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Advice to a young pastor

Your letter (June 1986, p. 29) requests help from leaders. But here comes a suggestion from the very “grass” that confronts you.

The fact that you seek help suggests that success lies ahead (Matt. 7:7). No two of us are alike, fortunately. It takes many kinds of preachers to win many kinds of people. Therefore, don’t expect to find a simple panacea. You may try making friends personally among your members. It is dangerous to open your heart because you stand a chance of getting hurt. But trust begets trust.

Have you explored the possibility of obtaining the help you seek from the echelons below you on the ecclesiastic ladder? I wonder what would happen if you revealed your sense of need for help and skill to responsible members of your churches.

Being a servant (slave in the Greek) in and for your congregation will endear you to their hearts. With such an approach your leadership ability will be tested and developed. Reveal your concern about the problems that your sheep are facing. When they realize that you need help in dealing with their problems, you may expect to receive advice freely.

This will present you with opportunity to test and develop skill in leadership as you struggle to help them put their suggestions into operation. It will not be easy. It will take work and patience.

As you accomplish this, the spark of life that you thought was almost dead should begin to glow again in your churches. Next you may be confronted by an unexpected problem: Your conference administration may suddenly acclaim your achievement. They may ask you to abandon your successful work and join them at headquarters. You might be assigned the task of pushing other pastors into pushing their parishioners into action.

As a passing thought, I might mention that in your present spot you may be tempted to indulge in self-pity as you dream about the glory of being head pastor of a large church with several assistants and stained glass windows and a pipe organ. Don’t forget that the pastor in that position tends to be isolated from essential heart-to-heart contact with his people.

The real advantage of small churches is not widely appreciated.—A. Grass Root (name withheld).

Likes candor

I seldom write to editors. Usually I think about it and then never do it. However, this time I must write. MINISTRY has always been one of my favorite magazines, and I try to read it from cover to cover. But recently I have been very pleased with the candor and forthrightness of some of the articles—from the sympathetic review of Merikay’s book to the articles by Dr. Beaver and Larry Yeagley (who said in print some things that many of us have felt for years) and on to your own hard-hitting defense of parity. Praise the Lord for a new day of openness and people who will speak up.

For too long, pastors have been patted on the back with words and left at the bottom of the totem pole in actions. Thank you for your defense of the pastorate in word and deed, and for your attempt to meet the real needs of the ministry.—Gary E. Russell, Pastor, Traverse City, Michigan.

I have been a faithful reader of MINISTRY for some 35 years and I never fail to find it worthwhile. Even though I am an Adventist I do not always agree with what appears in the journal, and sometimes I don’t even agree that the topic addressed by some writer is appropriate to the magazine; nevertheless I am pleased overall and I am glad you are sending it to my colleagues in other faiths. More than one of them has spoken to me appreciatively of it and of the generosity of the denomination in sending it to them gratis.—John Dunesme, Pastor, Palm Springs, California.

One other item that deserves mentioning is the obvious injustice in how we distribute our “sustentation.” Do we think that those filling “humble” positions will have fewer needs than those in “higher” positions when they retire? This is not even fair to those in administrative positions who would like to return to a field position before retirement. I’d like to recommend parity in benefits as well.—LaVerne Schlehuber, Senior Pastor, College Heights SDA Church, Alberta, Canada.

When I was a conference president and attended the Annual Council, I suggested that we freeze the wage scale until the 100 percent level caught up with everybody; then, in a few years everybody would be on the 100 percent level. This took place at the time that Elder Robert Pierson suggested that we show our appreciation for pastors by placing them higher than the 100 percent level. My thinking was that everybody should receive the same wage scale. No one is more important than anyone else. I believe that is taught in 1 Corinthians 12.

Unfortunately everyone sitting on that finance committee making recommendations for policies was getting more than the 100 percent level, and they were reticent to see themselves frozen at their level, and ultimately to end up being the same as everyone else.

As long as a church pays administrators and some others more than they pay pastors, the pastors will be humanly tempted to want to go into other lines of church work. This is a great tragedy. Thank you for addressing the problem.—John V. Stevens, Sr., Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department, Pacific Union Conference of SDA, Westlake Village, California.

Truth cover-up?

After reading your recent article “Ellen G. White and Vegetarianism” (April 1986), I began to wonder if your dissertation for your doctoral degree was on the art of how to cover up truth.

You cannot say that you do not have access to the facts, because the White (Continued on page 23)
A certain spiritual leader put his feelings into words when speaking to a group of seminary students. “When I was young,” he said, “my objective in life was to change the world! After I was in the ministry for a few years, my goal was to change my church and community.” Then he exclaimed, “But now that I am much older, I have limited my objective to changing myself!” This anecdote sums up the thrust of Don Williams’ personal testimony, “Confession of a Professional Christian.” Williams describes a condition, unfortunately, that most of us spiritual leaders experience.

Active layman Steve Cinzio shares his inmost feelings as to what he expects of his pastor. Some of his expectations may surprise you. He clinches his thesis by saying, “I am aware that I expect much from my pastor. But I want him to know that he can expect much from me in return.” It wouldn’t be difficult to pastor a church loaded with members like Steve!

Why not reinforce God’s Word in the hearts of your parishioners by preaching on the same or similar subjects they studied during Sabbath school time? It is for this reason we have listed the 1987 weekly Sabbath school lesson titles and scriptures used.

Objectivity is one of our goals! A goal that, by the way, none but God can ever achieve. But next to Him, we hope we are the best in objectivity! At least we are trying! So you will find another article dealing with ordination of women, written by our amiable scholar friend Samuele Bacchiocchi. I won’t tell you which side he is on. So read for yourself and see. Why not respond? This is an issue that isn’t going away. We must face it squarely. MINISTRY needs your prayers and your counsel.

We appreciate the increase of fan mail and as always we get blessed or blamed. We probably deserve both. If we didn’t get blamed, we would be angels—good ones, that is!

Speaking of angels, be sure to read Nancy Beck Irland’s article, “The Face on the Canvas.” Her story pulled a tear or two out of my eyes. It made me wish I had been a better father!
In view of our church's continuing study of women's ordination, MINISTRY will occasionally publish articles on both sides of the question. Our publication of these articles does not constitute an endorsement of the positions they take nor of the arguments they present. We publish them to acquaint our readers with the various viewpoints. We encourage our readers to read these articles critically and study the topic for themselves.

Few subjects can stir up emotions as deeply as a discussion of whether or not women should be ordained. Any man writing against the view risks being designated a male chauvinist, out of step with the enlightened age in which we live.

The thoughts expressed in this article represent my initial conclusions both on the ministry of women in general and on their ordination as pastors in particular. I intend to pursue the study of the ministry of women more deeply and to publish my final conclusions in book form.

Much of the literature I have read, both Adventist and non-Adventist, fails to recognize the important distinction between women's ministry in the church and their ordination as pastors. The underlying assumption seems to be that a woman can only minister within the church if she has been ordained.

This mistaken, unbiblical assumption must be regarded as the bitter fruit of the Western and medieval clericalization of the church, which has limited ministry within the church almost exclusively to ordained priests. Thus, women today are being wrongly led to seek priestly ordination because no other form of meaningful ministry seems accessible to them.

This reprehensible situation must be corrected, not by pushing for the ordination of women, but rather by recovering the biblical vision of the church as a unity (body of Christ) consisting of a plurality of ministries (1 Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:11-13). While, as will be shown below, the Old Testament precludes the ordination of women to serve as priests and the New Testament precludes their serving as pastors, Scripture provides ample support for their participation in the prophetic, liturgical, and social ministries of the church.

Although in Old Testament times the priesthood was reserved exclusively to men of the tribe of Levi, the Scriptures record several examples of women who ministered to the spiritual and social needs of ancient Israel. After the miraculous crossing of the sea, Miriam the prophetess led the women in a song of celebration (Ex. 15:20, 21). In the critical days of the settlement in Canaan, Deborah acted as prophetess, choir leader, and judge to all the tribes (Judges 4:4, 5; 5:1-31). And near the end of the Old Testament era, Huldah, another prophetess, spoke for God to both religious and civil authorities (2 Kings 22:14-20; 2 Chron. 34:22-28). The age of Old Testament prophecy closes with the announcement by Joel that in the days of the Messiah "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" (Joel 2:28-32; cf. Acts 2:17-21). These examples discredit the claim that the culture of Old Testament times made women radically inferior to men and excluded them from ministering to the spiritual and social needs of God's people.

God has gifted women for many forms of ministry in the church. But has He called them to be pastors? Does Scripture allow us the latitude to expand their role within the church by ordaining them?

Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph.D., teaches in the Religion Department of Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.
It is true that Paul wrote some oft-quoted strictures about the role of women to correct certain abuses. But there is no question that women fulfilled a vital role in the Christian ministry of New Testament times. Women such as Mary and Martha, Simon’s mother-in-law, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, the mother of Zebedee’s children, and Mary the wife of Cleopas ministered to Jesus’ needs (Matt. 8:14, 15; 27:55, 56; Luke 8:2, 3; 10:40; John 12:2; 19:25). Women were also the first to receive and to break the news of Christ’s resurrection (Matt. 28:1, 7).

After Christ’s ascension, dedicated women contributed significantly to the rapid spread of Christianity. Mary, John Mark’s mother, opened her home for worship gatherings—presumably the first home church of Christendom (Acts 12:12). Tabitha, or Dorcas, distinguished herself by initiating charitable social work (Acts 9:36). Lydia, a successful business woman, sustained Paul’s ministry financially and through her hospitality (Acts 16:14, 15, 40). Paul commends Phoebe as a “deaconess of the church at Cenchreae” who “has been a helper of many” (Rom. 16:1, 2). Paul praises Priscilla, as well as her husband Aquila, as “fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life” (verses 3, 4). Similarly Paul calls Tryphena and Tryphosa “workers in the Lord” (verse 12).

To the above examples can be added the four daughters of Philip who prophesied (Acts 21:8, 9). And Paul’s mention that “any woman who prays or prophesies” in church gatherings must show respect by veiling her head (1 Cor. 11:5, 6) is especially significant. Obviously, this implies that women prayed and offered prophetic guidance to the believers during public worship services (cf. 1 Tim. 3:11; 5:3-10).

Note should be taken of the fact that Paul, in listing the various functions within the church, mentions “first apostles, second prophets, third teachers” (1 Cor. 12:28) or “pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:11). This order suggests that he did not regard the prophetic ministry, which women also exercised, as in any way inferior to that of the pastor-teacher.

The foregoing considerations suffice to show that in Bible times, and especially in the early church, women did exercise a very important spiritual ministry, although they were never ordained as priests, apostles, bishops, or elders.

Women’s special gifts

As in Bible times, so today women can greatly enrich the spiritual life of the church. God gives to women many invaluable spiritual gifts and ministries that are essential to the healthy growth of the church. Well-trained and dedicated women often can minister more effectively than pastors to many of the spiritual, social, and physical needs of the congregation. Besides the traditional leadership roles women have played in the various departments of the church (choir, Sabbath school, personal ministries, youth, deaconess, church school board) there is an urgent need to open up new forms of ministry to professionally trained women who are willing to serve as health educators, Bible instructors, and counselors. The growing number of broken homes, single parents, drug-addicted young people, alienated children, and elderly members require the special ministry of trained and dedicated women.

The church that restricts the role of women to cleaning and cooking greatly impoverishes its own spiritual life by depriving itself of the warmth and love that only women can give. “In many respects,” writes Ellen White, “a woman can impart knowledge to her sisters that a man cannot. The cause would suffer great loss without this kind of labor.”

But our recognition of the biblical validity of the women’s ministry must not obscure an equally important truth, namely, that women were precluded from serving as priests in the Old Testament and as pastors, elders, or bishops in the New. In my view, the reasons were not sociocultural but theological, and consequently they are still valid today. I find in Scripture seven major reasons for the exclusion of women from the pastoral ministry.

Seven points to ponder

The order of Adam and Eve’s creation constitutes the first reason. The Genesis account of their creation indicates that though the man and woman were created equal as image bearers of God (Gen. 1:27), yet they were created different in terms of sex and functions. Moreover, man and woman were not created at the same time. God made Adam first (Gen. 2:7) and Eve second (verses 21, 22). He derived woman from the man and declared her to be a help meet for him (verse 18).

The two-stage creation account is in no way intended to support a chauvinistic view of male superiority. Rather, its purpose is to highlight the basic difference between male and female, a difference that is built into the very order of creation. This difference is not merely sexual. It extends to the differing, though complimentary, roles that men and women are called to play both in the family and in the church. Man cannot become a mother and woman cannot become a father.

