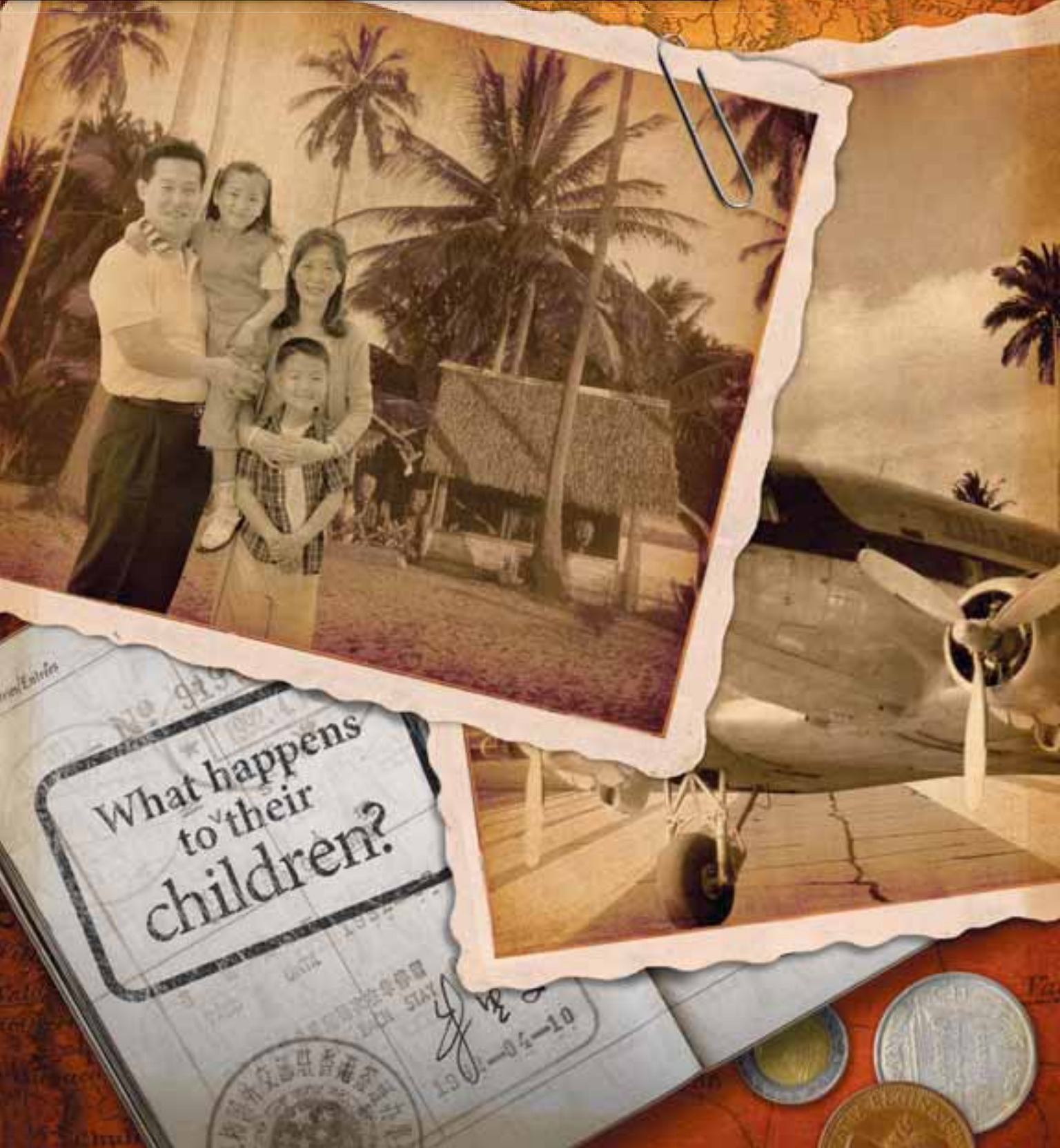


# MINISTRY<sup>®</sup>

INTERNATIONAL  
JOURNAL FOR PASTORS  
MAY 2007



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## OUR READERS RESPOND...

**Living with the other**

**M**iroslav Volf's article "Living With the Other" (March 2007) is a very timely article, particularly apropos to conflicts rising in our little congregation that is now coming alive with "new blood." Unfortunately, the "old blood" is hypersensitive to the new, and the new is impatient with the old! I realize this is a situation as old as Christendom itself—as old as mankind, for that matter.

—Jodie Jackson, pastor, Mt. Pleasant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Higbee, Missouri, United States.

