J. Robert Spangler, longest serving Ministry editor, retires.
Find it helpful

I have been receiving your magazine on a periodic basis for the past several years. I admit there are times when I only glance through, but there are other times when the issue winds up dog-eared and well read. Such was the case with the March 1990 issue, which contained several encouraging and inspiring articles, not to mention the challenge of Robert Johnston's "The Minister as a Believer."

I am grateful that you are willing to go to the expense of sharing your journal with others in such a generous way. And I am thankful for the careful writing and nonjudgmental attitude expressed in the articles.

Here's one Southern Baptist who looks forward to what you have to say, and often finds it helpful. — Tony W. Cartledge, pastor, Woodhaven Baptist Church, Cary, North Carolina.

Having read the letters and appreciation in the March issue of Ministry, I feel that I should add my own thanks to those who wrote to you. I am minister of a United Reformed church in East Anglia, and very greatly value your magazine. So many articles are "right on the ball" that it would be difficult to single out specific examples of those that have been helpful to me. Thank you for your kindness and brotherly generosity in sending Ministry to me. I really do look forward to its arrival each month. — Edward Hasler, Lowestoft, Suffolk, England.

A prayer group?

I am surprised that Crystal Earnhardt would call her women's group a "prayer group" ("Organize a Spirit-filled Ladies' Prayer Group," January 1990). Not once in the article does she mention that the women pray!

They watch videos, have Bible studies, and engage in such activities as boating, styling hair, weight control, cooking, quilting, decoupage, crocheting, social get-togethers, shopping, outreach, visitation, parties, and bereavement support.

These are all worthwhile activities and enrich members' lives and fellowship, but they are not prayer. Come on, women — let's spend some honest prayer time with our Lord. — Beverly Hall, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Another resource for using Greek

I was interested in what Maylan Schurch had to say concerning "How to Brush Up on Your Greek" (March 1990). A couple thoughts.

First, I have both the interlinear and "facing pages" formats. Because my parsing is better than my vocabulary, I prefer an interlinear text for spot-checking the original. When the facing pages format presents me with a string of unknown words, I find myself skipping that section rather than working it out. But with the interlinear I can quickly find the word in question. So I don't consider interlinears necessarily an extreme.

Second, Schurch omits a resource I consider invaluable and one that I think those who are interested in using their Greek should own. I am referring to A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament by Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981). This tool goes through the New Testament verse by verse: (1) parsing every verb form; (2) giving the meaning of every word not used more than 60 times in the New Testament (when no translation is given, you consult the word list at the beginning that lists words used more than 60 times); (3) indicating significant grammatical constructions; and (4) making numerous references to Zerwick's own Biblical Greek (a concise, inexpensive grammar) by paragraph numbers. This tool also contains a glossary of grammatical terms, noun and adjective declensions, and verb paradigms. Zerwick-Grosvenor is also a small book — the size of Novum Testamentum Graece — so it is easy to carry with you.

With a United Bible Society text and Zerwick-Grosvenor you can sight-read a passage in Greek if you have at least a little memory of Greek class. By the way, I'm not getting any commission on this book either! Like you, it is just a book I feel strongly about. I hope others can profit from it too. — Loring A. Prest, pastor, Evangelical Covenant Church, Norwalk, Michigan.

Warnings regarding fasting

It was refreshing to read the article by Roland Hill in the March 1990 issue of Ministry about such an unpopular subject as fasting. I have personally found great benefit in practicing a modified form of fasting consistently. It braces my spirits and gives me renewed courage to face up to problems, temptations, and difficult decisions. In addition, it usually gives me a spiritual high.

But even good things can be carried to excess. Ellen White cautions against going without food for prolonged periods of time, and even countenances eating "sparingly of the most simple foods" during a fast (see Counsels on Diet and Foods [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1938], pp. 187-191).

While abstaining from food can, of course, be a factor in limiting one's weight, yet it would be much more effective if accompanied by a rational diet. For instance, weight control can be dealt with in a practical way by adopting some plan of nutrition, such as the Weimar diet, which calls for eating other things in place of eggs, dairy products, and all kinds of grease. When we took up this diet, I found that within only two weeks I experienced a general sense of well-being, accompanied by a fresh surge of energy in my whole system as well. I might just add that my wife... (Continued on page 28)
First Glance

The team that has served you through Ministry's pages during these past five years. Back row, left to right: David C. James, associate editor; Kenneth R. Wade, associate editor; J. David Newman, editor; Rex Edwards, seminar director. Front row, left to right: Mary Louise McDowell, secretary; J. Robert Spangler, editor emeritus; Ella Rydzewski, editorial assistant.

This issue marks a transition from one generation to another. Ministry editor J. Robert Spangler is retiring (see Floyd Breeze's article on page 4), as is his secretary, Mary Louise McDowell, and yours truly is stepping into Spangler's position.

As the new editor of Ministry I pledge to uphold the same high standards followed by my predecessor. This journal will continue to speak to pastors' needs. It will also address some of the major issues affecting the world and the church. Among the major topics we want to discuss are: Global mission — how do we take the gospel to every people group? Pluralism — how much dissent can the church tolerate? AIDS — how much help should the church give? Sexual equality — should this include women's ordination? Apostasy — do we ignore it or deal with it? The environment — should the church become involved in trying to save this planet, or should it concentrate only on spiritual matters? Christ's second coming — how should we be living if we expect His imminent return?

This journal will continue to uphold the Bible as the only book that gives the solutions to humanity's problems. Above all, it will lift up Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, and salvation as a gift from Him. May we always look to Jesus as the true source of all help and healing.

In this issue "Does God Get Angry?" will challenge your thinking. Among the provocative questions the author addresses are the following: Does God have emotions similar to humans? Does He actually punish people? Does God kill?

"The Minister as a Pastor" looks at the heart of what it means to be a minister; President Wilson concludes his series on revival and reformation with a strong call to "true repentance"; Luka Tambaya, from Nigeria, makes a strong case for family planning; and Galen Bosley informs us about the importance of sleep.

This issue also contains a preliminary statement on abortion. For some time the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been wrestling with the question of how to make an appropriate statement on this sensitive topic. We need your critique of this proposition as we consider further refinements.

J. David Newman
The changing of the guard

Floyd Bresee

J. Robert Spangler, Ministry’s longest serving editor, retires.

Bob Spangler, who has been on the Ministry editorial staff for the past 28 years, retired as the journal’s editor on May 1.

In the fireplace of life, Spangler is pure cedar. Cedar catches fire quickly and burns brightly. And so does Bob. His creative genius and burning enthusiasm will be greatly missed by all of us as he enters retirement.

Bob graduated from Washington Missionary College (Columbia Union College) in 1943. In June of that year he married Marie Claytor. They immediately entered the pastoral ministry and eventually served in Ohio, Florida, Alabama, New York City, and Texas.

Bob developed a passion for evangelism. This soul-winning emphasis was especially sparked when he worked with Roy Allen Anderson, the secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association and editor of Ministry, in an evangelistic series in Cleveland.

In 1954 Bob was called to the Far Eastern Division as ministerial secretary. He served there until the 1962 General Conference session elected him an associate secretary in the GC Ministerial Association. At the General Conference he worked under the leadership of his old friend Roy Anderson.

Spangler’s long association with Ministry began at that time. He served as associate editor from 1962 to 1965, managing editor from 1965 to 1967, then as editor from 1967 to 1990. His term of 23 years was the longest of any editor of Ministry.

Floyd Bresee is secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Association.

Fruit of a crusade in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia, 1955.
years as editor makes him the longest serving editor of this pastors' journal. His predecessor, Roy Anderson, served for 16 years. L. E. Froom, the first editor, served for 22.

During his long tenure with the Ministerial Association, Spangler also served as its head from 1980 to 1985. But his greatest interest was always the magazine, and the conflicts between trying to be an effective editor and association secretary led him to resign the latter position in favor of being an associate secretary whose chief responsibility was to edit Ministry.

We at headquarters, along with ministers around the world, will remember Bob for many exemplary traits, but two predominate: piety and creativity.

Piety

Spiritual themes occupy much of his time and conversation. He longs to help men and women accept Jesus as their Saviour. A warm, pastoral heart led him to treat his staff with genuine care and personal concern. His spiritual leadership will be greatly missed.

Creativity

We will also remember him for his brilliant creativity. Bob's mind was constantly turning out new ideas, good ideas, all of which he wished could be implemented—now! He could have kept three secretaries busy—and sometimes did! Magazine deadlines, schedules, timetables were nuisances to be circumvented if at all possible. Ideas, changes, additions, improvements to each issue kept tumbling out of him right up to press time.

Two products of his creative mind occupied his heart and efforts during the last 10 years of his work in the Ministerial Association: PREACH and Project 27.

PREACH

Bob's creative genius gave us the Project for Reaching Every Active Clergy Home (PREACH) program that sends gift subscriptions of every other issue of Ministry to clergy of all faiths. The Columbia Union piloted PREACH in its territory in 1975. The project soon spread to all of North America. Now it embraces the world, with some 50,000 ministers in North America and 20,000 in the rest of the world receiving the magazine six times a year.

Project 27

Spangler's passion for the cross of Christ conceived and gave birth to the book Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . . . He was convicted that the cross and the great themes of redemption were central in the 27 fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. This belief motivated him to coordinate the writing, editing, and production of the book. He then led out in raising the $800,000 needed to send this book to some 200,000 ministers of all faiths and to every major library and leading media office in the world.

In addition to numerous articles and editorials, Spangler has written several books. He authored First Things First, a morning devotional book, and Marked: The Case Against Saturday Blue Laws. With Leo Van Dolson, he coauthored Healthy, Happy, Holy.

Bob and his wife, Marie, worked in a team ministry before he was called into departmental work. Later Marie taught elementary school for many years. Then their concern for ministers' wives led them to be cofounders of Shepherdess International, a resource and support organization sponsored by the General Conference Ministerial Association for Seventh-day Adventist ministers' wives. Spangler has relinquished his position as editor, but will not be leaving the Ministerial Association until late summer. And his ministry will continue in retirement through study, preaching, and writing. In fact, one reason he gives for retiring is that "I want to spend more time getting into the Word."

We feel that the editor of a magazine addressed primarily to pastors needs to have sat where they sit.
emirates he plans to continue contributing to Ministry. So while we say goodbye, we also welcome him to his new role as adviser and elder statesman.

Newman is new editor

J. David Newman, executive editor since 1984, became editor of Ministry on May 1.

Ministry is striving to become an ever more international magazine. It is fitting that its new editor comes from a broadly international background. Newman was born of British parents in 1943 at Cape Town, South Africa. He attended school in Nigeria, Scotland, England, and the United States. He is a graduate of La Sierra College, Riverside, California, where he met his wife, Phyllis. The family cherishes its Old World heritage—daughters Michelle and Heather have both followed in Dad’s footsteps by returning to England and attending Newbold College, his alma mater.

Our new editor holds an M.A. in archaeology and history of antiquity from Andrews University. He is a Doctor of Ministry candidate in church organizational behavior at McCormick Theological Seminary. Our hope is that, while continuing to carry his editorial responsibilities, he will be able to finish his work there in the next few months.

Experienced

David has had nine years of pastoral experience. We feel that the editor of a magazine addressed primarily to pastors and their spouses needs to have sat where they sit. Newman’s experience has been unusual, in that he has held pastorates in two divisions of the world church. He pastored in Scotland, as well as in Michigan and Ohio.

And he has had departmental experience. For five years he was Sabbath school and lay activities director of the Ohio Conference.

He has had conference administration experience as well. For three years he served as assistant to the president of the Ohio Conference and became conference secretary there shortly before being called to the GC Ministerial Association in 1984. Having been where they are, David brings a unique understanding of the needs and problems, not only of pastors, but of departmental leaders and administrators as well.

He has had editorial experience. For the past six years, Newman has been schooled in the editor’s craft under the able tutelage of Bob Spangler. During that time, Spangler has placed more and more responsibility on David’s shoulders, until his move into the editorship was easy both for him and for the magazine.

Competent

Newman is a natural at organization and management. Flow charts, assignment lists, deadline boards, and all the planning necessary to put a monthly magazine together is his instinctive domain. His plan is that topics treated in the magazine will emphasize pastoral skills and be divided as follows: family and spouse, 15 percent; issues and reports, 25 percent; professional skills, 30 percent; spiritual life, 15 percent; and theology/biblical studies, 15 percent.

David is anxious to give the magazine a more international flavor. In the past we have had great difficulty getting articles written by authors outside North America. A recent talent search designed especially to attract overseas authors was a first step in correcting this imbalance. In 1991 Newman plans to move articles by overseas authors up from 3 percent to 30 percent of Ministry’s content. His long term goal is 50 percent, since 50 percent of our subscriptions are from overseas.