The order of creation, man first and woman second, also means that man is called upon to fulfill a leadership role in the church as well as in the home.

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gests that slavery was a divine institution to be perpetuated. On the contrary, he is quite willing for slaves to find freedom (Philemon and 1 Cor. 7:21). It is hard to believe, however, that Paul would fabricate a theological argument to legitimize the subordination of women if he believed that to be unjust.

On the question of the role relationship between men and women, however, Paul has no doubts. As Christ appealed to Creation to establish the indissolubility of the marital relationship (Matt. 19:3-8), so Paul defended the subordination of women to the leadership of men both in marriage and in the church as part of the very order of creation (1 Tim. 2:11-13). To discredit the validity of Paul's theological reasoning in this instance means to open to question the validity of any of his other teachings, or those of any other Bible writer.

**Man's headship role**

A second reason for objecting to the ordination of women is closely related to the order of creation, and dependent upon it, namely, the headship or leadership role that man is called to play both in marriage and in the church. In Scripture, the principle of male headship in the family is applied also to the larger family of the household of faith (1 Cor. 11:3, 8; Eph. 5:22-33; Col. 3:18, 19; Titus 2:4-15; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:13).

In fact, Scripture requires any man aspiring to the office of bishop to exercise effective leadership in his own home, over his wife and children (1 Tim. 3:4, 5). In Scripture, the male headship role in marriage and in the church stand or fall together.

In 1 Corinthians 11 Paul introduces his statement that women should veil their heads in the church by saying: "The head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God" (verse 3; cf. Eph. 5:23). Here he correlates the headship between man and woman to the headship between God and Christ. The latter refutes the charge that submission means inferiority. The members of the Trinity are equals. Christ's submission to the authority and headship of His Father was the secret of His wisdom, power, and success.

As there is a chain of authority in the Trinity, so there must be one in the family and the church. When the biblical concept of headship among equals (fellow heirs, 1 Peter 3:7) is understood and practiced, women need not feel restricted or unfilled. Rather, a mature man's leadership can provide a woman the protection and support she needs to exercise the ministries that God has given her.

A third reason for viewing the ordination of women as unbiblical is the fact that the Bible establishes an all-male priesthood or pastoral ministry both inside and outside the family.

During the patriarchal period the head of each family functioned as the priest of his own household. Later the priesthood was entrusted to Aaron and his male descendants.

Christ foresaw the termination of the Jewish priestly system (Matt. 22:2), yet He made no provision for the inclusion of women among the apostles. Rather, He appointed 12 men "designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach" (Mark 3:14, NIV).

Christ's exclusive appointment of men as apostles can hardly be explained as being solely out of respect for Jewish social tradition. The Gospels present Christ as a nonconformist who openly broke many social customs, especially by including several women among His immediate entourage. Thus His failure to call any women either to the formal apostleship or to some informal apostolic ministry must be regarded not merely as a question of chance, but rather one of principle. In spite of the many irrelevant objections raised against this argument, the fact that Christ did not choose women as apostles must remain decisive for us today.

The testimony of the early church is illuminating in this regard. Though various heretical movements such as the Marciosians, the Montanists, and the Colyriadians had women priests and bishops, the mainstream of Christianity always rejected such a practice. The reason Epiphanius gave (about A.D. 375) is that "since the beginning of time a woman has never served God as a priest." This historical fact deserves attention, especially since there were priestesses in many pagan cults, some of whom, like the Roman Vestals, were virgins who spent 10 years training for their priestly ministry.

Apparently in early Christianity some pressure was exerted to ordain women as priests because several documents explicitly forbid such a practice. Seventh-day Adventists do not consider historical traditions normative, yet we cannot totally ignore the consistent witness of the Christian church through the past 2,000 years.

**Consistent male imagery**

A fourth reason for viewing the ordination of women as unbiblical and unwise is that Scripture consistently uses masculine terminology when speaking of God. Obviously, God transcends human sexual distinctions. Genesis 1:27 clearly implies that God's image is reflected in His creation of human beings as both male and female. Yet God has chosen to reveal Himself both in the Scripture and through Jesus in unmistakably male terms and imageries.

God has revealed Himself as father, not as mother. He sent His Son, not His daughter. Jesus spoke of the fatherhood, not of the motherhood, of God. He appointed 12 men, not 12 women, to act as His representatives. We pray "Our Father who art in heaven," not "Our Mother." Christ is the new Adam, not the new Eve. He is the bridegroom, not the bride, of the church.

To these we can add other biblical imageries that depict Christ as authoritative (Luke 20:1-8), head (Eph. 5:23), king (Luke 19:38), slain lamb (Rev. 5:12), judge (Rev. 19:11), and servant of the church (Luke 22:27). All these imageries are unmistakably masculine.

Why has God, who transcends human sexual differences, chosen maleness to represent Himself? Presumably because the male role within the family and the church best represents the role that God Himself sustains toward us. Ephesians 3:14, 15 fittingly illustrates this. Paul writes: "I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family [patria] in heaven and on earth is named." The text indicates that males in a human household are called fathers because they reflect the image of the heavenly Father. The same symbolism applies to the "father's role" a pastor fills in the household of faith.

Feminist theologians have long recognized the enormous significance of the biblical linkage between the male imageries of God and the male priesthood (the latter being a reflection of the former). To them this linkage rightly constitutes a formidable stumbling block to the ordination of women. Consequently, they are actively attempting to erode the male image of God and of Christ in order theologically to clear the
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path for a female priesthood. To accomplish the latter, they not only deny the bodily resurrection of Christ, but are also proposing either nonpersonal terms for God, such as fire, light, and almighty, or feminine terms such as mother, daughter, and she.10

Any change of the male imagery of the Trinity to open up ordination of women must be viewed not merely as speculations about the Trinity but as heresy. This is so for two reasons: First, because it destroys the imagery through which God has chosen to reveal Himself to us. Second, because it undermines the spiritual relationship such imagery is designed to provide us with. To worship God as mother and Christ as daughter means to worship divine beings who are totally different from those of the biblical revelation.

The pastor represents Christ

The symbolic role that the pastor plays as representative of Christ comprises the fifth objection to the ordination of women. In discussing the male terms for God, we have already established the correlation between Christ and the pastor. Such a correlation, however, extends beyond male terminology and imagery to include service.

The typological correspondence between the ministry of the priests in the earthly sanctuary and that of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary is explained at great length in Hebrews 8-10. By offering His own blood once, forever, and for all, Christ fulfilled and terminated the sacrificial ministry of Old Testament priests that typified His redemptive ministry (Heb. 9:11-14; 10:11-14). Yet Christ, the heavenly high priest, continues to perform intercession and reconciliation in heaven (Heb. 7:25). The pastor, somewhat like the priests in Old Testament times, acts as Christ's representative or ambassador in inviting people to accept salvation.

Paul clearly understood this correlation: "He [God] has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:19, 20, NIV). Paul had no question but that he was Christ's ambassador to believers and unbelievers. To the Galatians he wrote: "You welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself" (Gal. 4:14, NIV).

While every believer is Christ's ambassador and belongs to the "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9; Ex. 19:6; Deut. 26:19), in a special sense the pastor fulfills the role of Christ's representative. He is the shepherd commissioned to "tend the flock of God" until "the chief Shepherd is manifested" (1 Peter 5:2, 4). As a human father reflects to his children the image of the heavenly Father, so a pastor represents to his congregation the heavenly Father, Shepherd, and Priest.

A woman cannot fulfill this unique symbolic function because her scriptural role is not that of a shepherd, priest, or father. To change the nature of the symbol by creating women pastors means to dispense with the biblical function of the pastoral ministry altogether.

God's revealed will

A sixth reason I object to women's ordination is that the Scripture, the church's guide, provides no general principles, no specific precepts, and no examples that can support such a practice.

All the biblical examples of ordination involve males. Scripture's specific instructions unmistakably require that the bishop, priest, or elder be not merely a person but a male (anēr—1 Tim. 3:2; cf. Titus 1:6; Ex. 29:8, 9). And as noted above, the Bible's general principles preclude the ordination of women to the pastoral ministry. The absence of biblical warrant for women's ordination should warn the church from venturing in this uncharted terrain.

Finally, women should not be ordained because the pastoral ministry is not a profession that any person who trains is thereby entitled to enter. Rather, it is a divine calling that no one can claim by right. It involves a solemn appointment by the church of those who have given proof of their divine calling (Titus 1:5-9).

Those in favor of women's ordination argue that women are just as competent and capable as men in the ministry. Few will dispute this. But the issue is not one of abilities or training, but one of God's will as revealed in the Scriptures. Sometimes a man can be a better mother than a woman, yet this does not change the fact that God has called men to be fathers and women to be mothers.

The real issue is not whether women are equally as capable as men are, but whether God has called women to be pastors, that is, as indicated by the meaning of the word, shepherds of a spiritual flock. As C. S. Lewis aptly states it: "No one who opposes women's ordination is thereby maintaining that women are less capable than men of piety, zeal, learning, and whatever else is necessary for the pastoral office." 11 The opposition simply rests on the acceptance of the biblical view of the pastoral ministry, which precludes the ordination of women to the role of pastor or elder.

Scripture provides ample support both for the participation of women in various vital ministries of the church and for their exclusion from the specific role of ordained pastor or elder. If, in spite of the witness of the Scriptures, our church begins to ordain women, it will have opened the door for changes in other of its teachings and practices, such as the ordination of humility, tithing, the distinction between clean and unclean foods, restrictions on divorce, and Sabbathkeeping. These practices can be questioned on the same ground as is the exclusion of women from the priesthood, namely that they were culturally conditioned and consequently are no longer relevant.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church cannot afford to ignore the witness of Scripture; it cannot afford to yield to the pressures of our society. To do so can only lead to a gradual erosion of confidence in the authority of Scripture and in the uniqueness of the end-time message God has entrusted us to proclaim to the world.

Our church must recognize and encourage the vital ministry that women can fulfill as counselors, educators, musicians, missionaries, Bible instructors, preachers, and deaconesses. Spiritual gifts are to be exercised in the (Continued on page 23)
his is the last constituency meeting I will ever attend. All we are is a rubber stamp. Our opinions count for nothing."

The woman's words cut the air. The speaker, one of the delegates from my church, had been elected to represent us because of her keen insight, her administrative skills, and her acquaintance with how the Adventist Church functions. She had grown up in the system, had attended Adventist schools, and was a highly trained professional. Now she was angry. As she spoke, her anger began to affect those of us who listened. We nodded our agreement. Our frustration grew with hers as we listened to her develop the reasons for the disappointment she felt. Several expressed similar opinions. It was not a happy experience.

Reflecting on what my parishioner said, I recall some of the thoughts that went through my mind: I agree. The organization has gotten so big that one person's opinion has little effect. How can one feel part of anything that big? You're right. What's the use? We are just rubber stamps.

Then another thought hit home: This woman is not involved in our local church either! Does she feel the same way about it? What has alienated her?

I confess that it is more satisfying and much less threatening to consider problems affecting the conference than those that lurk on my own doorstep. However, after reflecting on what my parishioners have said, I would like to suggest that the question of lay involvement in church governance begins at the local church level. It is our opportunity as clergy to design programs that prepare people for meaningful involvement in all levels of church governance. It is likewise our opportunity to educate men and women on how the church operates, how decisions are made, and how they can use their influence in the decision-making process.

That's the secret, I thought: education. Educate the laypeople, and our problems are over. But in the midst of my cogitations a disturbing thought crept in: Do I really want people to have meaningful involvement, or do I prefer to share decision-making only in those areas that I select? Is it possible that I have become comfortable with my hierarchy of decision-making and decision-makers and don't want anyone else involved?

When laypeople began to take a less active role in church leadership a vacuum developed. (I believe evidence is available to support the proposition that at one time laypersons had a greater leadership role in the Adventist Church than they do now.) We clergy stepped in to fill that vacuum and have rather enjoyed its rarified atmosphere.
Wilfred M. Hillock wrote in his book *Involved,* "The most important earthly position in the Christian church is that occupied by those filling the pews." Many religious professionals would agree with Hillock. But belief does not always work itself out in practice. I have observed that we have established unwritten but clearly defined and understood boundaries beyond which laypeople are neither invited nor involved. Our delegate confronted one such boundary at the constituency meeting and came away angry. I believe that similar boundaries exist in the local church. We religious professionals must face the challenge of bringing our practice into harmony with our stated beliefs.