**Hope for a lost world**

**R**egarding the article "Hope for a Lost World: A Study of Romans 5:12–21" (March 2007), I read and highlighted many of the important ideas presented. Yes, the first 11 chapters of Romans are dynamite, and should be prayerfully and carefully studied by my fellow ministers and Bible teachers. There is much confusion about those chapters—even among our baptized members. By faith God justifies the ungodly and the heathen. (cf. Rom. 4:5; Gal. 3:8).

The Jews in Christ's and Paul's time endeavored to be justified by keeping the law, but stumbled at the Stone—Jesus Christ. Trying to keep the law apart from Christ is like trying to swim the Pacific Ocean. Editors, please give us more in-depth studies on the first chapters of the book of Romans.

—Jeremia Florea, retired pastor, Spring Lake, Michigan, United States.

**Israel in prophecy**

**A**fter reading the Hans K. LaRondelle article on Israel in biblical prophecy (January 2007), I am convinced that it should be put in pamphlet form. It's terrific, and I also believe it would be beneficial in our overall apologetic.

—Chuck Mitchell, pastor, Palm Springs, California, United States.

**God's everlasting covenant**

**R**egarding Michael Hasel's article on the Everlasting covenant ("Old and New: Continuity and Discontinuity in God's

Everlasting Covenant," March 2007), one cannot tackle the issue of the covenant in the New Testament without taking the book of Hebrews into consideration.

Says Hebrews 8:13: "In speaking of a 'new covenant,' he [God] has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear" (NRSV). It's rather difficult to consider this obsolete covenant, which will soon disappear, as an *everlasting* covenant.

The way Jeremiah's quote is introduced is also very relevant: "For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant . . ." (8:7, NIV). Accordingly, this first covenant did not work. And surprisingly, the fault rests not only with the houses of Israel and Judah but also with God Himself. If a contract is bad, one does not replace it by its mere facsimile.

More than any other book in the New Testament, Hebrews uses the comparative "better" (*kreittōn*): "better hope" (7:19), "better covenant" (7:22 and 8:6), "better promises" (8:6), "better sacrifices" (9:23), "better country" (11:16), and even "better resurrection" (11:35).

In addition, in 7:18, Hebrews uses the word "abrogation" (*athetesis*). It appears that continuity does not provide the best hermeneutical key for Hebrews. This book could well be a kind of deconstruction of the former ritual and a reconstruction of a new one based on Christ, the true High Priest.

Continuity? Maybe. But not in Hebrews.

—Jean-Claude Verrecchia, New Testament Studies principal lecturer, Newbold College, Bracknell, Berkshire, England.

**Spiritual axis of evil**

**M**inistry is intensely interesting. What makes it even more interesting is that the writers are willing to express their beliefs, even if they are controversial.

The article "Defeating the Spiritual Axis of Evil, Part 2" (March 2007) is one of these. I have much respect for the writer, James A. Cress. I enjoy his articles. But I do believe that he took a "tiger by the ears" in this case when he didn't have to!

He makes a plea against gender discrimination. I agree with this concept. I

love my beautiful wife and two daughters very much. I want the best for them. But is it gender discrimination to believe that some offices in the church are to be occupied by men? I don't think so.

Dr. Cress tells the story of Jesus and the woman at the well in Samaria. When the woman went into the city and told her friends, "He told me everything I've ever done!" he equates this with public evangelism, a calling for ministry, and proclamation.

What this woman did on her trip to town was give witness of her experience in meeting with Jesus. This is what every Christian is called to do. To say that this is an example of public evangelism for women today to aspire to is stretching the point.

—Hubert F. Sturges, M.D., retired physician and missionary to Ethiopia.

**T**hank you for presenting another picture of what Christ was like. You opened my eyes! In the story of the woman of Samaria, I never realized she was credentialed by God Himself to proclaim spiritual liberty as an evangelist to her hometown.

It is also eye opening to think of the "unholy troika of racism, social distinction, and gender discrimination" as a "spiritual axis of evil."

I hope our world church moves quickly to address these issues, making them a priority for our church's strategic plan by acting strategically, intentionally, and immediately to eradicate this unholy, evil axis.

If we do, we may see a reversal in the 1.5 million members reported at the St. Louis General Conference session [2005] that exited our church doors between 2000 and 2005. We would also see a new and powerful effectiveness in evangelism by utilizing Jesus' own strategy. In our multiculturally sensitive global community, Adventists should be at the leading cusp of eliminating the axis of spiritual evil.

—Pamela Maize Harris, Ph.D., APR, Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States.