In addition he intends to emphasize issues especially significant to pastors. Presently, about 20 percent of Ministry articles are by practicing pastors. His goal is to raise that to 60 percent. When a department wants the magazine to publish an article promoting a particular program, he plans to ask that the article be written by a pastor who has successfully implemented that program in a local church.

He hopes to develop a bank of authors who are pastors. Newman’s goal is to use this means to eventually increase commissioned or assigned articles from the present 15 percent to about 50 percent. Commissioned articles will help the editors better control both content and quality in the magazine.

Dedicated

David’s editorial philosophy will emphasize two words: relevance and distinctiveness. He believes that a denomination now nearly 150 years old must examine itself carefully to be sure that what it offers is relevant to the present and not just a reflection of the past. On the other hand, he insists that Seventh-day Adventists must never lose that which makes them a distinctive people.

Newman has both an inquiring mind and a loyal spirit. In his new job, neither is much good without the other. A loyal spirit toward his church and its leadership is a must for the editor of a journal that makes such an impact on the church’s ministry. But the magazine must also have a prophetic voice, asking the church why it is doing what it is doing, and if there might be a better way to do it. His supportive attitude toward his church, balanced with his perpetually wanting to know “why,” fits his new job admirably.

David enjoys a close relationship with his Lord. Believing that every minister should give top priority to private devotions, Newman and Spangler felt it their responsibility to lead the way. A few months ago they entered into a pact with each other to challenge and encourage one another to spend, without fail, at least one hour daily in prayer and Bible study. It has proved to be a rich experience for our new editor.

With great pleasure I welcome David
Newman to his new post, undoubtedly one of the most influential in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Jarnes and Wade become associate editors

David Jarnes and Kenneth Wade, former assistant editors and assistant secretaries of the Ministerial Association, have been promoted to being associate editors of Ministry.

Jarnes

We call him Dave, to differentiate him from David Newman, who is all of two years older. Dave Jarnes brings a Middle American flavor to the Ministry staff. Born in Missouri in 1945, he spent most of his childhood and ministry in Middle America. His wife, Jeanne, on the other hand, grew up in Burma, Sri Lanka, and India. Their son and daughter are now teenagers.

Dave graduated, cum laude, from Union College and later received an M.Div. from Andrews University Seminary, where he has also completed classwork for the Ph.D. in biblical studies/New Testament. He pastored for 10 years.

The full-time Ministry staff is made up of the three editors, editorial assistant Ella Rydzewski, and secretary Mary Louise McDowell. Of these, Dave is the most experienced editor. He worked for Andrews University Seminary Studies before coming to the Ministerial Association. Also, he has been here longest of the three editors, having joined the Ministry staff in 1983. He does more actual editing of articles than any other staff member.

God has blessed Dave with an amazingly analytical mind and exceptional ability to think creatively. He has the capacity to turn a problem over and over in his mind until he comes up with a facet to it that no one else has recognized. And his theological expertise is treasured by all of us.

He is anxious to help direct the magazine to the needs of pastors, and wants especially to see it successful at helping keep the ministry committed to Christ and His church.

Dave feels greatly indebted to Bob Spangler for helping him see the importance of presenting ideas in an interesting and attention-getting manner. Also, for challenging him to learn "how to keep the boat moving without capsizing it."

Wade

Ken Wade is the baby of the editorial staff. Born in Oregon in 1951, he adds a Western flavor to the group. As a boy he developed an avid interest in both science and engineering.

Seemingly insignificant happenstances (providences) often bring dramatic results. Arriving at Walla Walla College as a freshman, he sensed a call to the ministry but still had not decided whether to major in theology or biology. Entering the seminar to register, he found that all the biology advisers were busy, but one of the biology teachers was not.

Ken sat down and shared his dilemma with just the right adviser, who asked, "Why don't you take a theology major and biology minor like I did?" Four years later Ken graduated, cum laude, with majors in theology and biblical languages and a minor in biology. He later received an M.Div. from the seminary at Andrews University.

His professional plan was to spend a lifetime in the pastorate. However, after several years of pastoring, he developed what we would like to see in more pastors—an interest in writing. This eventually caught the attention of Bob Spangler and led to Ken's joining the Ministry staff as an assistant editor. He came to Washington, D.C., with Debby and their two sons in 1984.

Ken enjoys a special interest in evangelism. He has recently held two series of meetings in the church where he attends. Not long ago he brushed up on his Spanish and spent a few weeks in Inter-America seeking out the secrets of soul-winning success in that productive field.

He has become an outstanding authority on the relationship between the New Age movement and Christianity. His book Secrets of the New Age was published in 1989.

Wade brings to Ministry significant administrative skills. Also, he is the magazine's computer expert. This gift is useful both in producing the magazine, and in helping it bring to pastors information about the software most useful for membership tracking, keeping interest lists, and filing in the local church.

Ken's burden for Ministry is that it speak especially to pastors. It should also challenge the church at large to reach its full potential. He wants to see the magazine used to help the church implement a strategy for reaching the whole world for Christ.

He is especially grateful for the dynamic environment created among the editorial staff by Bob Spangler. Having access to Bob's fertile mind and creative genius has challenged Ken to keep both himself and the magazine growing.

Balance

We are proud of the beautifully balanced team constituted by these three members of our editorial staff. They come from different parts of the world and share an international outlook.

All have pastored. Between them they have a total of 27 years of pastoral experience, all of it in multiple-church districts. They understand well the frustrations of a pastor who must try to spread his wings over several congregations at once. One has also had local conference departmental and administrative experience.

All have been trained in biblical studies. One has gone on to specialize in management, one in theology, one in science and computer skills.

All are busy raising families, experiencing together the joys and frustrations of parenting. Newman and Jarnes are "preacher's kids" and understand the minister's family from the viewpoint of both child and parent. Each of the three sees the minister's spouse and family as a significant part of the ministry.

All were trained by Bob Spangler. Each has spent six years or more under leadership of the "old pro."

All love our Lord and His church and long to see Christ's work finished.

As "pastor's pastor" I say farewell on behalf of all of us to Bob Spangler. We praise him for his tremendous contribution to Ministry and the Ministerial Association. Not only has he edited an outstanding journal; he has carefully prepared three outstanding men to carry on. The magazine has made a great contribution to the cause of Christ, but as Bob would be quick to say, its best years are yet to come!
Is God love? Or is He just nice? Is Jesus a lion, a lamb, or both?

By the time of Christ some philosophers had come to the conclusion that God, in His absolute perfection, is not subject to human passions and emotions. He knows no distress, excitement, love, or anger. Philo, a Hellenistic Jew who lived at the same time as Christ, wrote: "Some . . . assume that the Exist- tent feels wrath and anger, whereas He is not susceptible to any emotion at all. For anxiety is peculiar to human weakness."!

We know better, for we know that Jesus experienced very human emotions. And He said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9®). Scripture teaches that God suffers with His children: "In all their distress He too was distressed" (Isa. 63:9). God’s tender love exceeds that of the most devoted mother: "Is not Ephraim my dear son, the child in whom I delight? Though I often speak against him, I still remember him. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I have great compassion for him," declares the Lord” (Jer. 31:20).

However, a strangely seductive variation of the idea that God has no emotion is gaining ground today and is widely accepted among Christians. It is the belief that God does not get angry.

Modern theology tends to emphasize God’s love at the expense of His holiness. It overemphasizes the fact that His love is unconditional (ignoring passages such as John 15:10-14: “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love. . . . You are my friends if you do what I command”) and tends to depersonalize the concept of retribution. The universe, it is said, is like a live wire that automatically burns those who get into the wrong relationship to it. But, as C. S. Lewis pointed out, those who substitute the picture of a live wire for that of an offended Deity do not realize that they have deprived us of all hope, for an offended Deity can forgive, but a live wire cannot.

There is, in fact, a great deal of truth in the "live wire" idea. Scripture teaches that evil brings its own reward (Hosea 13:9; Jer. 6:19; Prov. 26:27, 28:6, 10; Ps. 34:21; 37:14, 15). God’s punishment of the wicked often consists in abandoning them to their wickedness (Rom. 1:24-28; Ps. 81:12; Acts 7:42) to reap its terrible results. Even when the Bible speaks of God destroying, the destruction often is actually the work of alien armies or evil men (Jer. 3:4, 5). In 1 Chronicles 10:14 we are told that because of Saul’s transgression, the Lord “slew him” (RSV), yet verse 4 says that Saul “took his own sword, and fell upon it” (RSV). The idea of retribution as a natural process might be further supported from those texts that speak of sowing and reaping (Prov. 22:8; Hosea 10:13; Gal. 6:7-9; Job 4:8). But these texts hardly imply that damnation is a natural result of our evil deeds any more than they imply that salvation is a natural result of our good works.

Although God’s retribution is often indirect, there is also overwhelming scriptural testimony to God’s active, direct vengeance. Those fundamental Old Testament passages that define God’s character affirm that He is both extremely kind, loving, and forgiving, and extremely zealous in punishing and avenging (Ex. 20:5; 34:6, 7; Deut. 7:9,
The authors of Scripture see no difficulty in this at all, nor do they shrink from presenting God's vengeance as a salient aspect of His character (Deut. 32:41-43; Ps. 94:1; Isa. 1:24; Ezek. 7:8, 9; Micah 5:15; Nahum 1:2). Ah, but this is the Old Testament! Don't we find a different picture in the New?

No. The same dual emphasis is repeated in the New Testament: God saves and destroys (James 4:12). We are told to consider both "the kindness and the severity of God" (Rom. 11:22, RSV). One of the most intense pictures of God's vengeance is found in Revelation 19:11-21—and this is a portrayal of the Son! The same Testament that says "God is love" also says "God is a consuming fire." He is the avenger (Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30). Even Jesus got angry (Mark 3:5; compare Rev. 6:16). He destroyed the fig tree and threw the robbers out of the Temple (Mark 11:12-17). Jesus also spoke of the wrath of God (John 3:36); and portrayed God as a king who relentlessly punished and destroyed the impenitent (Matt. 18:34, 35; 22:7; Luke 12:46; 19:27). Thus the divine wrath is as clearly taught in the New Testament as in the Old.

Righteous indignation

Of course, human anger is all too often fueled by wounded pride; we become petulant and vindictive; we lose control. God's anger is not like this. But there is a righteous indignation that is not only legitimate but essential. Imagine two individuals who observe a group of thugs tormenting a helpless victim. One of the observers shrugs his shoulders and walks away, while the other becomes angry and forcefully intervenes. Which of them is righteous: the calm one or the angry one?

Wrath is the emotion a just man feels when confronted with injustice (see Judges 9:30; 2 Sam. 12:5; Neh. 5:6; Ex. 32:19; Acts 17:16). To love the good is to hate the evil that is antagonistic to it (Heb. 1:9); therefore anger and love are two different sides of the same coin. Perhaps this is why it is John, the apostle of love, who wrote the most graphic portrayal of God's wrath in the New Testament—the book of Revelation.

The antithesis of love is not wrath but apathy. And God is anything but apathetic. The second commandment says that God is a "jealous" God. "Jealous" might also be translated "zealous," or even "impassioned." In other words, God cares—fiercely. Like any good parent, He gets upset when His children go astray. God is not lovey-dovey, namby-pamby, laidback, harmless, and jovial. If His children are naughty, He disciplines them (Heb. 12:4-11), because He wants only the best for them.

God's hatred of evil is just as strong as His love of good.

Another argument that those who deny that God kills raise is that what is wrong for us must be wrong for God, too. At first glance this seems reasonable. Surely God practices what He preaches, doesn't He? If the law is a transcript of His character, does He not keep it?

The analogy of the child-parent relationship is helpful here. Many things that children are forbidden to do ("Don't torment the cat") are just as wrong for the parents. But some things ("Don't touch the car keys"; "Don't stay up past 9:00") are not wrong in themselves; they are forbidden only because the child is incapable of exercising adult responsibility.

The same is true of God and us. God forbids us to do certain things that are perfectly legitimate for Him to do. For example, God demands praise (Jer. 31:7) and accepts worship, but it is wrong for a creature to do these things (Rev. 19:10). God asks us to rest on the Sabbath, but He continues to work on this day (John 5:17)—as do His human agents (Matt. 12:5). God forbids us to take vengeance, but He does so (Rom. 12:19)—as do His human agents, the civil authorities (Rom. 13:1-5). Vengeance in itself is not wrong, but God knows that we cannot be trusted to carry it out fairly in our own case.

But what about the sixth commandment? Set aside for the moment the generally accepted scholarly position that this commandment should be translated "Thou shalt not murder" and does not forbid capital punishment or killing in war. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that it forbids all killing. Even if this were true, would it mean that God
Himself has no right to take life! No, because life belongs to Him. I have no right to burn down another man’s barn (eighth commandment), but the owner has that right because it belongs to him. Likewise, God may take away the possessions of any of His children for His own reasons—something that would be called stealing if we did it—because all things belong to Him. A parent may teach his child not to steal from others and yet, without being inconsistent, take away from the child a toy that the child is misusing.