**Who sets the goals?**

In A Gathering of Strangers Robert C. Worley discusses personal and organizational goals. We Adventists understand goals. But think for a moment. Where do our goals originate? Who talks most about goals? Is it clergy and administrators, or is it the people in the pew? It is not that there is something inherently wrong in discussing and establishing goals. A person's well-being depends upon setting personal and organizational goals. At issue is the process we use for determining organizational goals, and the extent to which we allow or desire the people in the pew to be involved in that process. Unilaterally established goals do not encourage congregational participation.

But we do not always stop at establishing goals and objectives for our members. Consider the effect upon people when we reserve significant decision-making as our special function. How do delegates feel when we proclaim that we cannot allow such and such a decision to be made, or tell them that they must take a particular action?

Religion and religious leaders wield a powerful force in people's lives. We would do well to examine how we use that power. Men and women may bow under the pressure of a strong person, but afterward they will feel great resentment. If they feel that they have been manipulated, they may simply withdraw rather than continue to resist. Their withdrawal will create another vacuum, and the church will suffer.

Worley calls the church a gathering of strangers that "exhibits a mixture of many kinds and degrees of involvement of persons." He further proposes that a person's level of involvement with a congregation is directly affected by three factors: personal, congregational, and organizational goals.

Goals, he reminds us, are established through organizational process and arrangement. In establishing congregational and organizational goals, personal goals may be ignored, but only at great peril.

The goal establishment process is itself an exercise of power. We clergy do not usually discuss power and its use except with close friends and in a quiet voice. It's time to speak up. After all, we know how to use power and how to use organizational process to achieve our purposes and goals.

We have been equally hesitant to articulate how organizational power affects church members' involvement, what I call their "involvement quotient," or IQ. The greater involvement, the higher the IQ. When we clergy establish goals and ask our church members to work toward fulfilling those goals the IQ is lower than when we use an inclusive process that incorporates the goals the church members believe important. Yet, merely involving people is not in itself adequate.

"If persons have goals which they think are important," says Worley, "these goals assume the force of a moral imperative: 'We should,' 'We ought to.' If persons holding goals lack power to attain them, they may calculate and plan ways in which they can achieve them nonetheless. Or they may make statements and engage in actions by which they become increasingly estranged from leaders and other members, behavior that psychologists call alienative involvement. They may even manifest that ultimate form of alienative involvement, withdrawal." Worley points out that withdrawal is the most intense and dramatic form of estrangement. We in the church have witnessed this and it troubles us. It troubles me. But I have been reluctant to initiate ways to find out why some of my most valued people have left the church. When I look I do not like what I find. I have avoided having to deal with withdrawal, because it is silent. But my congregation has paid the terrible price of the loss of involved members.

The involvement quotient becomes even lower as we move from the local church to the local conference and then to the union and the General Conference. Suggestions have been made and evidence presented that the situation may be changing. Laypeople are taking a stronger role in the decision-making process. Constitutions now mandate that specific proportions of laypeople be elected to local, union, and General Conference committees.

**The challenge**

We as religious leaders are challenged to bring to fulfillment our ideals and to give life to our hopes and dreams, while at the same time being true to the gospel and to the Lord whom we serve. We likewise do well to remind ourselves that others may differ with us about how a plan, program, or proposal can best be implemented. It might also be well on occasion to remind ourselves that ordination may bring authority, but not infallibility. A disagreement with the pastor is not equal to a disagreement with God. Even election as a conference officer does not provide infallibility.

We have within our churches some of the finest, most dedicated, and well-trained men and women in the world. These are the people I want to keep from alienating. The key to keeping them with us is, I believe, meaningful involvement. We clergy can make the situation better or worse, depending on how much meaningful involvement we are prepared to let our laypeople have. Here are some suggestions for opening the doors to involvement:

First, we clergy need to learn to openly welcome those who may have opinions.
that are different from ours. We in the parish have an opportunity to encourage a climate where divergent views are cherished and those who propose differing ideas are welcomed.

Second, the church board and pastor can work together to create a purpose and goals document for the church.

Third, local church leaders need to learn how the political process within the church functions. Those who are selected as delegates to constituency meetings might well be briefed as to what they can expect, how their voice can be most effective, what they can do, and how to do it. Specifically, we clergy can share our political expertise with the laypeople and clearly describe for them what makes the system tick.

Fourth, when people disagree with us we can avoid making a moral issue of it. It is natural for us to avoid those who oppose us. It requires special grace to model acceptance.

Fifth, we can share with the church members in developing a theology of leadership and together examine the implications involved in the New Testament teaching concerning the priesthood of all believers. We need to give special emphasis to determining how this applies to leadership.

Sixth, we can establish a pulpit/parish committee to which the pastor is accountable on the local church level. This committee should be responsible for evaluating how the pastor performs and how effectively the pastor guides the church toward implementing its purpose and goals statement.

From experience I know that this is not an easy process. I have spent frustrating hours with my church members working through the development of a statement of goals and a statement of purpose. Regular evaluation by the pulpit/parish committee, established at my recommendation, is not the most pleasant experience. Having people disagree with me and counter my proposals, even reject them, is not fun. But giving them the opportunity to do so communicates worth to them.

If the people in the pews are the most important members of the church, let’s treat them accordingly!

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3 Ibid., p. 28.
4 Ibid., p. 29.
previous thought: what if I had never had children? The possibilities intrigue her as she wanders downstairs, picks up an art magazine, and settles into her favorite chair. It is so quiet. Her husband is out helping some friends move into their new home.

"I would be there too," Jane mutters, "if I hadn’t have any children. We could have made a party of it with pizza and pop and lots of laughter, Sara and I. Come to think of it, if I hadn’t had any children, it might be my new home. But I have to stay here with the children. That means there’s no job, no extra money for a new home."

"Jane." A soft voice calls her name. She is startled by a hand on her shoulder and turns to look into the face of an angel who stands beside her chair. The outline of his wings glows in silver and gold.

Jane is speechless. "I’ve come to take your children," he says. It is a statement, spoken gently, as though the angel thinks he is doing Jane a favor.

"But—" Jane stammers.

The angel holds a finger to her lips. "Don’t argue. I have come at your request. Your children seem to be in the way of your happiness, and that was not God’s intention when He gave them to you."

"But... you can’t just..."

"The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away."

"But... please... you can’t do that!"

Jane pales and clings to the angel, then turns to look into the face of an angel who stands beside her chair. Again she is startled by a hand on her shoulder.

Jane studies the woman’s gestures and the lift of her chin, her profile. "Why, it’s me," she whispers in awe.

"Yes. It’s you. If you had never had children, you would have been a well-known portrait artist."

"Well-known? Like tours and exhibitions and stuff?" Jane asks incredulously.

The angel nods. "Yes. And can you see what it is that she is painting?" Jane shakes her head. The angel draws the scene closer, and Jane peers over the woman’s shoulder at the canvas.

"Can you see it now—the portrait?" the angel asks softly.

"Why... it’s... a child at play. My child with her dolls," Jane whispers.

"And look again at the artist’s face." Jane sees a familiar expression in the eyes of the woman. It is dreamy, wistful. Could it be that if she had not had children she would be as obsessed with painting children as she now is with painting landscapes?

"Come inside," the angel says, and having spoken it, they are there. It looks familiar except for one thing: the home is spotless! Portraits of children line the walls, portraits the other Jane has painted.

Two kinds of awards

"Look at all the awards," Jane breathes, noting the blue ribbons that adorn many of the works. "She must be very proud of these."

"Receiving them has given her pleasure. But of what use are they to her now? Nobody sees them anymore, and when she dies she can’t take them with her. They just hang here silently."

"Look! Here’s an award signed by the curator of the art museum!"

"Do you know him?"

"No, but..."

"Neither does this Jane."

"He must like her work. He gave her an award..."

"It’s his job. He doesn’t care about Jane. It’s just his job to hand out awards. His is not a spontaneous expression of his appreciation of her work."

"But at least he gave her an award. And she can display it with her portraits..."

"Does an award gain value because you can touch it and hang it on the wall?" the angel asks gently. "And does it mean as much to receive it from someone you do not know as from someone you love?"

"Well, it means much more when you get it from someone you love, but..."

Jane studies the blue ribbons wistfully. "I have never received any awards. I don’t ever have time to paint; I’m just with the children all day."

The angel leads Jane gently to the hall mirror. "Look at your face," he says. Jane raises her eyes to her reflection. It is the same wistful expression she saw in the face of the other Jane. She gasps and looks away.

"Will you ever be happy, Jane? Is it really because of your children?" the angel wonders aloud.

Jane falls silent and moves to her favorite chair. Again she is startled by a hand on her shoulder.

"Don’t take my children," she pleads. "Please. There will be time for painting later. Don’t take my children! I can be happy!" She turns to look behind her.

"Jane." It is her husband. "What’s the matter? Were you dreaming?"

"Oh, it’s you. I’m so glad. It’s just you."

"Here. I brought you something. A quotation that Sara found. She felt that you have been discouraged lately."

Jane reaches for the paper and smooths it across her lap. She reads the first sentence quickly. Then, her attention arrested, she takes in every word.

"No other work can equal [the mother’s] in importance. She has not, like the artist, to paint a form of beauty upon canvas; nor, like the sculptor, to chisel it from marble. She has not, like the author, to embody a noble thought in words of power; nor, like the musician, to express a beautiful sentiment in melody. It is hers, with the help of God, to develop in a human soul the likeness of the divine" (The Adventist Home, p. 237).

Jane sits quietly in the chair for a moment. "Thank you," she says, "I had a dream..." But it is too personal to share. She follows her husband up the stairs.

As she passes her children’s room she hears a whispered request. "Mommy. Can you come here for a minute? I have something for you." There is no trace of annoyance this time as Jane pads to the child’s bedside.

"Can you sit down for a minute?" the child whispers.

Jane settles herself beside her child, and immediately two warm, chubby arms encircle her neck. "I love you, Mommy! You’re my favorite mommy in the whole wide world!"

"And I love you, too," she says hoarsely.

My works and awards, Jane thinks to herself. And I can take them with me!
Creating specialists in loving

Are mothers really too busy to be involved in church outreach? Or is it just an excuse? Or does the truth lie somewhere between? How can you help them be involved?

Pastor, the ladies' half of the army is asleep—well, perhaps only dozing. As reserves, we dutifully mend the fighting men's socks, keep their rations hot, and keep the tent rent paid. But when the clarion call is issued for all the Caring Church to gird on their armor, we women slink off to our jobs, desert to the washing machines, and cower behind our young ones' souls. Or do we?

Perhaps we are only confused. With one ear we hear that the home fires are our mission. Take an outside job if you wish and, oh yes, keep a weapon handy in case an enemy crawls in through the window. But don't venture out to witness, for fear the children might suffer.

Then with our other ear we hear the appeal to each soldier of the cross for 100 percent participation. Souls must be won; our neighbors must hear; Jesus is coming again.

Is "Go ye" conditional for our share of the church? Is being a cog in the machinery of mission enough? May we just be Christians—or must we also say and do? Must we conduct Revelation seminars and give Bible studies?

For some reason most church women do not have a clear understanding of their job description. And as a result the female half of the Caring Church is often ineffective or idle when it comes to ministry outside the home. (The men may examine their own problems.)

The Caring Church wins or loses on this pivot: Can a pastor motivate and activate all his congregation to be individual caring Christians?

I submit to you that the women are eager to be just that. They have responded to the call of a new conversion, a changed life, a love relationship with Christ. Many women are earnestly wanting to serve their Master actively, not passively, within the context of their situation. But there is no one to show them how.

Don't argue. Have you ever packed up the baby, the terrible 2, the squirmy 6, taken them all with you to give a Bible study and sandwiched it all between scheduled naps, hungry stomachs, and the last clean diaper? Throw in a little eight-hour job, and you end up with statements that sound remarkably like excuses—only they aren't. They are reasons. And that makes a big difference if you are a pastor searching for solutions.

How pastors can help

Here, direct from the school of womanhood, are some suggestions for frustrated pastors:

1. Be sympathetic. Take care to evaluate honestly what women say. The fact is, for the majority of women, it is very difficult to be a homemaker, mother, soul winner, and often breadwinner, too. Some may be making excuses, but for most the words they speak are a cry for help. They are
frustrated at the round of busyness and eagerly seek a way out.

2. Recognize the potential of women. A Seventh-day Adventist woman’s life often follows a three-phase pattern. Early married life: pre-school children, “. . . no higher mission field . . .”. Later: “Oops—Christian education isn’t cheap, a job is now in order . . .” Then: “It’s time to slow down and pass the torch on to younger hands.”

Presto. There goes half of your army—just like that. But wait. It’s your attitude that will determine the outcome. The other side of “problem” is “potential.” With proper perspective you can begin to see the women of the church not as half an army idle, but half an army waiting to be led.