*continued on page 28*



# Who knows what you are doing?

NIKOLAUS SATELMAJER



Others do not know much of what we do. It's not so much that we want to keep it a secret—although there are issues that we must keep confidential. However, many things that we do are not done in the public arena. How do you tell others in the church that you have spent many hours helping a family going through a crisis? Who will know that you have invested time assisting a family living near your church deal with addiction issues? And what about . . . ? The list could go on and on.

We must recognize that often we do not see the outcome of time invested in various forms of ministry for many years. Individuals have told me of the positive outcome of issues that I helped them address many years ago. No doubt you have had such experiences.

Joseph Leininger Wheeler, the author of one of this month's lead articles, tells a personal account of a family accepting an appointment to be missionaries to a foreign land. This family invested much time in a new land, and in some ways they had to wait for many years to see the value of that investment.

Every one of us has received time as a gift from God, and clergy do not have less or more time than others. Rightly used, time remains as one of the greatest gifts we can share.

**Be generous with your time.** "Pastor, do you have a minute?" Or, "Chaplain, do you have a minute?"

Seldom is it only a minute. While there are those who abuse the minute, most come to us with issues important to them, and those issues should become important to us. Jesus was generous with His time. John 3 highlights the glorious gospel story, but often we focus solely on John 3:16. The story begins with Nicodemus asking a question. It's almost one of those "Do you have a minute?" events. Jesus—in spite of all the demands on His time—spent a considerable amount of time with Nicodemus.

**Be patient with the outcomes.**

What happens when we spend time with people? On some occasions the immediate outcome can be seen as positive, but most likely we are not certain about the outcome. The story of Jesus and Nicodemus is an example of one of those experiences. Once we finish reading the story in John 3 we have to wonder about the outcome. John certainly does not end the story by telling us that Nicodemus made a commitment to be a follower of Jesus. In fact, Nicodemus's last recorded response (John 3:9) has the aroma of sarcasm. If the story of Nicodemus ended with those words, it would not be much of a story.

But the story of Nicodemus does not end in John 3. We meet him again in John 7, where Nicodemus asks a positive question about Jesus (John 7:51). I realize that we cannot call this

a record of full commitment to Jesus, but certainly the words of Nicodemus reveal a change from the John 3 story. If the story of Nicodemus ended in John 7, I would be delighted to witness the positive change in his attitude. We know, though, that the story of Nicodemus does not end there. By the time we meet him in John 19, he has become a public follower of Jesus Christ. As the world marched past the Christ on the cross and mocked the One who taught, healed, and comforted, Nicodemus publicly identified himself with Jesus Christ (John 19:39). What Nicodemus did that Friday afternoon was not popular, but these were the actions of a changed heart.

**Be kind to yourself.** What are you doing today? What will be the outcome? How will you spend the time God has given you? My appeal to you: Don't be too hard on yourself. If you are faithful in your ministry—and I assume that most who have responded to the call for ministry are faithful—God will bless what you do. God knows what you are doing, and God will bless that work. The outcome of our work may not be immediately evident, but God does not depend on human assessment. God has His own assessment method, and we can trust His conclusions. ■

*Tell us what you think about this editorial. Email us at [MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org](mailto:MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org) or write to us at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.*

# What happens to their children?

Joseph Leininger  
Wheeler



Joseph Leininger Wheeler, Ph.D., is emeritus professor of English at Columbia Union College; cofounder and executive director of the Zane Grey's West Society; Senior Fellow for Cultural Studies, Center for the New West (1995–2002); general editor at *Focus on the Family*, and considered to be one of America's leading anthologists of stories.

**W**e were living in Fresno, California early in 1944 when my father received his call to the mission field. And to my parents, a call to the mission field was a sacred thing: a call from the Lord Himself.

Next thing I knew, I was told, "We're going to the mission field!"

"Where?"

"Panama."

"Where is *that*?"

And out came a map.

At eight years of age, I didn't really understand what maps meant. As a parochial school teacher, Dad had moved a number of times already, so another move meant little to me. Except, of course, that this particular move had a kicker at the end: "to the mission field." And when I noticed that my friends were impressed by it, I began to feel important—and even a bit excited. My brother Romaine, at two, didn't, of course, know what was happening.

So the folks began to pack.

## The roar of propellers

All the relatives who could be were there by the mesh fence to see us off. But I *did* wonder why everyone was making such a big deal of just another move. Why were they crying as they waved and waved and waved? Not until later did I understand why. Mission terms being seven years long in those days, I'd be 15 years old before they saw me again.

My grandparents clearly wondered if they'd *ever* see us again.