**God and genocide**

But does that justify what some would call genocide? Let us examine a worst-case example of the problem: the slaughter of Canaanites in the Old Testament. Here generations of skeptics have found ample ammunition in their case against God. How could God command His people to wipe out entire cities of men, women, and children simply because they happened to hold different beliefs?

Consider the following thought experiment: Suppose that you were out walking one day and heard agonizing screams coming from inside a house across the road. Upon entering, you saw a boy being held down on a table by several teenagers while a muscular man, his back toward you, was sawing through the boy’s leg with a carpenter’s saw. The boy was screaming in pain. What would you think of this man?

Suppose now that, upon inquiry, you discovered that the man was the boy’s father; that he was also a physician; that he had just arrived at his home in this primitive and isolated village to find his son dying of acute septicaemia of the leg; that no sedatives were available; and that tears were streaming down the father’s face. Now what do you think? A full knowledge of the situation makes quite a difference!

In the case of Numbers 31, I suggest that if we knew all of the facts, that which at first seems a cruelty would be seen as a mercy, as in the case of the amputating physician. Consider the facts we know: if one accepts the premise of a literal hell and the Bible’s evaluation of the apparently irremediable wickedness of the Canaanites—and archaeology has confirmed the moral bankruptcy of Canaanite culture—then God’s authorization of their total destruction is justifiable, even merciful, in that it entailed the least possible amount of suffering for the smallest number of individuals when seen in the light of eternity. Had the Canaanites been allowed to live, they not only would have continued in sin, resulting in additional suffering in hell someday, but they would have begotten offspring who would have ended up in the same place. In addition, they would have corrupted the Israelites. God told His people to terminate the Canaanites’ lives in order to prevent all of this. It was a case of less suffering now or greater suffering later.

Difficult times impose difficult questions upon us. In times of war, to end the conflict more quickly even the defenders of liberty, justice, and righteousness have made decisions that brought suffering or death to the innocent. If great leaders and good men sometimes find it necessary to let the righteous die with the guilty for the achievement of a greater good in the end, then has the Creator Himself no right to indiscriminately (see Genesis 18) destroy evil societies?

Hell was originally intended only for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41), but those who have chosen to share Satan’s character must share his punishment. It has been suggested that God will leave the wicked to destroy one another, but would a just God leave the weak at the mercy of the strong? How then could the degree of suffering be proportional to the amount of light (Luke 12:46-48)? According to Matthew 10:28, human beings can “kill the body but cannot kill the soul”; only God can “destroy both soul and body in hell.” Hell is a supernatural extinction of existence; it is God’s retributive wrath against sin.

The doctrine of hell can be understood only as a manifestation of God’s retributive justice, in which the sinner is punished until he receives the exact amount of pain he deserves in the light of his crimes. Jesus warned those who failed to make things right with the judge that they would never get out of prison till they had “paid the last penny” (Matt 5:26, RSV). The unforgiving servant was delivered to the torturers, “till he should pay all his debt” (Matt. 18:34, RSV). The severity of the punishment depends on the amount of light a person has had (Luke 12:47, 48).

**Reform or punishment?**

But the concept of equivalent punishment, or retributive justice, is currently under heavy attack. Why punish men in hell when there is no hope of reform?

After all, giving the criminal his deserts will not undo the crime he has committed. Is not the only legitimate reason for punishment to deter or to reform?

Let us see what happens when we replace the “primitive” concept of imposing punishment to match the crime with a more “humanitarian” concept of evil as a sickness that needs to be “treated” until the patient is reformed. Under the humanitarian system, punishment would no longer be based on what is deserved. It would not be measured (and limited) by any “barbaric” rule like “an eye for an eye,” but would be administered only as long as it served to reform, or to deter others—as is done in some nations where dissenters are shut up in psychological wards until they are “cured.”

Ugh-oh! Already our new theory of justice is headed for trouble. “That’s unfair,” you say. Not under the humanitarian system it isn’t, for the offender is not really being punished at all; rather he is simply being “reformed, rehabilitated, educated.” Such a system no longer deals with categories of justice and injustice, of deserts and merits, but of sickness and cure. Surely rehabilitation is not unjust! Under the new theory the offender is not punished until the punishment is commensurate with the crime, but is treated until he is cured—which could last forever.

C. S. Lewis provides a trenchant analysis of the ultimate results of rejecting the concept of retributive justice: “According to the humanitarian theory, to punish a man because he deserves it, and as much as he deserves, is mere revenge, and, therefore, barbarous and immoral. It is maintained that the only legitimate motives for punishing are the desire to deter others by example or to mend the criminal. . . .

“My contention is that this doctrine, merciful though it appears, really means that each one of us, from the moment he breaks the law, is deprived of the rights of a human being. The reason is this. The humanitarian theory removes from punishment the concept of desert. But the concept of desert is the only connecting link between punishment and justice. It is only as deserved or undeserved that a sentence can be just or unjust. I do not here contend that the question ‘Is it deserved?’ is the only one we can reasonably ask about a punishment. We may very properly ask whether it is likely to deter others and to reform the criminal. But neither of these two last questions is a
question about justice. . . . Thus when we cease to consider what the criminal deserves and consider only what will cure him or deter others, we have tacitly removed him from the sphere of justice altogether. . . .

"Only the expert 'penologist' (let barbarous things have barbarous names), in the light of previous experiment, can tell us what is likely to deter; only the psychotherapist can tell us what is likely to cure. It will be in vain for the rest of us, speaking simply as men, to say, 'but this punishment is hideously unjust, hideously disproportionate to the criminal's deserts.' The experts with perfect logic will reply, 'but nobody was talking about deserts. No one was talking about punishment in your archaic, vindictive sense of the word. Here are the statistics proving that this treatment deters. Here are the statistics proving that this other treatment cures. What is your trouble?" n2

What punishment?

Why do sinners deserve punishment? For the same reason that God deserves praise. We should not praise God with a view of receiving some favor, but because He is what He is. The purpose is not to change God; the praise is not offered as a cause to achieve some result; it is simply due. Likewise, Adolf Hitler, for example, deserves to suffer for the suffering he has caused others, not to change him, or to achieve any result, but simply because it is due. It is justice. If, in addition, his suffering has a deterrent effect, or if it cures him, all the better. But retribution is required apart from any deterrent or curative effect it may have. It is the moral analogy to the physical law "for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." Anyone who works deserves to receive the wages that he has earned, and the wages of sin is death.

Furthermore, the punishment must match the crime. This is the principle behind the law of lex talionis, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." I would argue that this principle is the very essence—in fact, the definition—of justice. Unfortunately, a misinterpretation of the Sermon on the Mount has led some to regard this principle as an abandoned relic of a primitive mentality.

Most scholars (e.g., Joachim Jeremias, David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Arthur W. Pink) agree that Christ, in Matthew 5:38-48, is not setting aside the law of lex talionis as a judicial principle, but as a principle of personal vengeance. It is wrong for the individual to take the law into his own hands. Vengeance belongs to God (Heb. 10:30) and to His delegated agents. Although Jesus warned His audience on the mount to "resist not evil" (Matt. 5:39, KJV), yet in Romans 13:4 the governing authority in the land is said to be a "minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil" (NASB). Civil authorities have the right to avenge. But Jesus' audience on the mount had no such authority. The Old Testament law of lex talionis was given as part of the laws of the government of the nation of Israel; but the Sermon on the Mount is given to the Jews who have lost their sovereignty to the Romans.

Therefore, "an eye for an eye" is still a valid principle of jurisprudence. Indeed, the lex talionis principle—punishment commensurate with the crime—is actually reaffirmed in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:1, 2; "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

The rest of the New Testament also indicates that God acts in accordance with the principle of lex talionis. "God is just," writes Paul. "He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you" (2 Thess. 1:6). Note that this "tit for tat" response is considered to be proof of God's justice. Hebrews 2:2, 3 makes the new dispensation an intensification of the old, where "every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution" (RSV). Colossians 3:25 and Romans 2:5-11 speak of payment in kind for one's deeds. The parable of the unmerciful servant concludes with a retributive judgment that requires an amount of suffering equivalent to the crimes committed: "So angry was the master that he condemned the man to torture until he should pay the debt in full. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you, unless you each forgive your brother from your hearts" (Matt. 18:34, 35, NEB).

Particularly revealing are the Apocalypse's indications of the behind-the-scenes reactions to God's judgments. The plea for blood vengeance on the part of the righteous dead in Revelation 6:9-11 is eventually answered in Revelation 19:2, where God avenges on Babylon "the blood of his servants." After the first three angels have poured out their "bowls of God's wrath" upon the earth (Rev. 16:1-4), the angels praise God for His justice in requiting the wicked blood for blood (verses 5-7), excluding "They deserve it" (NASB). Note that this punishment is purely retributive, not corrective, for at this point in history the wicked are beyond repentance (verses 9, 11); probation has closed. It is clear that God works on the principle of "an eye for an eye" and that the angels find this praiseworthy.

One last point. The "no-wrath" position robbs even the biblical statements about God's love and mercy of all force, for without wrath, there is no mercy. When a parent serves a child a meal, this is not a mercy, but a duty. But if the child disobeys, and for punishment is sent to his room without supper, and then the parent relents and serves him a meal in his room, this is mercy, because only wrath is to be expected. Thus unless we take seriously the scriptural testimony about God's wrath, we can discover no need for His mercy.

It is easy to slip from the truth of "God is love" into its counterfeit: "God is nice." It seems much safer to serve a tame God, always gentle, ever the lamb, never the lion. But as long as the Bible remains our creed, this caricature of God must be rejected.

n2 Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version.

1 Quod Deus Sit Immutabilis 52.
True repentance involves more than confession. It requires us to admit the darkness of the depth of our souls.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Rev. 3:19) is the call of the True Witness to the angel of the Laodicean church. But will the people, represented by the angel, respond to the call?

As I have pointed out in the past few months, the message to the Laodicean church presents our true condition as a people. It clearly identifies a twofold problem within the church—self-righteousness, and spiritual blindness to our true condition. This condition has been caused by drifting away from Jesus. However, the Laodicean condition is not completely hopeless, for Jesus presents a twofold solution to the problem—repentance, and a renewal of our relationship with Him.

My fellow Laodiceans, I want to speak to you now about repentance—true repentance. One of the steps followed by the apostles as they prepared themselves for the day of Pentecost was a humbling of themselves in true repentance and the confession of their unbelief. Ellen White counsels that “the same work, only in greater degree, must be done now.”

There is no way for us to escape the issue of repentance. Therefore, it is time for us, individually and as a church, to humble our hearts before God in true repentance.

What is repentance?

Of the four conditions to be met before God will give us the latter rain—confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer—it is the experiences of confession, humiliation, and repentance that are least understood. In other words, three fourths of the conditions are either vague in the minds of most Christians or are misunderstood. Is it any wonder, then, that we have not met the prescribed conditions and have not received the power that God is waiting to give us?

In the minds of most people, repentance consists of kneeling at the side of our beds at the end of the day and asking God to forgive us for losing our tempers, or yelling at our children, or telling a partial untruth, or mistreating animal pets, or doing other misdeeds. Although this is important, how many realize that losing our tempers or telling a lie are symptoms of a spiritual disease? As long as we continue to treat only the symptoms, the disease will never be cured! When a person has a fever or a headache, taking an aspirin may give some relief, but this is only treating the symptoms. If the disease is isolated and treated, the fever and headache will disappear.

What is true in the physical realm is true also in the spiritual. Confessing the lies we tell and the harshness with which we treat other people is the right thing to do. We must remember, however, that we are dealing with the symptoms of the disease. We must also come to grips with the disease itself, and then the symptoms will begin to disappear.

The spiritual disease that has infected us is sin, in which we all share. The apostle Paul explains how we became sinners, what our condition is in sin, and how the disease can be overcome.

To begin with, Paul tells us that we are in a sinful state because of the decision of Adam, who was the corporate head of
the human race. One passage that clarifies this for us is Romans 5:12: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

I have been told by some of our scholars that this verse is a literary chiasm. A chiasm is a rhetorical inversion of the second of two parallel phrases or clauses for the purpose of emphasizing a truth. By parallels Paul tells us that by man (Adam) sin entered the world, and as a result, all men sinned. That is, because of Adam’s sin, all men became sinners. And since by sin death entered the world, the result is that death spread to all. That is, because sin entered into the world, all human beings die.

What Paul is teaching becomes clearer when we recognize that Paul is writing in terms of corporate identity. This corporate identity is seen clearly in Paul’s summation of his position in verses 18 and 19: “Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation [corporate identity]; even so by obedience of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life [corporate identity]. For as one man’s disobedience many were made sinners [corporate identity], so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous [corporate identity].”

Now, why spend time, you ask, going through this theological reasoning? Because, my fellow believer, it is by understanding what Paul is saying theologically that we can understand what our real problem is. Once we understand the problem, we can find the solution that God has laid out for us in His Word.