3. Learn to be discerning. A general call for Bible study givers or literature distributors is too conducive to excuses. Instead of making general calls, seek to discover the spiritual gifts and interests of each woman. Who likes best to cook, sew, have company, type, teach children, talk on the phone, write letters, garden, visit, clean house, make crafts, grow plants, bake, etc.

Use a survey to glean this information, grouping similar interests together. If you are observant and a good listener, calls on church members can give you a good idea what each woman does best.

4. Find ways to turn each talent into a soul-winning tool for the Lord. An ant hill is not busy because a few ants are doing big things but because every ant is doing something.

Once when our church was holding evangelistic meetings we teamed up our bakers with our friendly callers to make love visits at the homes of interests. We checked our questionnaire file, and within 24 hours had a luscious pile of 40 dozen cookies and four teams of love visitors.

I have made many evangelistic calls, but never before was I whisked inside with such enthusiasm, or so strongly urged to come back—the invitations began to sound like a blessedly broken record.

Ministry ideas

Concern for missing members prompted a Project Love. Members brought fresh home-baked bread to the Sabbath school classes each week. The bread, along with the message “We care,” was taken to the missing members. The bread provided an inescapable reminder for procrastinators like me. (You either have to make the visit or eat the bread yourself. And who would stoop to that!)

Creative stitchers can have a part in helping visiting mothers. Let them dream up delightful quiet books with apples to snap on trees, nuts to pick, boats to float, etc. Then carefully select tactful, discreet adults who love children to take a seat nearby and offer sympathetic help: “I know how hard a day Sabbath is for mothers. Would you like me to sit beside you and help a bit?” An understanding person nearby with intriguing toys for visiting young ones will do more to represent Christ to a weary mother than all the sermons in a year.

Other seamstresses can make literature bags for all the kindergartners. Fill them up each week and send the children off—to outshine the whole church in giving away literature.

You may want a team of letter writers and telephoneers who can follow up on interests, handle literature mailings, send greetings to new parents in the community or sympathy cards to the bereaved, phone shut-ins, etc.

A team of pray-ers could provide support and encouragement to those going door-to-door and giving Bible studies. And those going out can share their experiences with a prayer partner. A telephone prayer circle is also super. In minutes, any request can be brought to the attention of dozens of pray-ers.

A hospitality band involving those who enjoy entertaining and just being friendly is another effective ministry for women. Nothing transforms a new-comer into a friend more quickly than an invitation home for dinner. And it need not be a burden on just a few. With planning, different families can be prepared for company on alternating weeks. These ladies could be your greeters and your friendly callers.

Some ladies have infinite love and concern for the young. They may follow up Vacation Bible School interests, run a bus ministry, take the youth out on witnessing projects, visit the children who have missed Sabbath school, follow up on those who have bought The Bible Story, plan ministry to orphanages and foster homes, and open their home for the youth get-togethers.

Mothers with small children have a special advantage in loving ministry. Far from being hindrances, children can themselves run small errands of love and mercy. Who can resist a bouquet of wildflowers, small arms around his neck, and a whispered “I wuv you”? What sunshine could be brought to dark and lonely hearts?

Ministry to the aged is another avenue of outreach, as is health evangelism. A practical ministry band can utilize the talents of gardeners, house cleaners, yard rakers, house painters, etc.

And you will find quite a number of ladies who would like to learn how to
give Bible studies, how to find interests and follow them up. Some may hold Revelation seminars or even lay evangelistic meetings. Train them and then trust them.

Organize for caring
Organizing pays. Go back to the anthill and stir it up a bit. It appears to be just a gigantic mass of motion. But watch closely and you will see that every ant has a specific job—if only to transport one speck of dirt from here to there. The amazing result is a perfectly coordinated restoration job. Organization will do the same for church ministry. The bigness of the job is not what counts.

Form groups of workers who have the same interests. This may be the single most effective planning action you can take. Arrange times for each group to meet to brainstorm, plan, train, and share. Try using Isaiah for inspiration or share the wealth in your Welfare Ministry. The first half of the book is a superb treatise on the “new” Caring Church program.

Encourage earnest prayer for those whom your ladies contact. Teach them to look to God for efficiency, wisdom, and power (2 Cor. 10:7). Then their joyful reporting and sharing of experiences can be a gift of praise to God for what He has done.

Nothing deadens a person’s enthusiasm so much as feeling alone and unnoticed. You can help keep enthusiasm strong by arranging frequent sharing sessions. We already report baptisms, Bible studies, and “wonderful experiences.” Why not also encourage people to tell of simple responses such as happy smiles, warmed hearts, expressions of sincere gratitude, even their own feelings: “I wasn’t so scared this time!”

Take time to express appreciation for every ministry, no matter how small it may seem. A tiny seed tucked tenderly into the fertile soil of a soul is of infinite value to the Lord of the harvest.

Keep in mind that most reapers (evangelists and pastors) desperately need more simple sowing done. And sowing is what many women can do best. For we can nurture tender flames and lift up feeble knees. We can follow the footsteps of Jesus into the home next door—there to find a lonely grandma, a distressed parent, or a fearful heart patient.

We can be—if you gently guide our faltering steps—your specialists in love.

Who are professional Christians? Ministers, among others. And what do they have to confess?

It is hard now to look back the 11 years to the beginning of my ministry and recall the idealism with which I started. Finishing the work, energizing my church, changing people’s lives, all seemed so reachable then. But time and experience have wrought changes in me—unfortunately, not all for the better.

My goals are the same, but realism has replaced idealism. I long for the work of Christ to be finished, not just in a worldwide sense, but also where I am. Now I wonder how, and even whether, it can be done.

Changed lives? Yes, I’ve seen some, and I thank God for them. But oh, how few they seem. An active membership? At times I am tempted to believe the theory that a church will have 10 to 20 active members, no matter what its size.

Of all the changes I have undergone in the past decade, the most difficult to face are the ones in my personal Christian experience. I find myself struggling against becoming a professional Christian. By that I mean someone whose devotional life is dictated more by professional obligations than felt personal need. Someone whose time in prayer and study depends on the imminence of the next sermon or Bible study.

Don Williams is a pastor and Bible teacher at Far Eastern Academy, Singapore.
He finds it easier to apply the things he studies to the lives of others than to himself, and is frequently thinking that a particular text would make a nice sermon.

A professional Christian is one whose standards may be dictated more by what is expected of him than by genuine personal conviction. I find it very difficult to discern which motivates me. What would I really be like if I weren’t aware of others? How would I have related to the recent questions and conflicts within the church if I had not been its representative and defender?

A professional Christian is a person whose loyalty has gradually shifted from the person of Jesus Christ to an organization. He often talks more about the church, loyalty to it, and pride in it and what it stands for than he does about Jesus. He wins people to the church and is proud to be “in the work”—of the church that is.

Too often, lately, I have seen these tendencies in myself. Tendencies I have long observed and disliked in others. The question arises, How can I reverse this process and recover what I have lost? The obvious answer would seem to be to study and pray, know what I believe and ignore the pressure of others, and to let Jesus be number one in my life. That is true, but I’ve always known that. Was it really ignorance of the solution that caused the problem in the first place? Probably not; it goes deeper than that.

The step after defining the problem is not to find a solution but to understand why I have allowed this to happen. My spiritual condition seems to have grown out of a desire to avoid complete commitment to Christ and yet to appear religious. In other words, I wanted the respect, praise, and security a religious leader has, but I didn’t want to be too spiritual. As a professional Christian, I could go with the crowd, keep a low profile on the pressing questions of the day, and avoid anything that would tarnish my reputation. As a professional Christian, I could avoid deep commitment without losing my image. By saying the right words, I could maintain the appearance of piety.

I have come to realize that Paul’s evaluation of the Jews applies to me. “But if you call yourself a Jew and rely upon the law and boast of your relation to God and know his will and approve what is excellent . . . if you are sure you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness . . . you then who teach others, will you not teach yourself? . . . He is not a real Jew who is one outwardly . . . He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spiritual and not literal” (Rom. 2:17-21, 28, 29, RSV). They, like me, fooled themselves into thinking that sincerely believing that they were right and sincerely going through the motions meant they were genuine followers of God. They did not know that they were in fact poor, blind, and naked.

Now that I have identified the problem and its source, how am I to resolve it? First of all, I must repent. I must repent for the false image of holiness I have portrayed; repent that I have wasted opportunities of leading others into a deeper relationship with Christ; repent for the time I have lost in my relationship with Him. Second, I need to pray for a complete surrender of myself, my reputation, my work—for a genuine reconversion. Third, I must ask the Lord for courage to be transparent, to be what I really am, and no more. I am sure the rebuilding will take time. I will probably always have a weakness in this area. But I pray that as I seek to restore and rebuild on Jesus as the foundation of my life and work, I will become what He wants me to be.

"What a wretched state I am in! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have looked at the King, Yahweh Sabaoth." Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding in his hand a live coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. With this he touched my mouth and said: "See now, this has touched your lips, your sin is taken away, your iniquity is purged" (Isa. 6:5-7, Jerusalem).
What I expect of a pastor

Reading Lawrence G. Downing's and Philip Follett's articles on their mutual expectations in the work of the ministry encouraged me. (See "What I Expect of an Administrator," February 1984, and "What I Expect of a Pastor," April 1984.) Such openness between administration and local church pastors is not only commendable but imperative as each attempts to help the other in the Lord's work.

After reading the two articles, I felt compelled to express my feelings as to what I, as a layperson, expect of a pastor. I come to these jottings with over 20 years' experience as a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and with a heart grateful for all that ministers have done to help me in spiritual growth. Many of them have assisted me in developing the gifts that I have used in caring for the church and in helping others to find joy and fulfillment as they left the world and gave their lives to Christ.

High expectations

I expect much from my pastor! I see him as my spiritual guide—a man who could have taken another profession but who was irresistibly impelled by the Holy Spirit to devote all that he is and has to the service of his people and his God.

I need to have my pastor communicate to me that whatever other interests he may have, he holds above them all the care of souls. It is not enough that he have this ideal neatly worded in an elegant scholarly treatise somewhere in the files that contain his seminary papers! It is not enough that he vocalize this as his primary concern. I expect his whole life to give overwhelming evidence that he is completely fulfilled in being about his Father's business. I want to see it, to feel it. I want this influence, like an arabesque aroma, to so permeate the flock that all will realize that here is a man of God who loves them and is willing to be spent for them.

Sadly, not all those who have ministered in the churches I have attended have conveyed such an impression. I visited one sister who was wasting away with cancer in the hospital, and attempted to bring comfort to her and her husband. One Sabbath when our church celebrated the Lord's Supper, her husband told me that the pastor had promised to visit and to share the Lord's table with them. Some days later when I visited again, I inquired whether the pastor had come. The husband told me that he had been informed by the minister that he could not bring them Communion because the emblems had been disposed of. I became angry when a short while later the pastor left on a photographic vacation and returned just in time to bury the good sister, who had passed away in his absence. How impor-
tant that words, acts, and body language be congruent in saying, "Right now there's no other place I'd rather be than right here, sharing my ministry."

I repeat: I expect much of the pastor! I know that his arm, like mine, is of flesh. I do not expect to be ministered to by someone who has attained perfection. But in times of turmoil I want this quality of caring to come through clearly as he interacts with those of the faith.

I have had pastors like that, men whose godly smiles conveyed that they cared for each soul. Their whole manner told us that there was no other place they'd rather be. This may give the impression that we, like spiritual neonates, were dependent. Not so, for such pastors, under the leading of the Spirit of Christ, have the gift of building up the body of believers.

At times, when I served as senior elder, folks came to me to criticize some aspect of the pastor's work. The pastor's strong commitment and love for his people have often been powerful weapons in my hand as the Lord led me in defending him.

**Rightly dividing the word of truth**

I expect a pastor to be a man who has his roots deeply embedded in the Word of God. His quotations from Nietzsche, Sartre, or Barclay will interest me, but it will be his knowledge and experience in the Scriptures that will warm my heart and tell me that here is a man of the Book. Here is a man who has walked through the garden of the Lord and has picked some delicate flowers for my delight!

I do not expect a pastor to be a biblical magician—pulling out texts like so many rabbits from a hat. I expect him to use the Scriptures intelligently and convincingly. I want to know that he has been with God and that the Lord of heaven has given him a message for me. More than what a passage meant in 1250 B.C., I want to know how that scripture can carry out the task. These small beginnings laid the foundation of my development as an active member of the church.

Training and trusting laity

I expect a pastor to be practical. I do not want to be on the listening end of his scintillating theories unless he is prepared to show me how to carry them out, so that I, in turn, can learn.