For the world was so much vaster then . . . And it was at war, too, and who knew how long *that* would last? No cruise ships plied those waters then. On land, the roads were terrible and accommodations both limited and primitive.

We'd walked out from the airport terminal to the stairway on wheels that had just been pushed out to the plane. Inside the plane, the incline from the front of the DC-3 to the back was steep and dark.

Finally, the two great engines caught, the propellers spun faster and faster, their roar becoming deafening and vibrations shaking the entire plane. Suddenly, we were in motion. . . . Seemed like forever before the wheels finally left the runway and we were in the air. At last, we were on our way to those two exotic words: "mission field."

In the years to come, those great silver birds would carry us all over Central America and the West Indies. Those flights we both longed for and dreaded. The DC-3, being incapable of flying above most storms, was forced to fly through them. Tense by the minute, we'd look out the window at those massive thunderclouds ahead, gray to pitch black. Once in, drawn deeper and deeper into the vortex, the plane would begin to buck! In air pockets, the planes would sometimes free-fall so far it seemed certain the very wings would be ripped off when we hit bottom. Thick brown bags were prominently displayed on the back of every seat—and we used them disgustingly often.

But when the skies were blue, it was like a moving magic carpet to look down at the Lilliputian villages far below. Since our speed was slow, we had the opportunity to savor every mile. After what seemed forever, we'd land and refuel in places like Mexico City, Tapachula, Guatemala City, San Salvador, Tegucigalpa, Managua, San Jose; and finally, as they covered every window with thick black cardboard so we couldn't see the Panama Canal below and learn where it was most vulnerable to enemy attacks, the descent to Panama City!

When we got out on that rolling stairway, the heat that engulfed us seemed blowtorch hot, and the equatorial humidity left us limp and sopping in only minutes. We knew then that we were indeed entering another world of images and impressions that have never left me.

## Moments to remember

I remember so *many* things from those days! The sight of a black panther one evening,

noiselessly stealing across our school campus in Pedregalito. . . . The hymn sung by a white-robed choir as I was raised out of a river the day of my baptism. . . . The long-suffering white horse named Musica given to me one unforgettable day. . . . The scorpions that would lie in wait for unsuspecting hands in sleeves and feet in the toes of shoes. . . . The sight of a packed third-story balcony in Panama City—and watching in horror as it collapsed on top of another group in a second-story balcony and then all crashing down on carnival revelers in the street—in only seconds. . . . The soldiers and sailors and marines who, during the war, considered our place home.

In Costa Rica, swimming in the legendary Ojo de Agua. . . . The day my father came home in midafternoon, his face ashen. A Taca Airline plane had taken off from Nicaragua, greatly overloaded—turned over on its back, crashing, burning all but two to death almost instantly. That terrible, terrible funeral: The charred remains of the six-foot-four-inch-tall president of the mission were brought into the church in a four-foot casket. Later, the other missionary children and I were shooed out into the patio for a three-day Monopoly game while our mothers wept and packed. Learned later that my father was supposed to have been on that plane!

In Guatemala City, cathedral bells giving structure to our days and nights. . . . Lorita, the parrot I'd smuggled in a shoe box on the plane trip from Panama, frequently climbing up to the rooftop patio and embarking on her travels to visit our neighbors who'd, sooner or later, bring her back, perched on a broomstick. . . . The earthquakes that would periodically make us so dizzy we'd fall to the floor, look with fascinated horror at the writhing walls, and flee into the streets, lest the house collapse on us. . . . The day I was in the American Library when someone came rushing in, shouting, "Revolution! A revolution! Get home as fast as you can get there!" At home, all our furniture barricading doors and windows. My father inexplicably stuck (in the interior of the country) in a mud hole, in the

mission Jeep. Able to make it home alive only because of that three-day delay. . . . Vacations in Chichicasteango, Lake Atitlan, old Antigua. . . . The birth of my sister Marjorie. . . . The missionary barrels that brought us hand-me-down clothes that would later make us objects of pity during furloughs back home (mercifully, later on, every three rather than every seven years).

Oh, there are so many memories to draw from! Any grown-up missionary child would have just as many. Different—yet the same.

### **A homeland that wasn't**

Eventually, in my midteens, I flew back to the United States by myself. But now, in a parochial boarding school, I felt myself to be a misfit, a fish out of water. I was a disaster at sports, and terribly naive about what were, to my classmates, accepted behavioral norms—especially where the opposite sex was concerned.

Eventually, but not until my junior year in college (no small thanks to a godly history professor who mentored me, serving as a bridge from the missionary world to maturity), I woke up, married, entered the teaching profession, sired two children, earned two master's degrees and a doctorate, and became what people considered "successful."