**Our real problem**

First of all, the problem is our sinful, or carnal, nature, which we have received as a birthright from Adam. Every human being possesses this nature. It is this nature that leads us to sin against God. It is the presence of the carnal nature within all human beings and what it leads us to do that caused Paul to say: “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). We sin in action because we possess a fallen, carnal nature as a legacy from Adam.

As the apostle Paul opens his heart to us, he confesses: “I am carnal, sold under sin” (Rom. 7:14). Why is Paul carnal? He inherited his fallen nature from Father Adam. Who sold him under sin? Father Adam. We are all in this same condition; there is not one human being that is any different from another.

My Christian friend, true repentance will take us beyond dealing with the symptoms of sin. Please do not misunderstand. Sinful acts that grow out of the presence of the carnal nature should be confessed and forsaken. But true repentance leads us to the point at which we will come to grips with the fact that the carnal nature exists within us.

A sad but graphic illustration of this is the experience of a man who had been confined in a death camp. Yehiel Dinur appeared in an Israeli courtroom to testify against the Nazi leader Adolf Eichmann, who was accused of being a butcher of humanity. When Dinur saw Eichmann, he “suddenly began to cry, then fell to the floor. It was not hatred or fear which overcame him. He suddenly realized that Eichmann was not the superman that the inmates had feared; he was an ordinary man. Says Dinur: ‘I was afraid about myself. I saw that I am capable to do this. I am . . . exactly like he!’”

Mike Wallace of 60 Minutes told the story on TV. He summed it up: “Eichmann is in all of us.”

The potential exists within each one of us to do the most inhuman things against our fellow human beings. We must be willing to recognize and admit this if we are ever going to experience true repentance. True repentance will lead us to humble ourselves before God, to look Him in the face and admit that we too have the carnal nature. It will lead us to admit to Him that we are capable of committing the most terrible sins. It will lead us to plead with Him to take control of our carnal natures and to subdue them and replace them with the character of Jesus.

The admission before God that there is a power within us that drives us on to sin and rebellion against Him will lead us to deal more kindly and redemptively with our brothers and sisters. When one of them sins, we will realize that the potential exists within us to do the very same thing. For we too are children of Adam.

I ask that we all examine our hearts. We must recognize that the carnal nature exists within us and be willing to admit the fact that the potential exists for us to commit grievous sins. Then we must ask God to control that evil nature. Until we can humble ourselves before God and admit our true condition, we will not understand what repentance is all about, nor can we even begin to understand what righteousness by faith is all about.

Until we humble ourselves before God and admit to Him that our natures are evil, it is not likely that we will have any desire to listen to the counsel the True Witness offers to spiritual Laodiceans. But this is what the Laodicean message is all about. We claim to be rich and increased with goods when all the time we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. As long as the carnal nature dominates our lives, our ears and minds will not be attuned to hear the invitation to buy the gold tried in the fire, white raiment to be clothed, and eyesalve that we may see.

The apostle Paul warns us: “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh” (Rom. 8:5); “For to be carnally minded is death” (verse 6); and “The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (verse 7).

Jesus is the only answer to the carnal nature’s dominion. Paul cries out: “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24, 25). Ellen White affirms Paul’s solution to our problem: “You cannot change your heart, you cannot of yourself give to God its affections; but you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; your affections will be centered upon Him, your thoughts will be in harmony with Him.” Our natures must be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ! We must not only be revived spiritually, but changed and sanctified by the power of Jesus and His Spirit.

Beloved, it is time for God’s people to humble themselves before Him and admit their true condition. We are sinful by nature. The carnal nature has led us to perform selfish acts to the detriment of God’s work and to the hurt of His people. Have we been quick to judge our brothers and sisters, to speak harsh words of condemnation, and to spread by mouth and print rumors and suspicions? Have we been thoughtless and mean to the members of our families and to the members of God’s world family? Have we been self-centered, grasping, and harsh?

*(Continued on page 29)*
The minister as a pastor

The physiology of the pastor should include eyes that take in both the larger picture and the needs of individuals, a heart of compassion, and hands that work.

God has chosen to give different assignments to those in different forms of ministry. There were the apostles—those sent out directly by Christ as His ambassadors. There are prophets—those who speak for God and sometimes reveal the future to His people. Evangelists have as their primary responsibility the winning of souls and the establishment of churches. And pastors have as their assignment preaching, teaching, nurturing, and encouraging the flock. Their assignment to a particular locale is longer term, and they are identified most closely with the needs and aspirations of the people. As such, they need certain special qualities—a spiritual physiology.

Pastors should have what I call eagle eyes. The eagle flies high above the earth, and so its view takes in great expanses of territory. Yet naturalists tell us that even from the distance of a mile in the sky it can see a small animal such as a rabbit. Like the eagle, pastors must be able to see the big issues of life. Yet they cannot lose sight of the needs of individuals. They must be able to see people as they are, warts and all, and not lose sight of what they can be by God’s grace. They must be able to see present circumstances, while also able to see rich possibilities. As the late Robert F. Kennedy said: “Some men see things as they are and say why. I dream things that never were and say why not.” The pastor needs to see the present clearly yet not be blinded to the future.

When I was growing up I used to hear old Black preachers talking about the things they saw in their “mind’s eye.” They had the facility of seeing beyond the limiting realities of the present, the poverty, pain, and discrimination, to the greater realities and glories of the future. They were able to carry us beyond our dismal present and enable us to see and experience those glories with them.

Pastors must have hearts of compassion. Matthew 9:36 gives us great insight into the character of Jesus. We are told that when Jesus beheld the pitiful, disillusioned multitude moving through life without direction or leadership He was moved with compassion. Pastors should have hearts that can be moved, hearts that love people, that pity rather than scorn them in their all-too-human problems. There are pastors who love projects and programs but have no love for people. Others love to study but have little love for people. Such individuals have their places in life, but they shouldn’t be pastors. Perhaps they are suited to being builders or librarians, but not pastors. The pastor

This article is the sixth in a 10-article series that considers the most vital relationships and responsibilities for which Seventh-day Adventist ministers are accountable. Most of the articles in the series were first delivered as chapel addresses at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. If you receive Ministry on an every-other-month basis and want to have the full series, send us four stamped, self-addressed envelopes, and we will send you copies of the intervening articles as they become available.
must love people, all kinds of people.

Unfortunately, some ministers see people as stepping-stones to greater prestige. They are willing to use people as long as they can help them fulfill their ambitions. For such ministers, people are pawns in a game to be manipulated and controlled but not understood or loved.

Pastors must be willing to try to understand their people, though they are not always easy to love or understand. And because sometimes the saints are anything but saintly, pastors must be willing to forgive. Being willing to forgive is particularly important when you are right or have the advantage. It is not easy to be forgiving under such circumstances, but when you think about how much God through Christ has forgiven you, how can you help being forgiving?

Pastors must also be willing to ask for forgiveness. They are as human as anyone else, and there are times when they need to ask forgiveness. Some believe that a frank admission of a mistake and a request for forgiveness is a sign of weakness. In reality, the ability to ask for and accept forgiveness is a sign of true strength, a sign that one understands what religion is all about.

Finally, a pastor may have great insight and a compassionate heart, but these mean little if he or she doesn't have the hands of a worker. This is just a simple way of saying that pastors must be involved in the lives of their members. Too many pastors are preaching sermons that lack relevance because they don't really know their members and the problems their members face every day. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick was once asked why he spent so much time counseling when as a pastor of the prestigious Riverside Church he could have had staff members counsel and could have devoted his time to sermon preparation.

"Why," he replied, "if I didn't counsel, I wouldn't know what my people's needs are or how to preach to them."

We can't afford to remain in an ivory tower. We must visit people, be with them, touch them—touch them in joy and sorrow, touch them in triumph and tragedy, touch them in pleasure and pain, touch them in wisdom and ignorance. The pastor with a worker's hands knows the importance of visiting parishioners and does not fear getting involved in the problems of the people.

**Acquiring pastoral physiology**

How, then, does one acquire such a spiritual physiology? How does one obtain the eyes, heart, and hands of a pastor? These are not characteristics that come to any of us naturally. The apostle Paul is a good example of how we can develop these characteristics. When we first meet him, as Saul of Tarsus, he is a bigoted, inflexible Pharisee with an indifference to the needs of individuals and a streak of cruelty. Years later we meet him as the apostle Paul, a sensitive pastor who for three years labored with tears for the people of Ephesus. The great change in Paul's life took place when Jesus became a real, personal Saviour to him.

The same is true with us. The first step to fulfilling the role of pastor is learning to know Jesus as a personal Saviour. When Jesus becomes real to us, when He is not just a sermon topic, when we see Him as our Saviour, our ministry will change. In fact, we cannot really pastor until we ourselves have drunk of the waters of salvation to which we are trying to lead others.

Second, we must read widely and come in contact with the great minds of the centuries. When Paul wrote Timothy during his last imprisonment, he asked Timothy to bring his books when he came to see him. Paul's books were so important to him that even though he had little time left to live, he wanted to read and grow.

We need to learn to read widely, not merely focusing on things that we feel will make good preaching material. Wide reading helps us understand human nature better. It helps us see beyond the narrow confines of our personal experience. Seeing the world through the eyes of others enriches us and places us in a position where we can enrich our fellows.

Finally, one really becomes a pastor by ministering to people. By meeting them in crises and sharing their joys and sorrows. By walking with them, identifying with them, and being one of them rather than merely directing them. Many years ago, inspired by a saying of Homer, Sam Walter Foss wrote the poem "The House by the Side of the Road." In it Foss expressed a desire to have a house by the side of the road to shelter wounded humanity. In the last verse of his poem he declared:

Let me live in my house by the side of the road
Where the race of men go by;
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
Wise, foolish—so am I.
Then why should I sit in the corner's seat
Or hurl the cynic's ban?

Let me live in my house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

In a poem entitled "Crowded Ways of Life" Walter S. Gresham took issue with the thoughts Foss had expressed:

"This is only a half truth the poet has sung Of the "house by the side of the way." Our Master had neither a house nor a home,
But He walked with the crowd day by day.
And I think, when I read of the poet's desire,
That a house by the road would be good;
But service is found in its tenderest form
When we walk with the crowd in the road.

So I say, Let me walk with them in the road,
Let me seek out the burdens that crush,
Let me speak a kind word of good cheer to the weak
Who are falling behind in the rush.
There are wounds to be healed, there are breaks we must mend,
There’s a cup of cold water to give;
And the man in the road by the side of his friend
Is the man who has learned to live.

Then tell me no more of the house by the road;
There is only one place I can live— It's there with the men who are toiling along,
Who are needing the cheer I can give. It is pleasant to live in the house by the way
And be a friend, as the poet has said; But the Master is bidding us: "Bear ye their load,
For your rest waiteth yonder ahead."

I could not remain in the house by the road
And watch as the toilers go on,
Their faces beclouded with pain and with sin,
So burdened their strength nearly gone.
I'll go to their side, I'll speak in good cheer,
I'll help them to carry their load;
And I'll smile at the man in the house by the way,

(Continued on page 29)
Family planning—a forbidden practice?

The claims of some that practicing birth control violates Bible principles do not hold up. In fact, family planning comprises a part of the Christian’s relating responsibly to this world.

To highlight the importance of looking ahead and counting the cost of becoming His followers, Christ drew illustrations from everyday life (Luke 14:28-32). In doing so, He underscored the need for planning in all aspects of the Christian life. But some Christians are not sure of the morality of family planning, or planned parenthood. Let’s look at several of the objections that are raised against this practice and consider whether it accords with biblical instructions regarding the Christian’s life.

“Multiply and replenish the earth”

Twice during the early period of human history God specifically instructed human beings to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 1:28; see also Gen. 9:7). In the light of these commands, some ask how anyone can advocate population control. One wonders what would have happened if sin had not come and none of Adam and Eve’s offspring had died. Would human beings today even have had a place to stand on this earth? Perhaps in those circumstances God would have limited the population either by sterilizing the men or “closing the wombs” of the women.

But in this less-than-ideal world, God has left us to do for ourselves what He may have otherwise done for us. When Judah was facing national destruction and long exile, God instructed Jeremiah not to marry and have children. Primarily God’s instruction to Jeremiah involved a message He wished him to communicate to His people: their faithlessness was going to result in severe troubles. But secondarily, we can see that His instructions indicate that prospective parents should take circumstances into consideration when they are thinking about bringing children into the world.

In a similar vein to the message that came to Jeremiah, Jesus, foreseeing the misery that would befall the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, lamented, “Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!” (Matt. 24:19). In fact, Luke 23:29 records an even stronger statement: “Behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.”