And I expect him to be observant, encouraging and enabling the members of his flock to share his ministry. I have had the privilege of working with some pastors who were especially evangelistically oriented. The most helpful aspect of their ministry was their willingness to have me tag along as they shared the Word of God with people. For me, this was a time of spiritual and personal growth. Their training allowed the Lord to use me in winning souls for Him.

When I joined the Adventist Church, I told God that I thought I had very few talents. I felt that I even lacked the talent to pray audibly before the other members at prayer meetings.

I smile as I remember the pastor who ruined a few weeks of my life by telephoning me one Monday and saying, "Steve, you're preaching on_______."

I expect a pastor to be impartial in his relationships in the church. There are some in the church who, because of lack of opportunity or problematic home environment, seem less worthy than others who have been blessed with education and wholesome family upbringing. I want to see my pastor active in making the former group feel wanted and loved. I would like to see him make some of these folks the first invitees to his home for Sabbath lunch. God used one such pastor to rescue some backsliders in our church. The folks concerned told me just how much they appreciated the love this man of God exhibited.

I am aware that I expect much from my pastor. But I want him to know that he can expect much from me in return. I will give him my loyalty. I will give him my support. I will give him my confidentiality. As a layman I will trust him and be his friend so that we may support each other in hastening the coming of Jesus.
Roger H. Ferris

“Using” prayer

A utilitarian approach to prayer is one among many options. Allow me to illustrate what I label “utilitarian prayer.” If I have a need for something, or a problem crying for a solution that remains elusive to the rational mind, or if I have grief that must be assuaged, or if I am in trouble or in a crisis, I pray. If I need to begin a meeting, I do the “proper” thing and pray, or if there has been a break in a meeting and I need to restore order, I pray. This is utilitarian prayer.

At a Lay Bible Ministry Seminar, the many participants were engaged in subconversations of varied intensity around the meeting room. The leader called above the friendly din for order. He announced a hymn and began to sing, but the conversations continued. Finally, in frustration, he used the never-failing last resort—he asked the group to stand for “a word of prayer.” An almost instantaneous hush fell over the group! Prayer worked where all other approaches to gain order in the meeting failed! Utilitarian indeed! It was not the prayer offered, but the fact of prayer that achieved the goal desired. He used prayer to manipulate the group’s behavior. As I comprehended what was happening I started counting. In twenty-four hours of meeting I noted more than a dozen purely utilitarian prayer calls made!

While at times it may serve some purpose, this misuse of prayer makes me uncomfortable. The beauty in the experience of prayer lies in relating to, and communicating with, God.

Public prayer can be used to manipulate people rather than to communicate with God. How do you “use” prayer? What can you do to make prayer more meaningful?

In daily life, relating to people involves communication on many levels. Imagine that you limited your conversation with your spouse or close friend to a few utilitarian words when you had a problem, needed advice, or wanted to get their attention. Your relationship would be strained at best.

Relationships require purposeful communication, not merely constricted utilitarian messages used to manipulate the behavior of other persons. In fact, once perceived, manipulation quickly develops resistance or disdain, rather than positive cooperative relationships.

On the human level we say, “I need,” “I want,” “Let me share,” “What do you think?” as signals for broad-based communication. We seldom say, “Let me speak a 'word of love' to you!”

We can counter utilitarian prayers by initiating calls to prayer that clearly state the purpose for prayer at that point. This would shift the approach from an announcement of prayer to an invitation to pray for a specific reason.

Some examples: “Let us devote a few moments in thanksgiving to God”; “Let us seek God’s blessing on our meeting”; “Let us seek God’s direction in our deliberations”; “Let us praise God in prayer”; and in a moment of transparent utilitarian honesty, “Let us pray to quiet the conversations and gain the attention of participants in this meeting.”

I do not wish to put down, but rather to lift, our attitudes about prayer. We need to raise our use of prayer from the purely utilitarian that quickly becomes mundane or even maudlin to the higher spiritual level where the person-God relationship is paramount.

Roger H. Ferris teaches at the Cypress Seventh-day Adventist School, Lynnwood, Washington.
When you talk to your members about witnessing, would you like to be able to point them to a whole new menu of fresh ideas that have been tried and proven?

Recently some lay members in the Southeastern California Conference gave $3 million to fund research that will result in the development of new methods and contemporary materials for enhancing the witness of Seventh-day Adventist Church members. Other funds have swelled the total to nearly $4 million. These funds will sponsor the formation of the Harvest 90 Adventist Research Taskforce (HART).

The HART committee has begun to search for and recruit personnel to do roll-up-the-sleeves research and development. The task force needs people with such diverse skills as writing, layout and design, marketing, demographics, population-sampling techniques, motivation, understanding societal trends, media relations, and survey instrument design. It will include clergy, educators, and lay members whose job description will be to research, develop, field-test, and refine new materials and methods and make them available to the world church. The North American Church Ministries Department will assist in wider field testing across the division to assure that the projects have more than local effectiveness.

The HART project will serve to bring together the denomination's creative thinkers. It is anticipated that research will run a minimum of three to five years, and when the project is completed researchers will be provided a free move to anywhere in the North American Division. In some instances specialists will be hired on a temporary contract basis where, for instance, their talents might be needed as part of a larger project but residency is not important to the task.

The strategy will be to locate most of the researchers in teams of two in the territory of Southeastern California, which is in many ways a microcosm of North America. Each host congregation and its mission territory will be the laboratory setting in which ideas and materials will be researched, market tested, refined, and finally judged either workable or unworkable.

"This is not an attempt to overcome a spiritual problem by spending money on it," comments Thomas J. Mostert, president of the Pacific Union and chairman of the HART committee. "But as you look back over the past 10 or 15 years, with the exception of the Revelation seminars, how many effective new materials have we developed? This will be an attempt to put workable new ideas and witnessing tools into the hands of Spirit-filled church members."

Manuel Vasquez, vice president of the Pacific Union, says, "This is one of the most exciting things I've heard in all the years I have been in the ministry." Dr. Dan Reeves, of the Fuller Institute of Church Growth, comments, "This is an exciting prospect. I know of no other place in the Christian church where this serious of a research program is going on."

It is anticipated that out of this research, under the blessing of God, will come new and more effective ways to reach the American public, to meet the needs of a people bombarded with marketing and media advertising, to attract them to the gospel. Why should the children of darkness be wiser in their day than the children of light?

The emphasis will be on creating and testing simple, forceful, attractive brochures, videotapes, and audiotapes for sharing, home seminars, home prayer group curricula, and other types of materials. Approaches to the secular campus and ways to attract media interest will also be designed and tested.

"One of the most encouraging aspects of the whole idea," says Mostert, "is that the initiative for it grew out of the commitment of two lay members. We believe that this is the way God has promised to work in His church at the end of time."

If God has impressed you with an idea that could potentially strengthen the witness of our church family, and you would like to see it developed and field-tested, send a description of the project to:

The HART Project
11330 Pierce Street
Riverside, California 92505
714-359-5800

Don Jacobsen, formerly of the Southeastern California Conference, recently accepted the presidency of the Oregon Conference.
Baptizing children

W hat Adventist pastor has not faced the dilemma of a 7- or 8-year-old child looking up with earnest, pleading eyes, explaining that he wants to be baptized.

Paul was 7 when he first asked me to baptize him. He lived with his Adventist mother and agnostic father quite a distance from one of the churches in my district, but since his mother did not drive, he had not been to church for several years. His main contact with the church had been through a relative who took him to camp meeting each year.

"Well," I told him, after talking with his mother, "I'd be glad to study the Bible with you, and then we could set a date for baptism."

I had Paul send to the Voice of Prophecy for their Bible lessons. I suppose that I secretly hoped that he would find them too hard or that with time he would lose interest for just a little bit, giving me a reason to delay his baptism for a year or two. But he was a good student and he seemed to grasp both content and concepts well.

Somehow I managed to prolong our weekly study appointments until Paul was 8, going on 9. But with the approach of camp meeting I found myself wondering how I could present the name of an 8-year-old, whom most of the church members had never met, to the church board for a recommendation for baptism.

I had Paul send to the Voice of Prophecy for their Bible lessons. I suppose that I secretly hoped that he would find them too hard or that with time he would lose interest for just a little bit, giving me a reason to delay his baptism for a year or two. But he was a good student and he seemed to grasp both content and concepts well.

The board, and the church, were very understanding of the boy's spiritual needs and agreed to accept him into membership, sight unseen. I baptized him at camp meeting, but he was never able to come to church, at least while I stayed in that district.

In retrospect I think I made several mistakes in dealing with Paul. First of all, and most obviously, I should have made every effort to get him to Sabbath school and church several times before he was baptized. He needed to know what he was joining when he joined the church.

But the real depth of my mistake did not come clear to me until I had been through several more experiences of baptizing children whose parents seldom attended church. What I have come to realize since is that my theology of baptism was lacking an important facet. I was teaching children that baptism symbolized their cleansing from sin and rebirth as a child of God. I emphasized that their new life was Christ's, not their own, and that they should live for Him. But I failed to bring home carefully the significance of baptism into Christ's body.

In our individualistic society it is difficult for children to conceive of themselves as a responsible part of any organization. "Do Your Own Thing" is today's motto.

Too often we baptize children on the basis of their own personal profession of faith without ever challenging this spirit of individualism. Is it any wonder, then, that after baptism they feel no more sense of responsibility to the church than they did before?

A baptized member of Christ's body, the church, should feel responsible to participate in the activities of the body. Not only to worship with it but to take an active part in its planning, giving, and outreach.

Look over your congregation next Sabbath, Pastor. How many of your young members are actively involved in worshipping God with the congregation? How many instead are reading their Sabbath school paper or perhaps whispering with their friends? At your next business meeting, take a head count of young members who participate. Look over your list of committees and planning groups. How many young members have been made to feel a part of the body by being included when decisions are made?

If our children are not ready to take an active part in the life of the body, are they ready for baptism? Do we do them a disservice by baptizing them without helping them to understand that baptism brings with it responsibilities, as well as privileges? 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 make it plain that all who have been baptized into the body have a part to play in its life.

The dilemma of what to do with a very young child who wants to be baptized is never easy to solve. But taking time to explain about church members' responsibilities, and helping the child to accept these responsibilities in preparation for baptism, may make it easier both to decide when the child is ready and to retain his commitment to the church as he matures.—Kenneth R. Wade

Thirty-one days in Europe

W hile I was on my recent trip to the Euro-Africa Division I enjoyed two record-breaking (for me) experiences. Traveling from Paris to Lyons I went faster than I had ever gone before on a train—up to 160 mph. And the second record involved speed too—this time in a car. Riding with a friend, I raced over the German autobahns at speeds up to 125 mph. Telephone poles flashed by like fence posts! (We broke no laws, since there is no speed limit on the autobahns.) How would J. N. Andrews, pioneer missionary to Europe, react to modes of travel so fast compared to the sailing ships and horse-drawn buggies of his day?

But more important than physical
speed is the progress of our work in Europe. The European part of the
Euro-Africa Division has a population of more than 300 million. Our church has
133,518 members there, nearly 55,000
of whom live in Romania.

Franco-Belgian Union
My first meeting was with the ministri-

tal workers in the Belgian-Luxembourg
Conference. We met at the conference
office in the historic city of Brussels. One
of my translators, Georges Vandenvelde, a true Christian gentleman, had
just retired from the presidency of this
conference.

Pastor Henri Van Der Veken, the new
conference president, was in the midst of
a series of evangelistic meetings in a
nearby town when the workers’ meeting
convened. I was deeply impressed with
the sophistication and quality of his
multimedia presentation on the Bible
and archeology. Amazingly, these
meetings not only pay for themselves but
often produce a surplus of several thou-
sand dollars for future evangelism. We
have asked him to write an article
sharing his methods with the readers of
Ministry.

My next appointment was with the minis-
terial force of the North France
Conference. The president, Francis
Augsburger, a leader with wide experi-
ence in both France and Africa, had
arranged for the meetings to be held in a
retreat center on a hillside overlooking
the beautiful city of Paris. Henri Tierec,
ministerial secretary, did an excellent
job in organizing the program. The
workers there impressed me by evincing
a spirit of unity combined with a deep
desire to be more effective soul winners.

On Sabbath I had the privilege of
speaking to the large congregation at the
conference headquarters church. The
majority of the members of this church
have immigrated here from the French-
speaking areas of the Caribbean. Enthusiastic believers pack the two complete
Sabbath school and church services each
Sabbath morning.

