foot-six athletic son is free to talk (to me anyway!) about how he is afraid of mice and is squeamish about tomato worms. He also hugs his dad and tells him that he loves him. Because my daughter can identify and express her sad and sorrowful feelings, she can cry with the mother of the stillborn infant. She can also talk positively about career plans—what her strengths and weaknesses are.

Several years ago when I was working as a secretary in a hospital laboratory, a man brought in his 4-year-old son for some blood tests. Daddy was probably about six feet tall, but he seemed even taller, for he was muscular and broad-shouldered. He was wearing a clean flannel shirt and fresh blue jeans. His boots were sturdy, and he wore a beard. He very well could have been a lumberjack.

The little son had obvious anxieties about the situation and asked his daddy, “Will it hurt?”

“Yes,” his father said gently, “it will hurt for a minute.”

The man put the child on his lap, and the technician cheerfully explained the procedure to the little fellow. Then as quick as a blink, it was all over with.

“Daddy,” the boy said tearfully, “I had an owie.”

Cherry B. Habenicht

“Mom! Watch me!” Hans shouts before he jumps into the water and glides quietly under its surface. Is this the same boy who used to huddle on the pool’s edge, afraid to get wet?

Lisa, who first swam the crawl with flailing arms and gasping breath, now smoothly covers a lap, then does another.

Their achievements surprise me, though I’ve been watching their progress since toddlerhood.

As much as I love to swim, they had to learn for themselves. I showed them that water play is fun and faithfully took them to swimming class. I did not force them into the pool, but neither did I let them shiver on the sidelines.

As they gained strength and coordination I minimized their errors and applauded their successes. As they grew older I trusted others to teach and guide. And I had to be willing to sit back—not involved but always alert—when they swam their first laps in the deep end of the pool or tried that first jump from the diving board.

Hasn’t this also been the pattern for their spiritual training? As enthusiastic Christians, Dick and I did not wait until our children would discover You on their own. We tried to make worship as pleasant as possible and regularly attended Sabbath school and church. We could not make them believe, but there have been times when we have coaxed them into participation or have had to insist on proper behavior.

Now they know the Bible stories. They sing hymns or pray as naturally as they walk or talk. They enter the worship experience; and their relationship with You, though girded by habit, is becoming personal.

Lord, may our children be vigorous in their pursuit of You, disciplined in their search for truth. As they internalize spiritual values may they grow strong. As religion becomes individual may they grow confident. I pray that they will be brave enough to take risks but not foolhardy enough to place themselves in danger. And when they must enter “deep water” give them the assurance that they will make it to the other side.

**Prayers from the parsonage**

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Cherry B. Habenicht
AH, STORYTIME!

From page 15

Most of the church members were only too glad to loan me their treasures to illustrate my children’s stories. A lamp for the light under a bushel, a quilt with the six days of Creation, crooks for shepherds, stars for Wise Men, cradles for Jesus, and canes and crutches to illustrate stories of miraculous healing.

In the seventies, the participatory motif infiltrated my ministry. I abandoned the pulpit in favor of a seat on the chancel steps for my ad-libbed story. This was the era of show-and-tell. Oh, the claptap I brought into the sanctuary! One summer in Kincardine, on Lake Huron, on consecutive weeks I brought in fishing rod, reel and tackle; a full set of golf clubs; a yo-yo; and a quiver packed with peacock feathers. While it wasn’t always easy to hook up the “show” of the world with the “tell” of the gospel, my approach gave the children something to look at and handle, and provided for the congregation the equivalent of comic relief in the drama of salvation.

Once into show-and-tell, you can really put an act together by adding motion to the tale and turning a dull story into a lively scene. On New Year’s I chose as my talk the theme “Be where you are, or you’re nowhere.” Clarence, my associate, played Adam, and since I was senior minister, I played God. A hefty fellow, Clarence crouched behind the lectern, and when I called, “Where are you, Adam?” he said, “Here I am,” then scampered behind the organ. I repeated the question “Where are you, Adam?” and Clarence replied, “Here I am,” then tiptoed past the choir and disappeared into the church office. Looking at the children, I ended cryptically with the line “Be where you are, or you’re nowhere.” The organist then sounded the chord for the last verse of “Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour,” and the kids moved off—somewhere.

For another form of children’s story I’m indebted to Socrates’ theory of knowledge. Called the theory of reminiscence, it’s based on the belief that every human soul carries within it the seeds of all knowledge. By asking the right questions, the teacher can elicit answers from the children’s eternal memory banks. The “dialectic” approach is a good substitute for a story, requires little preparation time, and if it falls flat, it’s not the teacher’s fault but the kids’. While it’s a safe method for the minister, fear of embarrassing remarks by their children keep the parents on pins and needles. When the dialectic ends, a corporate sigh of relief fills the church like a giant Amen.