We may not be directly facing the dire events that Jeremiah and Jesus spoke of, but the lesson that we should take circumstances into account in planning our families certainly applies. The economic situation in the world, especially in the so-called Third World, daily emphasizes that Earth cannot sustain its exploding population. On July 13, 1987, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) proclaimed baby Matej Gaspar of the northern city of Zagreb, Yugoslavia, to be the 5 billionth citizen of this planet. Matej was only one of the estimated 240 babies per minute or 340,000 a day that were born that year. Another source reveals that the 4 billionth child was born in 1975, and it says that if the present population growth rate were no more than maintained, the 6 billionth child will be born by the year 2000.2

The size of the earth’s population is alarming, since three quarters of the sur-
face of the earth is water and humans share the rest with deserts, forests, mountains, plants, and animals. Compounding the problem, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's world survey found that land degradation could reduce food production over the long haul by nearly 20 percent if conservation measures are not taken—some 544 million hectares (2.1 million square miles) of essential rain-fed crop lands could be lost. Thus this organization's ambition to provide food for all by the year 2000 seems a mere mirage.

When at the beginning of human history God instructed Adam and Noah to populate the earth, the problem of the time was lack of people. That instruction does not speak to our time when the problem is that of overpopulation.

“Children are a blessing from the Lord”

One of the texts grossly misused by opponents of family planning is Psalm 127:3-5: “Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.”

No one can refute the truism that children are a blessing from the Lord. Children like Isaac (Gen. 22:1-9), Moses (Heb. 11:23-39), Timothy (2 Tim. 1:5), Mary (Luke 1:26-35), and the four daughters of Philip (Acts 21:8, 9), to mention but a few, were a blessing to their homes and society.

But are all children a blessing or a reward from the Lord? The word blessing generally implies something that brings happiness to the recipient. What happiness does a rebellious child bring to its parents? According to Deuteronomy 21:18-21, a child that was a stubborn rebel, a glutton, and a drunkard, was to be stoned to death. I do not see that as a “blessing” or a “happy” affair.

Similarly, I wish every “fruit of the womb” were God's reward rather than simply a natural result of the operation of the law of cause and effect. But I do not see that the reason women like Sarah and Elizabeth were barren most of their lives was that they were such sinners that God would not “reward” them with “the fruit of the womb.” Nor, on the other hand, can I regard the children of harlots, adulteresses, and fornicators (like Tamar, Gen. 38:24; Jephthah’s mother, Judges 11:1-4; and Hosea’s wife, Hosea 1:2) as rewards from God.

In other words, even today many a virtuous married woman has prayed for a child but has received none. And many prostitutes, single girls, and jilted lovers—some of whom even pray that they do not become pregnant—end up with unwanted children. Children may be, but are not necessarily, blessings from the Lord.

Nor does a “full quiver” necessarily make a happy family. Solomon, for whom it is believed Psalm 127 was written, certainly knew by experience that having many children does not guarantee the happiness and security of the home. As a member of the large family of King David (1 Chron. 3:1-9), he saw how the happiness of the royal family was marred by Amnon's rape of his half sister Tamar and Absalom’s consequent murder of the former (2 Sam. 13:1-13). Solomon also witnessed Absalom’s attempt to steal the throne from his father (2 Sam. 15:1-13). It took a bitter civil war and the life of Absalom before David could be restored to his throne. So a home full of children does not guarantee happiness and security.

Is birth control murder or infanticide?

Some people say that birth control breaks the sixth commandment, “Thou shalt not kill.” Birth control does not necessarily involve the loss of human life. It may simply attempt to prevent the formation of life—and when life is not yet formed, there can be no death or murderer. (Since abortion involves a life already begun, the Seventh-day Adventist Church generally opposes this practice except in certain instances. It does not regard abortion as an acceptable method of birth control.)

Others suggest that God killed Onan for practicing one of the natural methods of birth control, “coitus interruptus” (Gen. 38:10). But verses 8 and 9 reveal that God punished Onan not because of the method he used but because of the purpose for which he used it—to avoid having a child who would be legally his deceased brother's according to the law of the levirate (see Deut. 25:5-6). God was not prohibiting birth control per se.

It is true that Margaret Sanger (1883-1966), the pioneer of modern family planning organizations, made statements that suggest that her motives were tainted with racism and elitism. She is quoted as saying, “More children from the fit; less from the unfit; that is the chief aim of birth control,” and “birth control, to create a race of thoroughbreds.” In the mind of this Irish American, the unfit members of society were the Blacks, Mexican-Americans, Jews, Indians, Spanish- and Italian-Americans, the poor, the illiterates, the handicapped, and the criminals. She advocated that all these should be eliminated by a massive sterilization program she herself described as “polite genocide”—a dehumanizing program that Hitler’s Nazi Germany later adopted.

The unpalatable early history of modern family planning has made many in the Third World suspect that the richer countries prefer promoting birth control to providing funds to combat hunger in the poorer nations. But whatever ulterior motives may have crept into family planning, the fact remains that prevailing social and economic realities worldwide prove that the scheme is necessary.

“God will provide!”

Opponents of family planning usually attempt to close the discussion with the short but pious clause “God will provide.” Some quote texts like Psalm 37:25, in which David states that he never saw “the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread,” and Matthew 6:27, 31-34, where Christ rebukes those who are “anxious about tomorrow” (RSV).

I agree with David. I too have never seen the “righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” This is because a righteous person takes the Bible seriously and works hard to earn a living (Prov. 31:27; 1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Thess. 4:11, 12). According to Proverbs 20:4, it is the sluggard who begs for a living.

But in Matthew 6:27-34 Jesus was not encouraging His followers to spend their time in idleness. He was rebuking those who make riches or food their objects of preoccupation or indeed their gods (see also 1 Tim. 6:9, 10 and Phil. 3:19). That is why Jesus concluded His rebuke by saying, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

So neither of the texts with which we started this section suggests that God is ready to do for us what we can do for ourselves. They do not, in any way, encourage people who know they cannot
care for many children to go ahead and bring them into the world only to suffer. Ironically, some of the people who advocate the mass production of children turn around and blame God for not alleviating their suffering.

How many children?
I do not wish to legislate how many children a Christian couple should have. The choice is primarily the couple's, to be made on the basis of certain factors that each couple should consider before having children. I would say the first factor to consider is the health of the mother-to-be and of the unborn child, since childbearing poses some hazards.

Too many women today become very sickly during their later years because of bearing many children. They often look older than their age. Some die too early to watch their children grow to maturity, while others meet their untimely death at childbirth.

Chief A. Fajobi, the executive director of Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), said, "Medically, it is dangerous for the health of the mother and child if childbirth is too early (before the age of 18 years), when the body though matured is not strong enough to shoulder the physical burden of childbirth; too frequent (ideal gap is a two- to three-year interval); too many (two or three children are ideal); and too late (after the age of 35 years), when the body is too frail to bear the burden of childbirth." 9

Next the couple should consider whether they are able to provide the necessities of life for the offspring they bring into the world. These necessities include caring for their physical needs—such as providing shelter, food, clothing, and health-care. Ellen G. White said that parents "have no right to bring children into the world to be a burden to others," adding that parents who do so "commit a crime in bringing children into the world to suffer for want of proper care, food, and clothing." 10

But the necessities of life involve more as well: education, training (Prov. 22:6), and the close personal attention children need. Each parent has only so much love to share. The fewer the children, the easier it is to distribute that love fairly. Remember the witty saying, "Small is beautiful, and the fewer, the merrier."

Finally, the couple should consider not only their own circumstances but also those of the society of which they are a part. The parents' choice of the number

of children to be born is not only a personal matter; their choice affects society, too. An expert rightly stated that "when many couples decide to have large families, even wealthy countries like the United States cannot keep up with the rapidly increasing needs of public services." 11

Ironically, it is usually the poor individuals in each country and the poor countries in the world that delight in mass production of children. It is rather unfortunate, since it is reported that these poor countries, found in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, make up 75 percent of the world's population, but produce only 50 percent of the world's food. 12

If these poorer families and poorer countries do not want to starve or beg for a living from the richer ones, then they should embrace family planning ideals. 13

Planned Parenthood allows couples to choose the number of children they have without coercion—either natural or official. (China's population of 1 billion has forced that nation to enact a law making it a crime for any Chinese couple to have more than two children.) 14

In conclusion, the proper training of and care for our children is a sacred obligation. It affects both our own souls and those of our children. Hence the need for proper planning. The seriousness of the matter is underscored in 1 Timothy 5:8 as follows: "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (NIV).

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A service of the General Conference Ministerial Supply Center
Provisional statement on abortion

The General Conference Christian View of Human Life Committee, which was assigned to hammer out a consensus on abortion, has just concluded its third meeting. The committee is releasing the statement reproduced below and is calling for the reaction of all interested parties.

As a committee we wrestled with how to balance a high concern for life with the need to consider the less-than-ideal condition of this fallen world. Are there parallels between abortion and slavery? God never intended that His free moral agents become enslaved to other human beings. Neither did He wish us to take innocent human life. But God works through as well as above culture. He gave laws to the Israelites concerning how they should treat slaves. I am opposed to the taking of innocent life. But must I, can I, impose that belief on people who view abortion as the lesser of two evils? While the church should uphold the sanctity of life, should it also give some guidance to those who feel that bearing a live child is an impossible option?

Read these guidelines carefully. If you have concerns about sections of this statement, write to me and explain how you would reword it. The committee’s next meeting is October 14-16, 1990.—J. David Newman.

A Seventh-day Adventist Statement of Consensus on Abortion (Preliminary)

Many contemporary societies have faced conflict over the morality of abortion. Such conflict also has affected large numbers within Christianity who want to accept responsibility for the protection of prenatal human life while also preserving the personal liberty of women. In the 1970s the Seventh-day Adventist Church issued guidelines concerning abortion. More recently the need to clarify, revise, and expand these guidelines has become evident, as the church attempts to follow Scripture, and to provide moral guidance while respecting individual conscience. Adventists want to relate to the question of abortion in ways that reveal our faith in God as the Creator and Sustainer of all life and in ways that reflect our Christian responsibility and freedom. Though honest differences on the question of abortion exist among Adventists, the following statement represents an attempt to express consensus on a number of major points:

1. Prenatal human life is a magnificent gift of God. God’s ideal for human beings affirms the sanctity of human life (in the image of God) and requires respect for prenatal life. However, decisions about life must be made in the context of a fallen world. Abortion is never an action of little moral consequence. Thus prenatal life must not be thoughtlessly destroyed. Abortion should be performed only for the most serious reasons.

2. Abortion is one of the tragic dilemmas of our fallenness. The church should offer gracious support to those who face personally the decision of abortion. Attitudes of condemnation are inappropriate in those who have accepted the gospel. As Christians, we are commissioned to become a loving, caring community of faith that assists those in crisis as alternatives are considered.

3. In practical, tangible ways, the church as a supportive community should express its commitment to the value of human life. These ways should include: (a) educating both genders concerning Christian principles of human sexuality, (b) strengthening human relationships, (c) emphasizing responsibility of the male and female for family planning, (d) calling both to be responsible for the consequences of behaviors that are inconsistent with Christian principles, (e) creating a safe climate for ongoing discussion of the moral questions associated with abortion, (f) offering support and assistance to women who choose to complete crisis pregnancies, and (g) encouraging and assisting fathers to participate responsibly in the parenting of their children. The church also should commit itself to assisting in alleviating the unfortunate social, economic, and psychological factors that may lead to abortion and to caring redemptively for those suffering the consequences of individual choices on this issue.

4. We do not condone abortion for reasons of convenience or birth control. However, we recognize that there are exceptional circumstances in which abortion may be considered. These circumstances may include significant threats to the pregnant woman’s life or physical or mental health, severe congenital defects carefully diagnosed in the fetus, and pregnancy resulting from rape or incest. After appropriate consultation, including careful weighing of the welfare of the fetus and the mother, the final decision regarding termination of the pregnancy should be made by the pregnant woman. She should be aided in her decision by accurate information, biblical principles, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

5. As Christians, we acknowledge our accountability to God and seek balance between the exercise of individual liberty...
and our accountability to the faith community and the larger society. Attempts to coerce women to remain pregnant or to terminate pregnancy should be rejected as infringements of personal freedom.

6. Church institutions should be provided with guidelines that will assist them in developing their own institutional policies regarding abortion. Persons having a religious or ethical objection to abortion should not be required to participate in their performance.

7. Church members should be encouraged to participate in the ongoing consideration of our moral responsibilities with regard to abortion in the light of the teaching of Scripture.

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**Jubilate!**

The gruff words and screams of pain coming from the women’s restroom betrayed the fact that Mrs. G’s granddaughter must have wiggled in the pew one too many times again. As a boy I often observed Mrs. G at church. (I don’t remember her real name. She lives vividly in my memory, though—as Mrs. Grim!)

No one seemed to know her very well. Probably because you couldn’t catch her eye to strike up a conversation. She was always too busy frowning at the floor.