In Lyons I had the privilege of meeting
with not only a number of the ministers
of the South France Conference and
their president, Jean-Pierre Fasnacht,
but with his lovely wife as well. Mrs.
Fasnacht showed a deep concern for
fostering a Shepherdess program among
the ministers’ wives. Again I was
impressed with the quality of workers in
this field. This two-day meeting con-
cluded my visit to the Franco-Belgian
Union.

The warm reception and fellowship
that our French-speaking ministers and
their wives, Bible instructors, and lay-
people gave me helped me to appreciate
more fully God’s love, which binds our
hearts together for the common purpose
of serving Him and sharing the gospel
with lost humanity.

West German Union
In the West Berlin Conference I met
on Sabbath afternoon with our believers
from the Berlin Hospital church and
from one of the other churches. We have
a fine major medical facility in Berlin,
and I was impressed with its leadership. I
spent a most profitable Saturday evening
with Dr. and Mrs. Ronald K. Noltze and
Dr. and Mrs. Marc Kanor. Dr. Noltze,
the medical director of the hospital,
served as a medical missionary at River
Plate Sanitarium and Hospital in
Argentina. He and his associates under-
stand how our medical work should
relate to the proclamation of the three
angels’ messages. It was evident that
these leaders have a desire to use the
health work as an entering wedge for the
preaching of the gospel.

Andreas Bochmann, a graduate of our
seminary at Andrews University and one
of the hospital chaplains, was my faithful
guide and translator for the weekend.
We made a quick trip to East Berlin,
where we spent a few pleasant hours in
the home of the Berlin-March Confer-
ence president Helmut Knoll.

From Berlin I flew to Bremen where I
had the delightful privilege of being with
Pastor and Mrs. Reinhard Engel. Engel,
president of the Lower Saxonian Confer-
ence North, spent some years as a
missionary in Africa. There is something
about people who have spent time as
overseas missionaries that makes them a
bit different from others. All of us who
gathered at the retreat center near
Bremen, where our meetings were held,
were impressed by his energetic spirit.

Nearly 30 workers gathered in Dues-
seldorf, where Herbert Kaetzner, presi-
dent of the Northern Rhenish Confer-
ence, extended every courtesy to ensure
the success of our one-day seminar. His
years as a literature evangelist leader
were evident in his aggressive leadership.

I believe a new spirit of evangelism is
gripping these fields. Harvest 90 is a
definite part of their thinking. Mark
Finley’s recent successful public cam-
paign in Munich has made a deep impact
on a number of young workers who are
determined to put into practice the
principles they learned. At several of our
meetings men who had been sent to
Munich and had worked as part of the
team testified that the success of that
campaign had renewed their determina-
tion to preach the gospel to the needy
populations in their home areas. I left
Germany encouraged and believing that
advances in church growth will be
realized.

Czechoslovakian Union
The final segment of my European
tour was a 10-day visit to Czechoslova-
ka, a country where we have nearly
8,000 members. President Oldrich Sladek,
along with his union secretary,
Vladimir Kohut, and treasurer, Pavel
Kubecka, energetically planned for a
large union conference ministerial
meeting that lasted three and one-half
days. The excellent leadership of Alois
Barta, ministerial secretary, was evident
throughout the session. Approximately
140 attended, some of them seminary
students and retired workers.

We met in a recently completed
Adventist church in Prague, a city rich
in both secular and religious history. Our
new church there, one of the most
beautiful in the world field, is a blessing
to our work in this city. Much credit is
due Elder Sladek for his vision and
untiring efforts to broaden and
strengthen the work of the Adventist
Church in Czechoslovakia.

While visiting Prague I felt almost
overwhelmed by sacred emotions as I
stood in Bethlehem Chapel, where John
Huss powerfully preached the gospel as
he understood it. There were no pews in
his church then (nor in its present
restoration). Why? Every bit of space
was needed for the 3,000 who jammed it
daily and several times on Sunday to hear
the Word preached. Huss, who gave his

J. Robert Spangler
life as a martyr, had a part in preparing the way for the Reformation that began with Martin Luther. I thank God for the bravery and integrity of this man who chose to die rather than compromise principle. He knew God and God knew him!

Retired teacher and minister Miloslav Sustek spent an entire day showing us these historical monuments and shared a part of the enormous amount of information that is tucked away in his mind. I, in turn, intend to share with you, our readers, an article or two on the life of John Huss.

Finally, I pay tribute to Johannes Mager, ministerial secretary of the Euro-America Division, who traveled with me part of the time. His affable spirit and his knowledge of the Lord and His Word brought rich blessings to my soul. And the Holy Spirit used him as he spoke to our workers at the various institutes.

In an age of skepticism, apathy, and secularization, Europe is not the easiest place to win souls. But souls can be won if we surrender our lives to God and pray for the Holy Spirit to make us fit to meet men. Let us remember this great division in our prayers.—J. Robert Spangler

Caring is more than caring

A colleague and I recently attended a seminar that stretched over a weekend. Because we were far from home we decided to visit an Adventist church in the city where we were. We were particularly interested in seeing whether the principles of the Caring Church strategy in North America were working.

As we entered the front door we looked for the greeters and the guest book. It is a good thing we knew what we were looking for, otherwise our names would never have been recorded. The services had inspiring music, vigorous preaching, and enough variety to fill the time until 12:58 p.m. At the beginning of the worship service a lady welcomed the visitors as a group and had them stand. This service was obviously for members only. The bulletin provided no words or music to help visitors participate in the various congregational responses.

When the service concluded we waited for a while, hoping for an invitation to Sabbath dinner. We had no food in our motel and didn’t want to fast or go to a restaurant. This church had many members, which may have been part of its problem. The church certainly had no strategy for caring meaningfully for visitors. We went hungry.

This church is not unique. My family attended a church at which we did get to eat. They had a fellowship dinner, its stated mission being to welcome visitors. However, the only person who spoke to us was also a visitor.

When I was a conference departmental director I more than once traveled several hours to preach, and then several hours home on an empty stomach. The Caring Church is more than a slogan or motto. It is more than the formal mouthing of pious platitudes. It is more than people handing out plastic smiles. According to Milton Mayeroff, “To care for another person, in the most significant sense, is to help him grow and actualize himself” (On Caring [New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971], p. 1). Paul tells us that caring is doing “only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs” (Eph. 4:29, NIV).

How can you get your church to be the caring church God wants it to be? (Size has little to do with how you feel. Small churches can be just as cold as large ones. When people were asked what they liked most about Robert Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral they replied, “Its friendliness.” This in a church of some 10,000 members.)

Develop the love of Christ in your congregation. This comes from inspired preaching and Spirit-filled leadership. Your people need to sense your close walk with the Lord. Motivation for caring does not come from programs, bulletins, mass rallies, constant appeals, or any of a hundred other methods. It comes from a deep sense of commitment to Jesus Christ and an awareness of the great sacrifice He made for us. “I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32).

Use program-planned spontaneity. This is especially important in larger churches where everyone assumes that someone else is taking care of each need. Have a roster of families who will invite visitors out to dinner. Find members with the gift of hospitality and have them be a part of this group. Fellowship dinners do not develop the sense of intimacy that a home setting does. Imagine how your visitors will feel when they receive two or more invitations to dinner!

Use name tags for everyone. This works despite the size of a church. It is hard for visitors to remember everyone’s name. It also helps the members spot the visitors. One church I know is successfully using this idea.

Make sure all your entrances have greeters, even the ones that only members tend to use. Members need to be greeted and given “warm fuzzies” just as much as visitors.

Have people assigned to take families with children to the different divisions. There is nothing more frustrating than exploring the corridors of a church, trying to find the appropriate room, especially when the sign on the kindergarten room says “Juniors.”

The Caring Church manual lists five underlying principles that guide the Caring Church model:

1. A biblical base.
2. An emphasis on church mission.
3. A view of the church as wholistic.
4. A focus on people.
5. A recognition of people flow.

Maybe part of the problem is that “a focus on people” appears at number 4, next to the bottom of the list. And that is where it appears in many churches. The truly caring church is not necessarily one that has outstanding community programs, awareness events, entry points, and skillfully concocted programs, important as these might be. It is one that has an interest in people for their own sake, not for the sake of the church. Remember, caring is helping others grow and actualize themselves. A person is more than a statistic, a cipher to be added to the other figures. The emphasis in planning should not be so much on
programs, services, and money, but on how we minister to people. Every Sabbath this opportunity occurs anew.

Does this seem like too much hard work? Remember that “if but one soul would have accepted the gospel of His grace, Christ would, to save that one, have chosen His life of toil and humiliation and His death of shame” (The Ministry of Healing, p. 135). Can we do less?

It does not matter how fine the singing, how great the preaching, how magnificent the building, how informative the programs, how full the treasury; if people do not feel accepted, if they do not feel welcome, if they do not feel loved, it is all for naught.

Why not have a “caring” audit at every church board meeting? How have we cared this week? Who have we blessed? Who has left stronger and happier for being in our fellowship? “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” —J. David Newman

Letters
From page 2

Estate itself issued The Fannie Bolton Story—A Collection of Source Documents. In fact, knowing the facts, you used ellipses to cover up and distort truth. On page 7, column 3, you quote Elder Starr incompletely. You omit a telling paragraph that reads: “Of course you will know how true the story of the ‘bloody beefsteak’ spread on a brown paper, and carried into the tourist car and cooked by Miss McEnteefer, is. I do not believe that either” (The Fannie Bolton Story, p. 118).

The inference is clear. Elder Starr was telling W. C. White, You know Fannie Bolton was lying, because she lied also about you. But what did W. C. White reply? You did not tell the readers about this. See page 119. There he admitted he did buy the beefsteak and it was cooked in the tourist car. (There is a discrepancy in the dating, but W. C. White was writing a considerable time after the fact, and not too many years before his death.)

Now you would have the readers of your article believe that when Fannie Bolton wrote of the experience in the depot, she was insane when she remembered about Elder Starr, but how was she so insane when she told about W. C. White, which act he admits to having done? It makes for a good “cover-up”—even if you have to distort the facts. Your assault on the character of Fannie Bolton through Elder Starr is reprehensible. I believe that I would rather take my chances with one who could pen the words “Not I, but Christ, be honored, loved, exalted” than with your cover-up through deception when you have access to the documents.—William H. Grotheer, Lamar, Arkansas.

Author replies

Your letter correctly points out that there were two accusations made by Fannie Bolton; and I dealt with both in my original manuscript, which runs 28 pages, plus an additional 5 pages of references (92 citations). The manuscript was submitted jointly to the editors of Ministry and the Book Department of the Pacific Press Publishing Association. I was originally under the impression that Ministry would run the material in a two-part series, using most if not all of it. (The small 32-page book from Pacific Press would then preserve in permanent form the full treatment of the subject; the book was due out July 31.)

For whatever reason, the editors of Ministry decided to publish instead a single abbreviated summary-synthesis, which boiled down my 28 pages of text into 15 pages, or about half of the original manuscript. Obviously something had to be left out; and the editors chose to use only one of the two accusations instead of running both—and my extended reply to both.

If the White Estate had any desire to cover up, as you allege, we would hardly have brought out our 122-page document, The Fannie Bolton Story, in 1982 that includes the distortions and fabrications of this unfortunate lady.

I still maintain that “the credibility of the witness is a legitimate and germane consideration in any evidentiary hearing, including this one” (my manuscript, p. 4), and Fannie’s record of institutionalization for mental illness for 16½ months is neither unjust nor unkind. The Ministry article did not carry the further statement of Elder G. B. Starr, found on page 118 of The Fannie Bolton Story, that at a Florida camp meeting he was told that Fannie had appeared and “made a public statement that she had lied about Sister White, and that she repented of it” (G. B. Starr to W. C. White, Aug. 20, 1933).

YES for loyal opposition

I would like to reprint “Does the Church Need a Loyal Opposition?” (May 1986). Of course I say yes and would like to send this out to my chaplains throughout the world.—Doyle Varvel, National Commander, National Chaplain’s Association.

We would like to reprint in our parish newsletter, which has a mailing list of about 300, “Does the Church Need a Loyal Opposition?” —Mary Olson, Emmanuel Episcopal Parish, Rapid City, South Dakota.

Women
From page 7

church irrespective of gender (Gal. 3:28). However, according to Scripture, ordination to serve as pastor or elder is open only to some men and to no women. The criterion for ordination is neither merely gender nor the presence of spiritual gifts for preaching, healing, teaching, and counseling. Rather, it is the evidence of a divine calling recognized by the church, who sets apart a man to act as her shepherd, father, and priest. These symbolic roles entail a certain relationship with the church that is dependent also upon male sexuality. My conclusion, then, is that the Scriptures preclude the ordination of women as pastors or elders but permit their serving in various other ministries.
Health evangelism: what’s gone wrong

Again and again,” says the servant of the Lord, “I have been instructed that the medical missionary work is to bear the same relation to the work of the third angel’s message that the arm and hand bear to the body.” 1 But in most areas the right arm has been paralyzed, if not amputated. Why is this? In what way was it to serve? How can it be used effectively to assist in the church’s mission of preaching the gospel to all people?