Storytime can lead to problems—even disasters sometimes. I will never forget the time I brought pop bottles filled to different levels with water so as to make the sounds of the musical scale. Unfortunately the children got hold of some of the bottles before the story. When I asked them to listen to the “do, re, me,” my ruler banging on the bottles brought forth only a monotonous “do, do, do.” To make matters worse, a 4-year-old grabbed a bottle and started drinking the colored contents. A hush fell over the congregation. I sensed hostility in the air, a hostility dispelled only when I announced that the liquid was simply colored tap water and ended the experiment with a prayer asking God to make music out of our messes.

Ah, children’s stories! . . . Time with God’s precious jewels. Memories of the lost child behind the massive pulpit, the Christmas tree pulled down on top of us by an exploring lad, two or three legs tangled up in microphone cords, coins rolling under pews, hankies waving, lips slipping, and family secrets being revealed.

Once I asked the children to bring me something from nature. The next week a boy brought me a sixteen-inch puffball, white as snow. I used it for the story of the mustard seed. One tiny spore makes a huge puffball. It’s the story of the leaven once again. For me, children in church will always be wonder-workers—small as a spore or seed but helping all of us to grow into the fullness of Christ. And the children’s story can be an important part of relationship building and ministry with them.

More than silver

From page 14

Critics of this viewpoint note that other persons besides Christians try to act with integrity in their work. And they add that since neither business nor politics can be conducted with an idealistic moral perfection, the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith with the promise of forgiveness for the penitent sinner had better be at the center of one’s concept of Christian vocation. According to their view, the proper criterion for adequacy in Christian vocation is found, not in ideals of service, but in performing adequately the duties and demands of one’s profession, even though it may involve deep-seated moral ambiguities, and trusting in the accepting love of God made known in Christ. Edward LeRoy Long, Jr., who holds this position, also rejects “job-related piety” because while it appears outwardly to relate religion and daily life, it actually tends to deepen the divisions between the sacred and the secular.1

What God requires

I believe this challenge to be partially true. God requires more of a Christian than merely church attendance and acts of piety. These become bogus rather than real Christianity if they are not projected beyond themselves and integrated with the totality of life. No Christian lives without sin either in his personal life or in his vocation; we all stand in need of penitence as well as prayer. Every Christian ought to do his work as well as he can do it. So far, the challenge strikes at vulnerable spots.

Nevertheless, this view of Christian vocation comes dangerously close to making the demands of the job, rather than those of the gospel, paramount. Granting the centrality of justification by faith, forgiveness is still only one side of the gospel message.

Few would question that the clergy’s ministry must include both corporate worship and personal devotions on the one hand and moral integrity and service to humanity on the other. Are these two elements not equally necessary in the church members’ work? Are they not inherent aspects of the gospel message? Remove them, and basic foundations, not only of Christian stewardship but also of the total Christian life, are shaken.

The ultimate goal of the church and of its ministry, says the Niebuhr-Williams-Gustafson report, is the increase among men of the love of God and
neighbor. If our congregations are, in fact, the ministry in their manifold vocations, then they are as truly responsible to this goal as is the clerical ministry. And if this is true, neither personal piety nor moral idealism can be set aside as inconsequential elements in Christian vocation.

Application to daily work

What, then, does Christian stewardship in daily work mean within the circumstances of our callings? Stated broadly, it means to conduct ourselves as to manifest and seek to promote the love of God and neighbor. Conceived more explicitly, it has numerous facets, none of which exhaust the meaning in the term but certain of which we need carefully to take into account. Among these are (1) personal awareness of and serious concern for the way of life set forth by Jesus as the will of God, with the recognition that we need to try to apply this directive to the changed conditions of our day; (2) the endeavor through both corporate worship and personal prayer to seek the leading of the Holy Spirit and strength for the daily task; (3) the choice of a vocation, insofar as the choice is open, in which we will have opportunities either for the direct or the more distant and long-range service of humanity; (4) the adaptation of talent and training to opportunity, so that we will be able to do our work well within our chosen fields; (5) the refusal, even at personal cost, to work at an occupation we conscientiously believe to be destructive of human good; (6) the performance of our duties with integrity, fidelity, and as much skill as possible in the job we do, even though opportunities for service may seem remote; (7) our conducting of ourselves on the job, as at church and everywhere else, with decency and dignity, with friendly relations toward associates, and according to Christian standards.

This is not a blueprint for action. Even if we accept these principles as valid, every individual must apply them within his own varied circumstances. In the attempt we shall make mistakes. Yet to the degree that we make earnest, dedicated efforts along some such lines as these, our love of God and neighbor will increase, and stewardship within our daily work will become an actuality.