Since her own daughter or son no longer attended church, Mrs. G had taken it upon herself to make sure that her grandchildren learned religion. Often she marshaled the boy and girl who appeared to be about 3 and 4 years old, into the pew directly behind the one where my family sat, so I was painfully aware of each slap, fillip, and rebuke the children endured.

It didn’t surprise me when the children quit coming to church. I wonder whether they have been able yet to begin to think of religion or God without feeling a knot in their stomachs. Do they continue to live in fear that God will respond to their every misstep with summary justice?

Some people see God that way. Others see Him as a laissez-faire benefactor whose strongest response to our bumbling rebelliousness is an amused chuckle.

How does God respond to human failure? Your answer to that question has a lot to do with how you represent Him to those around you. If you see Him as a stern disciplinarian intent on exacting His pound of flesh for every fault, you may end up portraying Him to others after the manner of Mrs. G. But it is equally fallacious to portray Him as an imperturbable observer who doesn’t care whether we succeed or fail in our walk with Him.

**Allowing for failure**

I’ve become deeply impressed recently with the amount of emphasis the Bible gives one particular characteristic of God: His willingness to accept and work with human frailty and failing. Of course, the first example of this is found in Genesis 3. Another good example is seen in God’s patience with Abraham’s repeated attempts to answer his own prayers. And of course, the New Testament has its stories of the prodigal’s father, and Christ’s acceptance of Peter even after the disciple denied his Lord. But it is the jubilee system described in Leviticus 25 that brings God’s accepting, forgiving attitude down to the life of the common person.

In instituting this system that assured a family’s property would return to it every fiftieth year, God made it plain that the basis of this plan lay in the fact that He was the ultimate owner of everything. “The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me,” He said (Lev. 25:23, NKJV).

The effect of this system was to decry that no matter how bad you “blew it” in your business dealings, your fate was not to be left up to your peers and competitors. No. It rested in the hands of God. And God would always give you, or your descendants, a chance to start over again from square one.

Sure there would be suffering along the way, and it would be difficult to start over again from scratch. But you would always know that though you had failed, in God’s sight you were not a failure. That you were not worth any less than your neighbor. That God still had an inheritance for you to claim.

Such a thought ought to put a spring in the step and straighten the stature of any man or woman. It ought to make us not only confident but jubilant in our God.

If only Mrs. G had seen God in that light. She might have had more success in reclaiming her children and their children for God.

If only you and I could see God in that light, and remember Him in that way when it comes time to deal with people who we believe have “let God down.”

How do we treat church members who have repeatedly made a failure of their attempts to serve God? Maybe they’ve come to church for a while, then started spending their time at a bar or nightclub instead. How do we treat them when they come back—maybe with alcohol on their breath? The first or second time it’s OK—we welcome them with open arms. But how about the sixteenth or seventeenth time? Isn’t it about time by then that we start ministering God’s displeasure to them by not accepting and helping them any more?

Or is it possible that the message God would really want us to portray is what He portrayed in the jubilee system: There are evil consequences for mistakes. You will suffer for what you have done. But if you will return to Me, I still hold out to you the eternal inheritance that is only Mine to give.

And what about the way we treat ourselves? How do you feel when you have let God down? Discouragement is one of Satan’s sharpest tools. But it cannot pierce the armor of jubilation.

Wherever you are in your walk with God, reconsider God’s jubilee message. Then jubilate in Him! —Kenneth R. Wade.
Floyd Bresee

Sermons preached but not delivered

Feeling lazy, the paperboy dumps his bag of newspapers in the garbage can rather than taking them to his subscribers. Have the papers been delivered? He’s gotten them off his hands. But a thing is not really delivered until it has gotten into the hands of the person for whom it was intended.

Many sermons we preach never really get “delivered.” We have gotten them out of our system, off our hands. But, perhaps because of the way we worded what we had to say, they didn’t get into the minds of those for whom they were intended. They were preached, but not delivered.

Carpenters build houses. They ought to have considerable knowledge about the principles of house construction. But they also need to know something about hammers and saws. Without those tools their knowledge will never get applied to houses.

Similarly, preachers ought to have considerable knowledge of theology, Bible truth. But they shouldn’t consider language unimportant. Language is the means by which they apply their knowledge.

When we talk about the use of language in preaching, we’re talking about style. Webster says style is the “mode of expressing thought in language.” Style is often associated with dress. Style is not the woman, but the way she’s dressed. People judge a woman by her dress. In preaching, style is not the idea or truth you present, but the way you express it. People judge an idea by the way it’s expressed.

Let’s look at four criteria of good preaching style.

**Good style is clear**

The sermon is a telescope, not a kaleidoscope. The latter draws attention to the bright bits of glass within itself. The former draws attention to that which is beyond itself. One you look at. The other you look through.

Edward Everett was the principal speaker at the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg. He was a stylish orator. He spoke flawlessly, without notes, for two hours, climaxing with “Whereasover throughout the civilized world the accounts of the great warfare are read, and down to the latest period of recorded time, in the glorious annals of our common country there will be no brighter page than that which relates the battles of Gettysburg.” Beautiful. Impressive. But Lincoln’s Gettysburg address, which followed Everett’s, has had far more impact on the world. Lincoln said almost the same thing, but so simply and clearly: “The world . . . can never forget what they did here.”

Clever is good, but clear is essential. If you can be both clear and clever, great. But never sacrifice clarity for cleverness. Speak to be understood rather than to be admired.

**Good style is accurate**

Since they deal with such grand issues, preachers tend to overstate. People don’t like that. In particular, watch out for “est.” Not everything you talk about is the oldest, biggest, or greatest. After you’ve exaggerated the earthly, people tend to assume you’re still exaggerating when you speak of the heavenly.

**Good style is thought-provoking**

Watch your congregation as they fill out some form or survey in church. A few will do it in an instant. Others will take 10 times as long. Remember that they listen to your sermon in the same way. Some take 10 times as long as others to grasp an idea or think something through. One is bored with your idea before another has even caught it.

How do you preach to both in the same sermon? Bring out a meaning of the idea, but not the whole meaning. Don’t lay out the ramifications so completely that you leave no thinking for the listeners. Prefigured food is unappetizing. The beauty of Jesus’ parables is that a meaning is almost instantly clear, but the whole meaning is practically unfathomable.

Relevance is not the responsibility of the speaker alone. Lackadaisical listeners may try to lay guilt trips on preachers by asking, “How does that apply to me?” Preachers ought sometimes to shrug their shoulders and reply, “How should I know?” Preaching should always be practical and relevant, yet only the worshipers can determine its relevance to their individual lives. Prime their pumps, but don’t do all their thinking for them.

**Good style is natural**

Bathe your heart in the Holy Spirit so you have something helpful to say. Permeate your mind with good literature so you develop the vocabulary and use of language to say it well. Then step into the pulpit and speak it naturally.

Either too ornate or too poor a use of language attracts attention to itself and away from your message. So the best style is usually that which your audience notices least!
Sleep

Galen C. Bosley

On February 19, 1985, China Airlines Flight 006 left Taipei, Taiwan, for an 11-hour trip to Los Angeles, California. About nine and a-half hours into the flight the number 4 engine lost power, and the flight crew began to try to restore power. While they were concentrating on that task, the captain failed to monitor his instruments properly, and the plane rolled over and began a nosedive toward the ocean. The plane fell from 41,000 to 9,500 feet before the captain managed to regain control. The plane sustained severe structural damage, and two passengers were seriously injured during the incident, which exposed the plane to a force five times that of normal gravity.

Lack of sleep or irregularity of sleeping hours may have been an important factor in this incident. The pilot lost control of his plane during hours when, for the past six days, he had been asleep.

At 3:58 a.m. on April 13, 1984, two freight trains sped toward one another on the same track. In the cab of Burlington Extra 6714 the engineer and other crew members had fallen asleep. The two trains collided head-on near Wiggins, Colorado, destroying seven locomotives and killing five crew members.

Investigators cited irregular shifts and crew members' decisions not to sleep during their off time as contributing factors.

A questionnaire filled out by 1,000 train engineers revealed that 11 percent would admit to dozing off on most night trips, while another 59 percent admitted to at least one dozing-off period sometime on the job. No daytime engineers admitted to dozing off on most trips, but 23 percent had done so at least once on a day trip.

A leading sleep researcher stated recently that more accidents occur from sleepiness than alcohol consumption. Single-vehicle, air transport, and military accidents have a greater probability of occurring at night. Flight simulation studies have shown that a pilot's ability to fly a simulator may be impaired at night as much as it would be by a blood alcohol level of 0.05 percent.

Sleep is important—no one will deny that. But in the midst of a hectic schedule, when there is more to do than there is time to do it, it is tempting to begin to think of sleep time as lost time. So many try to get by with less hours in bed by staying up late or getting up early, then trying to make up for the lost sleep time with hurried catnaps.

Effects of sleep loss

But the effects of cutting back too far on sleep time soon become evident. The effects are most readily evident in small children. We've all watched crankiness and sibling fighting increase when children miss their naptimes on a busy day.

Adults are better at masking their hostility. Nonetheless, the psychological effects of sleep deprivation include increased irritability, anger and antisocial behavior, and the breakdown of normal ego defense mechanisms. Without enough sleep, people generally become more serious, listless, and grim. Spontaneity disappears, and extended sleep loss can lead to disorientation, paranoia, depression, and inability to maintain focus on a task. Perceptiveness also decreases, as do cognitive reasoning abilities and psychomotor capabilities.

Sleep loss also affects physical capabilities, such as the ability to make fine hand movements and focus the eyes. It leads to increased sensitivity to pain, reduced muscle tone and strength, increased reaction time, and difficulty maintaining good posture. If sleep deprivation continues long enough, death results. Studies conducted on rats have shown that when body temperature begins to drop dramatically because of sleep loss, death occurs within days, even if the animals are allowed to resume sleeping.

Recent sleep research indicates that it is not only how many hours you sleep but also the regularity of your sleeping schedule and the duration of the sleeping period that allow you to get the benefit you need from sleep.

What happens when you sleep

Sleep is by no means a passive wasting of time. Sleep time is divided into two main divisions: rapid-eye-movement (REM) sleep and non-rapid-eye-movement (NREM) sleep. NREM sleep is further subdivided into stages 1, 2, 3, and 4, with increasing numbers representing deeper sleep. Stages 3 and 4 are called slow-wave sleep (SWS), or deep sleep. Each of these divisions of sleep is an active physiological process.

REM and NREM sleep each has its own physiological functions. A typical night's sleep is made up of four to six approximately 90-minute cycles that begin in stage 1, then proceed to deeper and deeper sleep, then to less-deep sleep, then to REM, then back through the series like this: stage 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, REM,
As the night progresses, the amount of SWS decreases and REM increases. As morning approaches, stage 4, and sometimes stage 3, are eliminated from the cycle.

Apparently REM sleep is involved with mental processing of new information, the transfer of material from short-term to long-term memory, and in some way with the control of what is called animal motivate drive behavior. Translated into common terms, this means that animals deprived of REM sleep show increased sexual drive, sexual deviance, pleasure and food seeking, and decreased grooming. REM sleep is also important in many bodily functions because it affects secretion of several body chemicals, including cortical steroids.

The amount of time we spend in REM decreases as we grow older. A premature infant may spend as much as 80 percent of its sleep time in REM, while full-term infants are in REM only about half of the time they are asleep. By young adulthood REM makes up only 10 to 20 percent of sleep time, and in later years this decreases even further.

Slow-wave sleep (stages 3 and 4) is important for recovery from fatigue, and increases after increased physical labor. It is characterized by high-amplitude, slow-frequency EEG activity of less than four cycles per second; by resting muscle tone and slow, regular cardiac and respiratory rates; by increased blood flow to the muscles; and by constriction of brain arteries. SWS also decreases with age. While it averages 10 to 20 percent in young adults, it may be entirely absent in the elderly.

### How much is enough?

We have all known people who seem to be able to function well on only four or five hours of sleep per night. But such people are the exception rather than the rule. Most of us need between seven and eight hours per night. A recent study of 12 European countries and the United States showed that 25.3 percent of men and 29.1 percent of women slept less than seven hours per night, whereas 14.6 percent of men and 13.7 percent of women slept longer than nine hours. Most people sleep longer on weekends, which indicates that they may be depriving themselves of needed sleep during the week.

Perhaps the best way to determine how much sleep is enough for you is to go to bed early enough to awaken naturally without an alarm clock. Allowing your own body to determine how much sleep you need can help prevent the chronic sleep deprivation that is prevalent in industrialized nations.

### How to improve your sleep

Facts about sleep may be interesting, but what most of us are interested in is how to get a good night's sleep. If you suffer from insomnia, you may need to go to one of the sleep study departments that have recently been instituted at several universities. Some problems can be diagnosed only through thorough testing. In an article published recently in the *Washington Post Magazine*, the author told of his 20-year struggle with nightly wakefulness. He tried all kinds of folk remedies and wonder cures, but continued to wake up several times every night, finding himself unable to get back to sleep for hours on end.