In the great evangelistic parable—the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:1-23)—the Lord reveals the secrets of success and the features of failure. The parable focuses on three points—the sower, the seed, and the soil. Throughout the parable the sower and the seed do not change. The only variable is the soil: the seed falls on the hardpan or rocky place, the beaten path, the weed patch, and the good ground. While these conditions of the soil represent the receptivity of different people, they also exhibit the degrees to which the soil has or has not been prepared. Simply stated, planting in those areas not prepared wastes both the effort and the seed.

Are we Seventh-day Adventists good farmers, or do we want to reap where we have neither plowed nor sown? And do we attempt to harvest before the seed has had time to germinate, grow, and mature?

Mervyn G. Hardinge, M.D., Ph.D., Dr. P.H., is dean emeritus of the School of Health at Loma Linda University in California. This article is provided by the Health and Temperance Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

In the terms of this parable, inspiration has counseled us that we must not only sow the gospel seed but must first prepare and enrich the soil.2

Here is where health evangelism—“medical missionary work”—comes into the picture. Inspiration tells us that preparing “the way for the reception of the truth for this time” is its basic role.3 In fact, “when connected with other lines of gospel effort, medical missionary work is a most effective instrument by which the ground is prepared for the sowing of the seeds of truth, and the instrument also by which the harvest is reaped.” 4

Health evangelism, the “right arm,” encompasses more than simply our medical work in its traditional sense (physicians, nurses, paramedical workers). It also includes health reform,4 our health principles,5 and our sanitariums, rightly conducted.6

What should health evangelism do?

How does health evangelism prepare the soil for the gospel seed? Inspiration specifies its role. 1. It breaks down prejudice and opens doors for the truth, acting like an entering wedge.11 2. It aids the body (the gospel ministry) to do active, aggressive work.11 3. Most important, it clarifies thought processes by elevating the moral standard, clearing the mind, and making sin appear sinful.11 “If we would elevate the moral standard in any country where we may be called to go, we must begin by correcting their physical habits.” 15

The last point may bear a little elaboration. There is a close relationship between the mind and the body. We usually infer from this that our thoughts and emotions influence body functions. This they assuredly do. Stomach ulcers, colitis, angina, skin allergies, arthritis—anxiety influences all of these conditions. In fact, problems such as these are sometimes called stress diseases.

But the relationship between mind and body is a two-way street. Not only does mental activity influence the physical; the physical affects the mental as well. Like the liver, kidneys, and testes, the brain is a physical organ composed of specialized cells designed to perform specific functions. Just as certain cells in the tail of the pancreas manufacture insulin, and specific cells in the liver produce bile, neurons in the brain cortex are constructed to produce thoughts. Every thought we think is the end product of electrochemical activity in living cells.

Like the cells of our other organs, the brain cells depend on the constituents carried in the blood for their sustenance and for their capacity to function. The lungs and kidneys (and sometimes the skin) must eliminate the waste products resulting from the brain's cellular activity. Foreign substances introduced into the body via the lungs, intestinal absorption, or even the skin, once in the circulation, are transported throughout the universe of body cells, including the brain, and have their varying effects. Products of tobacco smoke; alcohol; components of coffee, tea, maté, and other beverages; therapeutic and non-therapeutic drugs—all produce physiological disturbances (pharmacological actions) in accordance with their chemical structures. Because of excesses, deficiencies, or harmful components, the foods we eat may reduce the brain’s efficiency and interfere with its normal function.

Disuse of any organs or systems results not only in their atrophy and their
functional loss, but also in the deterioration of the brain areas controlling these organs and systems. Research has shown that judicious use of the brain in, for instance, decision-making causes enlargement of those cells involved, with corresponding increase in the number of connections with adjacent cells involved in the activity. This improves performance; it increases clarity of thought and action.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, health evangelism enables the biological transformation of the mechanisms of choice so that moral discernment becomes active and effective.

**Why hasn’t health evangelism worked?**

But health evangelism as we have practiced it has generally not been very successful. I believe the difficulties are caused by unrealistic expectations, faulty methods, and personnel problems.

Church administrators tend to expect too much too soon from health evangelism. The time frame for effective health evangelism is significantly longer than the current anticipated time frame for orthodox gospel evangelism. People who are attracted to health programs are generally more secular and less religiously oriented than those who are willing to attend manifestly religious meetings. As a result, developing their spiritual interest and bringing them to a decision takes much longer. The soil of the heart must be adequately prepared. We can’t reasonably expect an abundant harvest in just a few weeks.

Too often, also, administrators do not consider health programs evangelistic. So rather than giving them adequate financial backing, they expect them to support themselves.

When health is employed for evangelistic outreach, the methods used vary widely. Often they take the form of a short health or medical talk presented sometime prior to the evangelistic sermon. And generally, the nightly health topics are unrelated to the subject matter of either the evening sermon or the preceding and succeeding health talks.

A five- to ten-minute health talk does not lend itself to an in-depth presentation of any subject. At best it may instruct and should at least entertain. Because the public is interested in health, health talks attract listeners to the gospel service. This is, of course, desirable, and so through the years I have given hundreds of talks for preachers and evangelists. But I know many health professionals who dislike being used, like a travelogue, religious film, or a collection of rocks, as a feature in the program. Certainly this common form of “health evangelism” is neither intended nor designed to be a motivating force to change lives physically or spiritually.

Another common approach uses a short series of health meetings given prior to the beginning of the evangelistic series. Usually the health series omits any spiritual overtones. After five or ten talks the speaker generally hopes to find some subject to provide a mystical bridge to carry the audience from the health field to the spiritual. But no such bridge exists, and the attrition rate is high. Frequently many attendees feel that they were tricked, and the long-term benefits from this type of approach are small. With this approach, gospel messages are generally presented too soon. The people are not yet ready.

Others use numerous variations of the above methods, such as holding health classes one or two nights a week after the evangelistic service, for those who are interested enough to stay.

Usually the preacher is burdened with the presentation of the gospel of salvation, and rightly so. Sacrificing his time for talks on exercise or coronary heart disease or stress appears to him wasteful. The sooner he can be on his feet and into his evening subject, the better. But these approaches, which evince such attitudes, indicate a profound misunderstanding of the role of health in the soul-winning endeavor. Ellen White has indicated that “the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel’s message as the hand is with the body.”

To fulfill its purpose, health reform must become an integral part of the evangelistic program and not merely a come-on.

Health evangelism has suffered not only because of unrealistic expectations and faulty methods but also because of personnel problems.

The health professional has the right training to speak authoritatively on health. But rarely can he present talks as well as an experienced evangelist or even an experienced pastor. With little or no training in communication skills, he is as much a novice in public evangelism techniques as the minister is in health areas. Besides this, most graduates from health schools have had no experience in working with an evangelistic team.
Placing a seasoned evangelist with an inexperienced health professional is like harnessing an ox and an ass together.

Placing a seasoned evangelist with an inexperienced health professional (in the manner in which it is often done) is like, as the Bible puts it, harnessing an ox and an ass together. [Dr. Hardinge was circumspect enough not to specify which is which!—Eds.] Health professionals who desire to work in public evangelism need training in public speaking and in soul-winning techniques.

On the other hand, although Ellen White encourages all to obtain knowledge in physiology and anatomy, most ministers have little if any training in the biological and physical sciences. Health, nutrition, and drugs encompass broad areas of science, and with the explosion of knowledge recent years have brought in these fields, the untrained minister is ill-equipped to provide instruction on these subjects or to see that they are appropriately presented.

Those ministers who do take training in health usually have a weak background in the basic biological sciences (physiology, anatomy, chemistry, and microbiology), so in their course work they either shun or are excluded from in-depth courses in health and nutrition. They give only minimal time to their training because generally they must bear the expense themselves. (Sponsoring organizations don't tend to be generous either.)

Experience reveals that with rare exceptions, when conferences sponsor ministers for health education they don't usually send people who are currently, or even potentially, successful evangelists.

Those ministers who, having received minimal health training, return to their conferences are given no time to get their act together. They are expected to be productive soul winners immediately. In contrast, even ministers completing the Master of Divinity degree are not expected to be successful evangelists without additional experience.

Some indicate that when a successful health-evangelistic program is available they will try it! Successful evangelists hesitate to experiment with health programs lest the results be poor. They stick with the tried and the true. And pastors are under pressure to win souls, so they are reluctant to attempt something new lest they fail. Not infrequently pastors and evangelists who would like to conduct health-evangelistic programs are not encouraged to do so. And then it is flatly stated that "health evangelism doesn't work."

Some have even quoted a comprehensive study done in one of the conferences in North America in which no converts indicated that health programs contributed to their conversion. Unfortunately, what is not stated is that no health programs directed toward soul winning had been conducted in that conference during the period the study covered!

What can make our health evangelism more effective?

1. We must see that ministers have adequate health training, with opportunity to gain experience.

2. We must be sure health evangelists receive training in public speaking and soul-winning techniques.

3. We must recognize that health evangelism draws attendees who are more secular-minded than those who come to regular evangelistic meetings. They take longer to become interested in spiritual things; we must plan on much longer than two or three weeks from the "preparation of the soil" to the "reaping." But we can expect an excellent class of converts.

4. We must carefully organize the health evangelistic crusade to develop progressively the health and spiritual message as an integrated whole. When those attending modify their behavior and develop more healthful lifestyles, they will be better able to comprehend spiritual truths, which we may then appropriately introduce.

5. We must present spiritual thoughts and needs from the beginning. We should not seek some mystical bridge from the purely health-oriented to the purely spiritual material.

6. We should consider the health evangelistic program an integral part of the gospel commission and should fund it as fully as we do regular gospel evangelistic meetings.

Some years ago I had the privilege of working with a young pastor who cared for three small churches. He arranged that I give a series of health presentations each Sunday night (7 to 9 p.m.) beginning in January. Approximately 60 percent of the attendees were nonmembers. Throughout the meetings the attendance remained excellent.

I started each session by reading from the Bible, bringing out a spiritual thought, and having a short prayer—taking no more than 90 seconds for this part of the program. No one objected. Later I made spiritual applications as appropriate. Talks, demonstrations, and question-and-answer periods filled out the program.

At the end of May the health series ended. The young pastor had thoroughly identified himself with the meetings. As I closed the last meeting I wished each one the Lord's blessing and said, "If you follow consistently what I have taught you, you will add years to your lives; but if you will do what the pastor will tell you, you will live forever." The pastor continued with evangelistic meetings once weekly until late November, when, with the Lord's rich blessing, 90 percent of the nonchurch members were baptized.

"When properly conducted, the health work is an entering wedge, making a way for other truths to reach the heart. When the third angel's message is received in its fullness, health reform will be given its place in the councils of the conference, in the work of the church, in the home, at the table, and in all the household arrangements. Then the right arm will serve and protect the body."

Why not give health evangelism a try?

1 Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 288.
2 Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 57, 63.
3 Medical Ministry, p. 238.
4 Ibid., p. 240. (Italics supplied.)
5 Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 76.
6 Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 290.
7 Counsels on Health, p. 212; Medical Ministry, p. 191.
8 Medical Ministry, p. 246.
9 Ibid., p. 238; Evangelism, p. 513.
10 Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 327.
11 Ibid., p. 288.
12 Counsels on Health, p. 505.
13 Medical Ministry, pp. 242, 243.
14 Counsels on Health, p. 21.
15 Ibid., p. 505.
17 Counsels on Health, pp. 21-23.
18 Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 327.
1987 Sabbath school lessons

Rarely is there any relationship in theme between Sabbath school and the worship service. For greater impact why not consider having a special Sabbath—once a quarter or once a month—where the Sabbath school lesson and sermon are coordinated.

To help you in your planning, we are again publishing next year’s list of Sabbath school lesson titles.

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The Walk-on-Water Syndrome

This book should be read by all serious church members, lay and clergy, for the author clearly understands and describes the professional problems facing pastors today. Bratcher deals with the general implications for the local church when the pastor, because of unmet professional and personal needs, functions with lessened efficiency. He also examines the consequences for the minister and the body of Christ at large.

Bratcher shows not only why but how the minister and congregation can work together to improve ministry. Specific problem areas he deals with include: the minister's humanity and spiritual maturity, stress in the pastoral family, the call and ministerial fulfillment, conflict in the church, denominational politics, managing a system of volunteers, measures of ministerial success, and the need for effective placement.