Christian stewardship, then, does relate to the spending and saving, as well as the acquiring and giving, of money. What a nest of problems this opens up in our luxury-loving, status-seeking, installment-buying society! But, as we have previously stated, stewardship involves more than money. Stewardship speaks of our role as creatures created in God’s image. It is all of life regarded as a happy and holy trust, for which at last we must give account. Perhaps Martin Luther summed it all up when he said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord who redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature . . . in order that I might be His son, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness.”


TEMTATIONS

From page 19

lectionary, John 3:16. At that time many Christians were among those Germans persecuting Jews. Barth made the point in his sermon that Jesus was a Jew, that He had died for all the world, and that Jews were of the world. He said that anyone who loves Christ would not participate in the contemptuous yet widespread ill-treatment of the Jews. Many in the congregation walked out in disgust before he finished his sermon. One wrote a scathing letter denouncing his sermon. Barth’s reply was a single sentence: “It was in the text.”

God’s Word is more than what we claim. It makes its claim upon us. God’s grace is ruling grace. The question is not simply Do we take the Bible literally? It is Have we allowed the Bible literally to take hold of us?

Barth’s congregation made him choose between pleasing them or God. It was a terrible choice. But it is the crisis many of us face again and again. And our virtues are our worst temptations in that crisis. Our love for the people tempts us, as does our compassion, our desire to please, our ambitions—especially our ambitions. These tempt us to muffle or omit imperatives from our preaching and leadership.

Albert Speer was a Christian and a professor at the Berlin Institute of Architecture. But more than that, he was ambitious to build great monuments. He wrote that he was wild to accomplish things. He said that for the commission to do a great building, he would have sold his soul. He did, to Hitler.

It is easy to sell your soul when you are ambitious. And every pastor who is any good is ambitious. Paul said he was ambitious to please God (2 Cor. 5:9, N.A.S.B.). Noble ambition, but how hard sometimes. Our ambitions tempt us to do so many things, or just as harmfully, to omit them. Especially imperatives. They can make people unhappy and even drive them away.

Worse yet, we can conspire to disguise our disregard of God’s commands with our virtues. That was Milton’s insight in Paradise Lost as he described Eve’s decision to share the forbidden fruit with Adam. Milton was not really retelling the Biblical story; he was telling us something about human nature. His point was that because we cannot live with guilt, we tend to justify our evil by calling it good. In his story Eve remembers that God said that those who eat of the fruit will die. She projects that Adam will surely wed another Eve and enjoy life when she is gone. Therefore she decides to share the fruit with him, “so dear I love him.” Milton’s message: that was not the sharing of love but of murderous jealousy and envy!

Ironically, then, often the place to look for guilt is in our virtues. They are the perfect hiding place for disobedience. So pastors who never breathe an imperative are called gracious and positive. And preachers who rarely if ever call people to the tougher agendas of God—like witnessing and working for justice—are said to be loving and relational. And the pulpit that is quiet about racism and materialism and narcissism is said to be encouraging, and caring, and helpful. Our worst temptations may be our virtues.

If we will be pastors whose major ambition is to love and please God, then we must have imperatives. Let there be courageous preaching in pulpits all over the world. Let us be a breed that resists those who “accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings” (2 Tim. 4:3, R.S.V.). We have no liberty to pander to their preferences of topics or texts. Bold leadership and courageous preaching is what will turn our world upside down, just as it did in the days of the apostles.
CHRISTIAN SABBATH

From page 13


7 Sanhedrin 97b. For other examples see note 1.

8 Paul K. Jewett perspicaciously remarks: “We have, in Jesus’ healings on the Sabbath, not only acts of love, compassion and mercy, but true ‘sabbatical acts,’ acts which show that the Messianic Sabbath, the fulfillment of the Sabbath rest of the Old Testament, has broken into our world. Therefore the Sabbath, of all days, is the most appropriate for healing.” The Lord’s Day (1971), p. 42.

9 Friedlander, loc. cit.


12 Carson, op. cit., p. 75.


15 Plutarch, De Superstitione 3 (Moralia 166A); Justin Martyr, Dialogue With Trypho 23. 3; Euphranius, Adversus Haereses 30. 2. 2; Apostolic Constitutions 2. 36. 7. A.T. Lincoln admits that “in each of these places the term denotes the observance or celebration of the Sabbath. This usage corresponds to the Septuagint usage of the cognate verb sabbatizō (cf. Ex. 16:30; Lev. 23:32; 26:34ff.; 2 Chron. 36:21), which also has reference to Sabbath observance. Thus the writer to the Hebrews is saying that since the time of Joshua an observance of Sabbath rest has been outstanding.”—“Sabbath Rest, and Eschatology in the New Testament,” in From Sabbath to the Lord’s Day (1982), p. 213.


18 Gerhard Barth, Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew (1963), p. 81; cf. also pp. 79, 83, 163, 244.


20 My discussion of the malediction of the Christians is found in From Sabbath to Sunday, pp. 157-159.

21 Willy Rordorf, op. cit., p. 68. My response to Rordorf’s arguments is found in From Sabbath to Sunday, pp. 31-34.


* Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations in this article are from the Revised Standard Version.