Only after being hooked up to an apparatus that tracked his brain waves and muscle tension all through the night did he learn that what woke him up several times during the night was twitching legs. Doctors at the research center prescribed medication that alleviated the twitching, and he has been able to sleep better ever since.

For most of us, though, getting better sleep may be simply a matter of eliminating a habit that disturbs our sleep, or starting a practice that can enhance sleep.

Among the things that can inhibit good sleep are alcohol and other psychoactive drugs, lack of exercise, and habit patterns.

Alcohol's relationship to sleep is particularly significant. While alcohol may help a person to fall asleep, it decreases the quality of sleep. It disrupts the cycles of sleep stages and inhibits REM sleep. Even moderate levels of prenatal alcohol exposure can lead to disturbance of sleep cycles in newborns. And infants born to alcoholics experience inhibition of REM sleep. The real tragedy is that this may contribute to their becoming alcoholics themselves. REM sleep deprivation of rat pups has been found to increase their adult alcohol consumption.

Such drugs as antihistamines, antihypertensives, and nearly all psychotropic drugs, including marijuana, affect sleep, increasing daytime sleepiness and disrupting various sleep stages. Marijuana in infants exposed prenatally interferes with sleep cycling, lessens SWS, increases body movements, and lessens characteristic markers of REM sleep, regardless of the trimester of exposure.

Smoking is another factor associated with sleep difficulty. Smokers take significantly longer to fall asleep, and they awaken for longer periods after falling asleep than do nonsmokers. In addition to the increased latency of sleep onset and more frequent arousals, smokers also appear to get less sleep (between .17 and .85 hours less per night) than nonsmokers, and tend to have as much as three times as many nightmares and dreams.

Many people report feeling tired and sleepy for several days just after quitting smoking. Fortunately, this sleepiness not only affects them during the day; it also extends into their regular sleeping hours. Abrupt cigarette withdrawal brings about a total time awake decrease of 45 percent on the first three nights of abstinence. This gain comes partly from falling asleep faster and partly from less episodes of wakefulness during the night.

### Habits that improve sleep

Two of the most important things you can do to improve your sleep are to get
Exercise decreases the time it takes to get to slow-wave sleep.

into the habit of getting enough exercise and to abide by a regular schedule for sleep whenever possible.

Studies have shown that exercise decreases the time it takes to get to SWS, and that physically fit individuals obtain more SWS than unfit individuals. As in most things, moderation is the key here. If you haven’t been getting enough exercise, start out with light exercise and work up to more strenuous exercise as your level of fitness increases. Strenuous exercise can actually lead to sleep disturbances for the unfit, and exhausting exercise can produce the same result even in those who are physically fit. Any exercise done just before going to bed should be light to moderate, because heavy exercise tends to excite the central nervous system and cause sleep disturbances.

Exercise in the late evening may also tend to raise your metabolic rate and keep you warmer. Since sleep depresses body temperature, a delay in the lowering of your body temperature may keep you awake longer. Of course, the same problem may result from trying to sleep in a room that is too warm.

A regular schedule for going to bed and getting up can also help you get more and better sleep. In a study of a group of adolescents suffering from moderate sleep disturbances, all that was necessary to overcome their problems was rigorous stabilization of bedtime and wake-up time on weekdays and weekends.

And regularity of sleep has more benefits than just better sleep. Maintaining a stable sleep-wakefulness cycle is necessary for optimal levels of subjective mood and behavioral performance as well. Among college students, regularity of retiring and awakening hours is the exception rather than the rule. But those who adhere to a regular sleep schedule show greater achievement potential, intellectual efficiency, self-control, and sociability. Studies of sailors have yielded similar results. Good sleepers outperformed poor sleepers in fulfillment of duties and tended to be promoted more rapidly.

Three additional suggestions for promoting better sleep involve what you do just before and after you “hit the hay.” If you like to read just before going to bed, read light material, preferably something unrelated to your work. Don’t watch television right up to bedtime, because the excitement and tension generated can make it hard to get to sleep. And if after you’re in bed you find it hard to get to sleep, don’t just lie there getting more frustrated by the minute. Get up and read something that is relaxing. Staying in bed and fighting to get to sleep can become a habit that will make it hard to fall asleep every night.

Whatever you do, it is important to do your best to resolve any problems you may have with getting enough sleep. A recent National Institutes of Mental Health study revealed that unresolved sleep problems are strongly related to development of serious depression.

“When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet” (Prov. 3:24) is one of the most precious promises in the Bible. A good night’s sleep can help give you the strength you need to cope with even the most challenging days.

Sources


THE GRACE OF GOD . . .

to succeed without ability and create without talent;
to be confident in doubt and secure in turmoil;
to have joy in sorrow and peace in battle;
to be loved without a lover and taught without a teacher;
to be nourished without food and assuaged without water;
to believe when doubtful and trust when suspicious;
to love when hated and care when rejected;
to see in the dark and hear in the din;
to walk straight on a crooked path and firmly on shifting sand;
to be sweet when bitterly assailed and peaceful when hostiley attacked;
to make judgments sounder than my understanding and decisions wiser than my knowledge;
The grace of God is God acting in me despite me.

—Wallace Alcorn
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The Struggle of Prayer
Donald G. Bloesch, Helmers and Howard, Box 7407, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80933, 1988, 170 pages, $8.95, paper. Reviewed by James Ayers, graduate student, Boston College, and pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Waltham, Massachusetts.

We would expect prayer to be so important to the Christian that we would need little instruction on it. Yet for most believers, including pastors, prayer is not a regular or joyful practice. And so we collect books on prayer. The bulk of these books do not help because, according to Bloesch, they emphasize only one aspect of prayer. They may focus on how to obtain answers to prayer, or they may stress a mystical contemplation. The Struggle of Prayer acknowledges value in each of these approaches but also offers a critique of them. Prayer is neither magical nor mystical.

Bloesch states that prayer is difficult because we don’t understand it well. He sees prayer as a dialogue between a sovereign God and a fallen yet redeemed creature. “There will always be a tension and sometimes a contradiction between our desires and God’s will... sin still darkens the mind even of believers, so that we do not always know or desire what is best for us. We want to be respectable sinners, whereas God wants us to be self-sacrificing saints.”

Prayer is learning to speak and listen. It is a time to express our longings and hear the Lord’s commands. God invites us to be free agents and at the same time to be transformed into the image of His Son.

The book’s strength is its presentation of Christian prayer throughout the centuries. It is the best sourcebook I have found that tells how great Christians have understood prayer. I would prefer more emphasis on practical application, but Bloesch would respond that once we know what prayer is, we will act on that knowledge.

Helmers and Howard is a new publisher, and you may not find this book in your local bookstore. You may order it direct or have the store order it for you. It will be worth the effort.


The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life

Quaker, rebel, realist, Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911) found life with Christ a joyous experience. Her writings emphasize God’s love for human beings. First published in 1870, The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life remains popular, having sold nearly 2 million copies. In it Smith shares her vibrant optimism. Feelings can often be transitory and deceptive, and Smith stresses that we are not to live by them. The key is total surrender and choosing to believe in spite of feelings. Here is a religion of liberty and not bondage, as can be seen from her explanation of the difference between a life of works and a life of grace. But there is no denial of God’s law, which “is only another name for God’s love; and the more minutely that law descends into the details of our lives, the more sure we are made of the depth and reality of the love. We can never know the full joy and privileges of the life hid with Christ in God until we have learned the lesson of a daily and hourly guidance.” This volume is filled with spiritual gems. Those who like Steps to Christ will certainly appreciate this work.

Prayertimes With Mother Teresa
Prepared by Eileen Egan and Kathleen Egan, 1989, 239 pages, $7.95, paper.

Eileen Egan is the author of the biography Such a Vision of the Street: Mother Teresa—The Spirit and the Work. She and Kathleen Egan have taken excerpts from Mother Teresa stories and incorporated them into 52 weekly reflections that include Scripture. In a materialistic but spiritually empty world, we are invited to come apart and know the peace and love that comes from service.

“Prayer... is something to look forward to, to talk to my Father, to talk to Jesus, the one to whom I belong: body, soul, mind, heart. And this is what makes us contemplatives in the heart of the world, for we are twenty-four hours in His presence: in the hungry, in the naked, in the homeless, in the unwanted, unloved, uncared for, for Jesus said, ‘Whatever you do to the least of these my brethren, you do it to Me.’ ”

Three Spiritual Directors for Our Time

There has been a recent emergence of interest in Christian visionaries of the past, perhaps to counteract the growing influence of Eastern mysticism. Gatta is a scholar, an Episcopalian minister, and a woman. In her work as a spiritual director and lecturer at Yale, she has researched the works of three fourteenth-century English Christian spiritual directors—The Cloud of Unknowing, Walter Hilton, and Julian of Norwich.

The Cloud of Unknowing is an anonymous writer and practitioner of a form of contemplation known as “negative” or wordless prayer based on the idea that God is beyond our comprehension. A renewed interest in this type of prayer has made The Cloud’s writings a textbook in many churches, often indiscriminately. The Cloud restricts his audience to the wholly converted, urging that it not be undertaken without the guidance of a seasoned spiritual director. He warns that this method is not for everyone and that it must always be integrated with an already thorough and longtime practice of reflective reading, meditation, and prayer. This is wise advice, considering the similarity of the prayer to Eastern meditation. Gatta warns that, practiced in a religious vacuum, “negative” prayer has no significance and could be dangerous. She discusses the criticisms of the practice and questions the motivation behind contemporary interest in “transcendental” modes of spirituality.

Walter Hilton describes himself as a teacher. A prolific writer of his era, his best-known work is Scale of Perfection.
Hilton has much to say about religion and feeling: "It is better not to depend too much on our own religious experiences, but to trust in the merits of Christ. . . . "Reformation in faith and feeling is a work of grace." As presented by Gatta, Hilton's greatest contribution is his understanding of sanctification through Christ.

Julian of Norwich was probably a church anchoress who served as a spiritual counselor. Because her work was limited to Norwich, her writings were not widely circulated. Gatta sees her as ministering more to the twentieth century than her own fourteenth century. The author's summary of Julian's 16 "dialogues" with the Divine is insightful and thought-provoking.

Julian's messages are for those who are committed to Christ yet fall prey to two kinds of "sin or sickness." The first is spiritual malaise; the second is "despair or doubtful fear." According to Julian, "our inability to believe in divine love triggers spiritual depression" and keeps us in despair. "For in seeing us, God sees only His beloved Son, and the grounds for fearing God's wrath disappear." God suffers with us—"For all that is good our Lord does, and what is evil our Lord suffers."

Julian often uses imagery to express God's compassionate love. Gatta points out that Julian sees motherly attributes in Christ and considers Him our "Mother of mercy."

According to Gatta, Julian is forced to come to terms with contradictions between her visions and teachings of the church. All of Julian's questions are not answered, such as that of damnation. God assures her that He "shall make all things well," and she is informed of a mysterious "great deed" that God shall perform on the last day by which He will keep His word. But Julian never learns what this deed will be.

Gatta covers a lot of material in this short volume, and she has done it well. Whatever we may think of these visions—from the practical works of Hilton, the mystical works of The Cloud, and the revelations of Julian—their work transcends the years to provide spiritual insight for modern Christians.

**How Catholic Women Have Changed**


This book is for those interested in the study of women in religion. It chronicles two decades of change for women in the Roman Catholic Church—a church that still refuses to ordain them.

Catholic women in church work have had further to go than Adventist and other Protestant women. "It is safe to say that no group of American women has changed more in the last 25 years than Catholic religious women" as their lives were transformed by initiatives coming out of Vatican II.

One woman observes the irrelevance of her church to real life: "Religion is a reflection of the culture. The church was a reflection of the culture in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but our culture has changed. Women have changed. They aren't just wives and mothers. . . . The church is no longer a reflection of women. That's why it is so important for the church to change, because women cannot relate to a church that is too different from the culture."

Another speaks about ordination: "I feel times of real anger and impatience with the church's disregard for women's contributions and the implication that women are making some breach if they go beyond a certain point. It seems clear that if the future of the church rests with the laity, then as women's services are more urgently needed the transition should be made with dignity and purpose—not just a long, drawn-out measure of last resort."

There are no specific solutions given, only suggestions such as that by author and writer Dolores Curran, who feels her work is to minister to average Catholic women and families rather than battling the patriarchs: "I can't work up and down in the church at the same time. . . . My time is much more useful changing grassroots attitudes."

**Laughter of Aphrodite, Reflections on a Journey to the Goddess**


*Aphrodite* gives us a look at extreme trends in some feminist theology. The writer of this volume, whose name ironically is Christ, tells of her journey as a feminist theologian down the path from Christianitv to the worship of "the Goddess" as a symbol of life.