This book deals with the ongoing, universal needs of pastors and congregations in a sensitive, objective manner. Both the congregation and the pastor will benefit from this insider's view of pastoring and the needs of pastor and laity.

True Fellowship
Jerry Bridges, NavPress, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1985, 190 pages, $8.95. Reviewed by Lester Bennett, director of Sabbath school ministries, Northern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

"Fellowship is more than food and fun."

Bridges has written this book to reveal just how much more fellowship is. Since some type of fellowship cliché seems a necessary part of the description of any church activity, his input is timely.

The author analyzes the various shades of meaning suggested in the New Testament usage of koinōnia. Some of these are in a relationship mode; others speak more of partnership. Koinōnia is a sharing of who we are and of what we have. In any case, Christian fellowship is only fully actualized when it is a product of the divine koinōnia—our fellowship with God.

Written in the Navigators' mold, this book is biblically based, practical, and devotional. Specific concerns dealt with include the community of fellowship: fellowship through spiritual gifts, through sharing resources, and through support of various ministries.

To reassure those who may be nervous about his basic theme, Bridges includes a chapter on the social dimension of the Christian life. He points out that in any fellowship event "there should be some natural and obvious correlation between the social and spiritual aspects of the event."

Mind Over Emotions

Upon seeing the title of this book, and its subtitle How to Mentally Control Your Feelings, I was excited. The back cover proclaims that if "overcharged, runaway emotions bully you into submission time after time, you'll appreciate the sensible approach taken by Christian psychologist [Dr. Les Carter]." After reading the book, I can honestly say that I am still excited. It is simply the best book I have read for helping a person understand emotions and how to handle them.

Carter's premise is that all people have emotions and that all people are sinful. Some people keep their emotions under closer control than others, and some also control their sinful propensities more carefully. But all of us handle our feelings imperfectly. The subject the book addresses is how we can hold our imperfect emotional nature in check.

Avoiding unnecessary use of technical terms, Carter writes in a very readable way and uses frequent illustrations to bring his point home. He discusses 14 different emotions and attitudes: anger, defensiveness, depression, envy, grief, guilt, impatience, infatuation, inferiority, loneliness, phoniness, pride, shyness, and worry. After defining each one, the author takes an in-depth look at it, and then gives ideas for keeping it under control.

The real key to emotional maturity is what the author calls "Christ-centered mental control." To this end, he points to Scripture as a reliable, unshakable foundation for our all-too-shakable emotions, and to Christ as the One who loves us no matter what we are or have been, and who loves us too much to leave us the way He finds us. When we claim Him as Saviour and Lord, we also lay claim to His strength, which enables us to live lives of composure and stability.

Clergy Desk Book

New ministers ought to find this book most useful. It will save them hours of time searching for and developing their own materials. The book is full of ideas, forms, work sheets, and a little of everything else dealing with some major areas that pastors constantly need to attend to.

Holck wrote his book after spending more than 25 years serving in a variety of church roles. His is the book every experienced pastor dreams of writing someday. Fortunately, not everyone has followed up the dream with action.

If you are an experienced pastor, chances are you have already learned and filed away for future use most of the things included in this book. But still, having all this material in one handy book can save time.

Preach On!

The subtitle of this book proclaims it to be "a concise handbook of the elements of style in preaching," and it fulfills that role very well. This concentrated book provides many tips for improving your preaching. The chapter on use of figures of speech is especially
practical and helpful, as is chapter 4, which provides simple, comprehensive proposals for proper breathing and pitch. Appendices provide lists of good preachers, text and sermon guidelines and criteria, and sample sermons.

What in the World Will Happen Next?

This book on eschatology is a typical dispensational, Israel-centered, secret-rapture, premillennial presentation. Powell claims that the two signs of the end are modern Israel and the European Common Market. The antichrist will set up his headquarters in the latter. At the rapture, the Spirit will be withdrawn. He says the antichrist will claim that the secret rapture was brought about by aliens from space kidnapping Christians. After the rapture, the antichrist will unite the world to protect it against any further invasion.

The two witnesses of Revelation 11:3-12 are the translated prophets Enoch and Elijah, who come back to Israel to preach during the last seven years following the rapture. They will be killed, and so finally will be fulfilled the scripture “Death passed upon all men” (Rom. 5:12).

Armageddon is portrayed as a Middle East war involving Israel. Powell’s hermeneutics vest in Israel what the New Testament gives to the church. He overlooks the fact that biblical end-time events revolve around God’s remnant church and not around the modern state of Israel.

Beyond Forgiveness
Don Baker, Multnomah Press, Portland, Oregon, 1984, 100 pages, $7.95, hardbound. Reviewed by B. B. Beach, director, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

This book, written by a Baptist pastor, presents in dramatic form the case history of how the author and his congregation dealt with a fallen pastoral staff member. It is a story of sin, loving discipline, restoration, reunification, and finally edification.

What are your options when the news breaks that a respected minister has been leading a double life? Baker outlines some 20 steps taken by his congregation in dealing with the situation. His presentation of the biblical principles and purposes of discipline is especially helpful. He asserts that discipline should be restorative, not punitive; that the church should not continue to be the only “army” that deserts its “wounded”; that the fallen minister is disqualified for spiritual leadership and must be removed from ministry until the restoration process is completed; that a sinner should not be excluded from the church when he confesses, repents, accepts reproof, and obeys church discipline; that the congregation is responsible before God to deal with transgression.

While the book presents interesting, uplifting spiritual insights, it does deal with a somewhat idealistic case. The fallen minister immediately confessed, repented, and willingly accepted church discipline. His wife and the congregation were supportive. Since the events took place in a congregationally organized church, no church authority outside the local group became involved.

The real challenge provided by this story is to reexamine our own attitudes toward fallen leaders. Is it reasonable to believe that a repentant minister who has been involved in several moral falls over a course of 13 years could, after a standard disciplinary procedure, be ready to return to full ministerial function in a year or two? On the other hand, is it possible that the true principles of the gospel provide complete forgiveness and restoration even for fallen ministers?

Christian Excellence: Alternative to Success
Jon Johnston, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1985, 227 pages, $6.95, paper. Reviewed by Ella Rydzewski, editorial secretary, MINISTRY.

We all long for excellence, but find ourselves constantly subject to Murphy’s Law. Johnston points out that excellence and success are not identical. In fact, in many instances they are conflicting goals. It all depends on the motive, he says. Success is reaching goals that are perceived as valuable and result in power, privilege, or wealth. To Johnston the difference between success and excellence is that “success grants its rewards to the few, but is the dream of multitudes. Excellence is available to all living beings, but accepted by few.”

Johnston traces the concept of excellence back to early Greek civilization. He feels that the Greek concept influenced Christianity, but that true Christian excellence is very different from the Greek ideal.

Greek excellence, he says, was equated with powers of reason and limited to extraordinary minds. By contrast, Christian excellence is within reach of all—philosopher, artist, illiterate, the impoverished. “An overflowing, unpretentious, genuine love can be possessed by even the most obscure and insignificant persons.” The Source and Supplier of true excellence is God.

Education and information are only the first step in achieving excellence. It is developed by a practice of the will. We are all gifted, and the author dares us to act on this realization. He uses scriptures throughout his writing to emphasize his ideas, and thus this book could easily be used as the text for a Bible study group.

Lifelines: The Ten Commandments for Today

In this book Edith Schaeffer presents a refreshing new view of the Decalogue. She uses new texts from both Testaments and life-situation illustrations to describe a pattern for living.

Shaeffer compares the commandments to a game of pick-up sticks to illustrate the point that it is extremely difficult to pick up one without dislodging another. Although she falls into the “one day in seven” trap when dealing with the fourth commandment, the book provides new insights and illustrations to show that the commandments are practical and relevant to modern life.

Recently Published
I Almost Died! Ern Baxter, Integrity House, P.O. Box 2, Mobile, Alabama, 1983, 120 pages, $5.95, paper.

Christian ministers are often tempted to be concerned only with the things of the Spirit, to the neglect of their bodies. If you need motivation to take care of the temple God has placed His Spirit within, Dr. Baxter’s exciting story of health, heart disease, and recovery is just what you are looking for.

This book is now available from MINISTRY Services, Box 217, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866, for US$3.95.
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Grief seminar on video

Chaplain Larry Yeagley has become widely recognized for his successful approach to aiding those who have experienced loss through death or divorce. Now his five-session seminar has been restructured for sharing via videotape and a local discussion leader.

The video seminar incorporates three to five discussion points into each 90-minute session. Participants spend about half of their time listening to content and assignments by Yeagley, and half in live interaction. These video seminars are currently being used in more than 300 locations across North America. One pastor says, “Of the eight nonmembers going through our last Grief Recovery Seminar, six continue to attend church. Their voluntary donations to date have totaled more than $300. I am amazed!”

Grief Recovery is one of eight complete video seminars produced by Adventist Life Seminars, a special project of the Gulf States Conference. For more information, call (601) 892-5559 or 482-3461.

Stimulate visits from your community

In our August Shop Talk we noted a source for help in preparing a direct-mail campaign to encourage people to visit your church during the upcoming holiday season, a time when the spiritually inactive would be most likely to visit.

Now we’ve received word that you can obtain newspaper ads and radio spots specially prepared to go with the direct-mail advertising suggested. (All of these can be targeted to specific groups of people in your area.)

For samples and further information, contact Mike Jones at PSW, 517 SW Fourth Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97204; phone (503) 228-4000. Since lead time is important, contact him right away to begin planning for the holiday season.

Chewing-gum money supports evangelism

About four years ago a Northern California Conference committee on evangelism was surprised to find that actual expenditures for field evangelism in that conference amounted to only about 3 percent of its gross income in tithes and offerings. In view of the importance our church has placed on fulfilling the gospel commission, this amount seemed inadequate.

At the Redwood Area Camp Meeting that followed the committee’s study, a booth calling attention to the need for funds to be used directly for evangelism raised $26,000.

Giving at camp meeting is not a new idea. But what made this booth’s contribution unique is the dollar-a-week plan in that conference amounted to only about 3 percent of its gross income in tithes and offerings. In view of the importance our church has placed on fulfilling the gospel commission, this amount seemed inadequate.

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Giving at camp meeting is not a new idea. But what made this booth’s contribution unique is the dollar-a-week concept—what someone referred to as chewing-gum money. The amount pledged is low enough that almost anyone can afford to give it.

The potential support the dollar a week offers evangelism is unbelievable. If the membership of the Northern California Conference, about 32,000, each gave a dollar a week for a year, they would make $1,664,000 available specifically for spreading the good news. The same plan carried out throughout North America would yield more than $35 million.

Elder Ralph Martin tried the dollar-a-week plan in the Nevada-Utah Conference, where previously there had been a rather meager amount for evangelism. In 1984, 300 persons were baptized there as a direct result of the camp meeting dollar-a-week funds.

The mechanics of the plan are simple. Set up and promote a booth at camp meeting. Tell our people that their money goes directly to evangelism. Set up a special evangelism fund. Recruit the workers and go into all the world and teach. God will bless our efforts if we will attempt great things for Him. (Submitted by Caleb Davidian, Placerville, California.)

Find it fast

What are Adventist authors saying about the Bible and geology, the inspiration of Scripture, or the nature of Christ? Where can you put your finger on information about church growth or television and religion?

The SDA Periodical Index is an up-to-date, handy reference tool to 37 Adventist magazines, including MINISTRY, the Adventist Review, Andrews University Seminary Studies, Message magazine, and Journal of Adventist Education. Special sections are devoted to reviewing books and listing obituaries.

Recently computerized, the Index is published each June in a 200-page volume. Individuals, church libraries, and junior academies may subscribe for $15. Hospitals, conferences, and academy and college libraries subscribe at the institutional rate of $40. Back issues of the Index, which began in the late sixties, are available at nominal cost.

You may gain quick access to any article listed in the Index even if you do not subscribe to all 37 magazines. The Index office, located on the campus of Loma Linda University, will photocopy any article you request for 10 cents a page plus postage, and send it to you by return mail.

For more information, write to David Rios, Editor, Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index, Webb Memorial Library, Loma Linda, CA 92350, or telephone (714) 824-4942.

We want your ideas

If you have practical ideas for making ministry easier or more effective, please send them to us at MINISTRY, Attn. Shop Talk Editor, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. We pay $10 for each published Shop Talk item that is not selling a product or service.

Most of us value worship and regard it as a vital part of the church's life and witness, yet we wistfully yearn to improve our church services. This course will provide you with five worship models that will help you plan a spontaneous yet structured worship service. It will show you how "authentic worship" can become a powerful form of mission and evangelism.

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