YOUTH BAPTISMAL CELEBRATION GUIDE

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Thank You, Lord

16 Ten Rules and the Church

27 Prophecy

30 MINISTRY/JULY/1985
Evangelistic seminar kit

A helpful kit providing information on how to hold a full-message evangelistic series in the seminar format is now available. The kit includes the thirteen-page publication “Evangelism Seminars,” samples, and other supporting materials. It lists sources for materials to be used in your seminar, and gives program outlines and various other details necessary for conducting a successful evangelistic seminar. In addition, you may obtain three cassette tapes describing the seminars in detail. Prices are $2 per kit, and an additional $6 if you want the tapes. Write (enclose payment): New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Attn: Nikolaus Satelmajer, Seventh-day Adventists, York Conference of 13215. Money for missionaries

The Direct Mission Aid Foundation of Minnesota wants individuals, churches, and mission societies to nominate missionaries to receive special monetary grants. The organization makes grants of $1,000 to selected Christian missionaries to Third World countries. Qualifications for candidates include: at least six years’ service in the field; evidence of a significant contribution, working directly with people in the field; minimal financial support; and deep commitment to the gospel and social needs of people.

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Also available: Narrated KJV New Testament US$25.00; Narrated KJV Psalms and Proverbs US$14.95. Add $3 postage and handling per order. Order from MINISTRY services, Room 217, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866.
The Myth of the Greener Grass

This book needed to be written. We live in a society so saturated with romanticized sex that even conservative Christians too easily become confused. This book seeks to demythologize extramarital sex and the author succeeds eminently.

In a very practical way, with illuminating illustrations taken from his years of counseling, the author deals with such subjects as why partners cheat, marriage myths and legends, the ever-present temptation, what to do after an affair has happened, how to think logically and constructively when faced with an affair, how to untangle the triangle, an anatomy of an affair, affair-proofing a marriage, and a marriage test for wives and husbands.

This is a must for every married couple and an imperative for every pastor. No one is immune, neither pulpit nor pew, from the myth of the greener grass.

A House Divided

This book is a deeply intimate account of an incestuous family. The author stirs the reader’s emotions from the opening paragraph to the closing invitation: “Some who read these pages will have a desire to correspond with me. Please, feel free to do so.”

The book was not written without a struggle. To make the “innermost secrets of our family a matter of public scrutiny” was a difficult decision for the author, but all who read it will be benefited. Here the perpetrator of incest can read with shame the “overwhelming sense of violation that invades every portion of the incest victim’s being.” Here the victim can find hope for healing and “freedom from the ghosts that would haunt” sleep. Here the pastor will learn to recognize, and respond to, the urgent cry for help. This book will grip your imagination, stir your emotions, and inform your mind about a subject that has suddenly exploded on the national consciousness.

One word of warning. Do not try to share the reading of this book with your spouse—you will quarrel for possession until the reading is done.

Recently Published
Walking in Wisdom: A Woman’s Workshop on Ecclesiastes
Barbara Bush, Zondervan, 1982, 127 pages, $2.95, paper.

Written by a pastor’s wife, this brings Ecclesiastes up to date by means of interesting study lessons accompanied by discussion questions.

The Messies Manual
Sandra Felton, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1983, 155 pages, $4.95, paper.

Another book written by a pastor’s wife, it tells how one wife overcame twenty-three years of sloppy housekeeping and as a result founded Messies Anonymous.

Dare to Discipline Yourself

A Feast of Families

An interesting mix of descriptive narratives about families—both Biblical and modern, including the author’s own family.

What Jesus Said About . . .
Morris L. Venden, Pacific Press, 1984, 137 pages, $4.50. The outgrowth of a study group’s investigation of the Gospels in comparison with Ellen White’s comments. Chapters include what Jesus said about justification, Himself, sanctification, perfection, the investigative judgment, devil possession, misman-

agement of church funds, and the atonement.

Should I Keep My Baby?
Martha Zimmer- man, Bethany House, 1983, 112 pages, $3.95. Caringly written to help a teenager pregnant out of wedlock to make important decisions. Includes a list and map of crisis pregnancy centers.

Celebrate the Feasts.
Martha Zimmer- man, Bethany Fellowship, 1981, 186 pages, $4.95. A practical guide to the Old Testament feasts, how to celebrate them meaningfully in the church or home, and the meaning of the symbols. Includes instructions for making items needed for celebration.

Archaeological Commentary on the Bible.
Gonzalo Baez-Camargo, Doubleday, 1984, 288 pages, $17.95. Organized as a commentary, but with emphasis on important archeological discoveries that relate to each text covered. Invaluable tool for scholars and preachers alike because of its ease of use.

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