It is a story of what can happen when one misunderstands the culture of the Bible, assuming it is a reflection of God's character rather than how God deals with human beings where they are. It is what happens when one does not accept the existence of a personal devil and his part in human suffering. And finally it is what happens when one allows one's gender, race, nationality, or even religion to define one's identity rather than finding that identity in being a child of God.

In this case the author turns from Christian tradition as a norm and roots her theology in "my own experience and that of other women." It is common for those who have been wronged to blame God and turn to alternative beliefs. Those beliefs are usually based on personal impressions and those of others in similar circumstances. One wonders what the writer's understanding is of "Christian tradition" and how much of it was purely human in origin. Platonic dualism is one such tradition the author rightly questions.

This is a sad story of a sensitive individual. We share her sense of the holiness evident in nature, but the writer turns from the Creator to worship the creature. Looking to self, she states, "We can trust our own intuitions, and listen for the echoes of the resounding voices of ancestors, and of the Goddesses." But her goddesses are powerless as we feel the despair of the writer contemplating nuclear destruction. "The knowledge that we could destroy this earth weighs heavily on me." How different is her meditation from that of Julian of Norwich, who believed in a God who said that "all will be well."

Christ states that she has accepted death and sees religion as only a quest for immortality. If Aphrodite seems to laugh, it is in mockery. For Carol Christ, there seems no laughter.

**Recently noted**


With a novelist's flare for plot and description, Goldstein tells his own story of the search for truth that led him to try drugs, throw himself repeatedly from the door of an airplane, and challenge everyone he met from Miami to the Middle East to explain the meaning of life. The story begins with the author heckling a street preacher, and ends with his own experience of beingheckled for having come to believe what the preacher said. What happens between makes captivating reading.
I was glad to see the article on fasting, for I have often thought that perhaps as a church we need to give more study to that subject. In fact, that concern led me to suggest the topic to the leader of a women's day of prayer held here last fall on the Andrews University campus. I almost regretted the suggestion when the leader then asked, "Why don't you do it?"

This forced me to study the topic myself. I consulted various authoritative resources. One result of this study is a concern that your recent article, without any cautions, might cause serious problems to some people who would attempt to put it into practice. Nutritionists that I consulted urged that no one should go on a total fast for more than one day without the supervision of a medical doctor, and they gave me a number of valid reasons for this. Perhaps you should let your readers know that the five days suggested by your author may not be wise for all to try—for some it could be seriously damaging and possibly even fatal. I was interested to find also that this advice fits well with what I learned from biblical and historical sources about earlier practices of fasting.—Madeline Johnston, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

I am disappointed, hurt, and appalled by your publication of the article "Fasting: A Discipline Ministers Need."

Disappointed because it appears you didn't have anyone with expertise on diet, nutrition, and fasting check the article for sound health practices.

Pastor Hill defines fasting as "a voluntary abstinence from any kind of food for a limited period of time for a sacred, or holy, purpose." Unfortunately, he oversteps the "holy purpose" through much of the article. He states that fasting can help a minister with weight control. He also says, "In fact, after three days of fasting, it is possible to begin losing up to two pounds a day."

Actually, in a fasting diet the body gets rid of fluids, not fat, during the first two or three days of a fast. After a few days of rapid weight loss (as much as two or three pounds per day) without a proper diet, the body goes into a starvation mode and burns fat more efficiently and slowly—resulting in an even slower use of excess calories and a rapid return to the previous weight when a normal diet is resumed (check any reputable nutrition book for authoritative support). What Pastor Hill is proposing here is dangerous!

I am hurt and humiliated that you would begin an article on fasting with such a caricature of overweight ministers, as in the opening paragraph. As one who struggles with weight, I do not appreciate the slur. If Pastor Hill ever really struggled to overcome obesity, he has somehow forgotten the mental, emotional, and spiritual struggle involved. I see no evidence that he has considered the feelings of Christians who struggle daily with the flesh—especially with food.

I am appalled by the implications of Pastor Hill that those who struggle with their weight are either weak willed or unspiritual. I doubt that pastors who are fat are any less "humble" or "spiritual" than their more slender cohorts.

I don't know where Pastor Hill gets his ideas and information about fat people and weight loss, but I get mine from experience as well as from textbooks on nutrition. I'd like to suggest that before he solves another human being's problems, he first become acquainted with that one's struggles, fears, and hurts. Fasting is a valuable spiritual practice when used temperately. However, to state that fasting can solve the problems of the overweight demonstrates horrendous ignorance.

I would love to read an article by Pastor Hill on how fasting has helped him walk closer to Jesus, or how he fit a balanced program of nutrition and exercise into his busy schedule without neglecting his flock. But please, let's keep the two issues separate!

PS: I loved Loren Seibold's article on the small parish ("Small Town, Small Church," January 1990)!

Berrien Springs, Michigan.

David Rose, retired Seventh-day Adventist minister, Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Dear Pastor Hill,

I wanted to write you a letter to express my concern about your recent article on fasting. While I appreciate the intent behind your article, I believe it is important to provide accurate information to those who may be considering fasting as a means to lose weight.

Your article emphasizes the benefits of fasting for weight loss, but it is important to note that fasting can be a dangerous practice without proper guidance. Fasting can lead to serious health problems, including dehydration, electrolyte imbalances, and malnutrition.

It is crucial to consult with a healthcare professional before embarking on a fast, especially for extended periods. Fasting for more than a few days can be harmful and potentially life-threatening. It is essential to consider the individual's overall health, age, and medical history before recommending fasting as a weight loss strategy.

I hope that your future articles address the complexities of fasting and provide a more comprehensive perspective on this practice. It is vital to present information that is both informative and responsible to help inform your readers on this sensitive topic.

Sincerely,

[Name]

Berrien Springs, Michigan.
tion; consequently, the drop in insulin brings an increased excretion of sodium. Accompanying this is a considerable amount of water, which results in a sizable weight loss.

After this rapid initial drop, the rate of weight loss decreases. During the first day and part of the second day the body burns mainly animal starch (glycogen stored in the liver and to a smaller degree in the muscles). Thereafter, it is actually in a state of imbalance. The system goes into a starvation mode, and the metabolism begins to drop in order to conserve energy. Only about half of what weight is lost comes from fat; the rest results from the body’s burning good, healthy muscle.

I would suggest that ministers can best lose weight by limiting the amount of food they eat so as not to feel full by the end of the meal. And they should aim at getting 30 minutes of moderate exercise three to five days a week. This can be just vigorous walking, bicycling, or gardening. The exercise will help in decreasing the appetite.

Hill’s article seems to suggest that to obtain spiritual health, one’s physical health must suffer. Isn’t that the old myth that the body is a hindrance to the soul, the misunderstanding that motivated medieval monastics to flog their bodies? I agree with the practice of fasting, but let’s do it more moderately and not to the detriment of health. (I suggest that Pastor Hill dispose of the books by Smith and Wallis.) — Galen Bosley, D.H.Sc., R.D., Department of Health and Temperance, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland.


**True repentance**

From page 13

My fellow pilgrim, you and I are no better than any other person. We too at times have had our own agendas, and perhaps to the detriment of God’s cause. We must admit that we are a backslidden, stiff-necked people, and that a revival of true godliness is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. I appeal to each of you, let us examine our hearts and join in humble before God and admitting the presence of the carnal nature. Let us enter into an experience of true repentance individually, and then share in the joyful results together.

Let us prepare our hearts so God can do for us what He wanted to do at the General Conference sessions in 1888 and 1901 but could not do. Seek the gift of true repentance, seek the latter rain, and thus allow God to carry out His will to finish His work in and through us.


**The minister as a pastor**

From page 15

As I walk with the crowd in the road.

Out there in the road that goes by the house,
Where the poet is singing his song,
I’ll walk and I’ll work ’midst the heat of the day,
And I’ll help falling brothers along—
Too busy to live in the house by the way,
Too happy for such an abode.
And my heart sings its praise to the Master of all,
Who is helping me serve in the road.

The pastor’s place is in the road with the people, seeing their needs, feeling their joys and sorrows, and touching them for God.
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We want your ideas on funerals

A little more than a year ago we asked you to send us the creative ideas you use to make weddings special. You responded with lots of suggestions, a selection of which we published in our March issue. Now we'd like to try the same thing regarding funerals. Do you add any special touches to the funerals you conduct to make them more personal, more meaningful, or just to make them easier on the family of the person who has died? Send us your suggestion, and if we use it, we'll pay you $25. Write us at Shop Talk—Funerals, Ministry, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. We pay for Shop Talk items upon publication.

Keeping track of hymns

Ever have the feeling that you've been singing the same hymns over and over again? Here's an easy way of keeping a record of the hymns you use in your worship services. Keep a hymnal in your study, and as you choose the hymns for the service, write the date of the service in the margin of the page that contains the hymn. You'll be amazed at how quickly you come to regard this hymnal as an important tool. —Arthur Freer, pastor, Logan Valley Presbyterian Church, Bellwood, Pennsylvania.

A different altar call

Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." We normally direct our altar calls to the adults in our congregations, asking them to come forward in some kind of commitment. Why shouldn't this be done for children, even small children? We can base the call on Jesus' love for them, asking them to respond to that love — and being careful to word the call in such a way as to make it understandable to them. Follow this call with a call to the parents and then to the other adults in the congregation. You'll find that not only will the children benefit from the call, they will in turn lead some of the adults to a decision. —Eimer V. Untersher, Gaston Seventh-day Adventist Wayside Chapel, Gaston, Oregon.

The Adventist Evangelism Collection

The Adventist Heritage Center at Andrews University has recently opened a new display — the Adventist Evangelism Collection. Located in a room on the first floor of the James White Library, this collection contains historic documents and mementos celebrating Adventist evangelism.

There you can see the 1850 Rhode-Nichols prophetic chart used by early traveling evangelists G. W. Holt and Joseph Bates, and a picture of the tent in which J. N. Loughborough and C. E. Cornell held the first Adventist tent meeting. A prophetic chart that James White promoted and a chart of the Ten Commandments hang beside each other much as they did in the early preaching of the message.

On display are the large, papier-maché images of the beasts of Daniel and Revelation among which W. W. Simpson walked as he preached on the apocalyptic prophecies. In 1904, owing largely to his pioneering use of visual aids, this bright, young Adventist evangelist drew crowds of 2,000 people in Los Angeles.

The room contains handbills, photographs, songbooks, an old question box, and stereopticon projectors with their large glass slides — introduced into Adventist evangelism by A. V. Colton in 1913. A pulpit from which Ellen White preached, an old pew from an early meeting house, and a small, portable pump organ contribute to the atmosphere of the room.

The Heritage Center collection continues to receive handbills, visual aids, books, and sermons from denominational evangelists, making it a gold mine for research in the history and practice of Adventist evangelism. (If you would like to contribute materials to the Adventist Evangelism Collection, or other material related to Adventist church history, please contact the Adventist Heritage Center, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104; telephone (616) 471-3274.) —Steven P. Vitro, professor emeritus of preaching, worship, and evangelism of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

"Fun(d)raising"

Accent on Humor is a 75-page booklet chock full of jokes, stories, anecdotes, cartoons, and quotes about fund-raising. This little volume gives volunteers and staff people a lighthearted look at the task of raising money.

"People are generous; they want to help others. And when they can have some fun while doing it, their sense of reward and satisfaction is deepened," notes Sheree Parris Nudd, executive director of the Porter Memorial Hospital Foundation in Denver, Colorado. Nudd has given away more than 100 copies of Accent on Humor to donors, volunteers, and other friends of the hospital.

Accent on Humor costs US$6 per copy, with reduced rates for multiple orders (as low as US$3.15 per copy on orders of 75 or more). To order, send US$6 to Philanthropic Service for Institutions, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. For information about bulk orders, contact Ludmila Leito, (301) 680-6133.

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We think your ideas are more valuable than ever — so we're increasing the price we'll pay for them! Now we're paying $25 for practical ideas for making ministry easier and/or more effective, provided that these suggestions do not involve a product or service that you are selling. (We'll consider the latter for publication also, but we won't pay for the privilege of using them!) Send your ideas to Ministry, Attn. Shop Talk Editor, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. We pay upon publication.
THE THIRD NATIONAL ADVENTIST CONFERENCE ON BUILDING THE LOCAL CHURCH THROUGH DYNAMIC SMALL GROUPS

The Third NASGCON will return to Springfield, Oregon SDA Church
Wednesday, October 17, 5:30 pm to Saturday, October 20, 6:30 pm

October 17-20, 1990 Springfield, Oregon SDA Church
Elder Glenn and Shirley Gingery minister in the Springfield SDA Church where 70 new members have been baptized in the last three years. Most of these people testify of the positive help they have received from one of more than 30 small groups in this church. Elder Gingery's leaders' meetings have not only discipled the leaders but led to a Spirit-filled lay ministry in the church and community which in turn has resulted in a marked increase in attendance at the Springfield church during the time of the Gingery's ministry. Hear and see firsthand what God can do for you and your church as you listen to the Gingeries and other successful pastors and lay leaders.

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