Meanwhile, returning to the homeland in order to be there for my sister Marjorie, my father accepted position demotions (as seen by many) as the price of returning to the United States, and Mom taught elementary school. After earning a master's in counseling, my father accepted pastoral positions in small churches until retirement.

Comparing all this to the high positions my father had held in Latin America, I subconsciously considered Dad to be concluding his career as a bit of a failure. For both he and Mom now suffered from the missionary curse: losing the *Zeitgeist*. So long had they been absent from the fast-paced life back home that when they returned, it was immediately clear that they were no longer in tune with "the spirit of the age." Much as I tried to hide it, in my newfound sophistication, I was a bit ashamed of them.

### **Recognition**

Until one memorable day in Dallas. The church the folks had served so faithfully was holding a world conclave in the Dallas Convention Center. Some thirty thousand were attending. One never-to-be-forgotten day, my wife and I were invited to join my folks for some sort of "surprise." No explanation. They were just told to be at a certain spot at 1:00 P.M., with any close family who could come. So the four of us stood there waiting for we knew not what. I was proud of my professorial rank and position, scholarship, publications, awards, and increased recognition—and was just there to humor Mom and Dad.

Then, in only seconds, the epiphany that would dramatically change the rest of my life! First, far-off voices, footsteps on the stairs, then more and more, louder and louder, a never-ending stream of well-dressed people, some looking vaguely familiar, descended to the floor and eddied around us—the four of us, standing there in a state of confusion and shock. Suddenly, one of the most distinguished of them moved toward my parents and began to unwrap something quite large. It was a plaque. Almost instantly, there was absolute silence.

In Spanish, he began to read the words on the plaque—but he couldn't continue, and began to weep when he came to the words "Mamá y Papá de Wheeler." Unbeknownst to me, in my erstwhile arrogance, the speaker, now president of a college Dad had founded, was there to celebrate two cherished people, missionaries who had come to the West Indies to start a school from scratch. All those engulfing us, now in church leadership positions all over Latin America, had come to that school, fearing what they might see. Instead of noblesse oblige, they found a man and woman with only one reason for being there: to *unconditionally love each student*. In years to come, each student would look back at those six golden years and realize that those had been the happiest days of their lives, their individual and collective Camelot. As the words "Mamá y Papá de Wheeler" were



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*Altar of incense*—intercede for others  
*Most Holy Place*—seek God's atonement  
 —Sue Shobe, prayer coordinator, Pennsylvania Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Reading, Pennsylvania, United States.

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said, the crowd constricted around us, all crying at once.

I stood there, my pride in shreds, belatedly recognizing that if I lived to be 200, no matter how many honors, no matter what position or recognition came my way, *never* could I begin to be the success of that man and woman now half buried by their "children."

*Finally*, and for the first time, I realized what it meant to be a true missionary.

### But back to their children

Yet this study is really about the *biological* children; what is the impact of missionary life upon *them*? Especially today, when people look at Romaine, who earned two doctorates in music in Austria and has performed piano and synthesizer concerts all over the world, published several books of poetry, prolifically composed music set in Europe and Latin America, and today, in his Eagle's Nest studio on the rim of Mexico's Copper Canyon (deeper and vaster than the Grand Canyon of the Colorado), is attracting camera crews and news commentators from Latin America, Europe, and North America. They look at Marjorie, after raising three children, now becoming an award-winning artist, both with the pencil and with the brush. My world, on the other hand, has been teaching, researching, public speaking, editing, compiling, and writing.

People look at us and shake their heads, posing the question, *How did two such conservative missionary parents produce three such creative children? What magic did they have that enabled their three children to defy norms and the law of averages?*

How, indeed! Let's see if we can find out how they did it.

### Re-creating that world

First of all, we were all homeschooled (before there was a term for it) by a remarkable woman. Mother, a trained teacher herself, was also an elocutionist—who knows what *that* is today! A stage performer who had memorized thousands of pages of short stories, poetry, and readings, Mother knew even book-length poems such as Longfellow's *Evangeline* and *Hiawatha* by heart.

And she was a master teacher herself, turning out whiz kids in mathematics and verbal skills. At home, Mother expected us to value time as God's greatest gift to us. Always, we were to be growing, becoming.

Looking back through the years enables me to finally gain perspective. I experience again the serenity of those years: no TV, no videos, no cinema, no computer, no telephone (only in the school or mission office). Our music mostly came from ourselves and our small collection of 78 rpm records (and the ones we checked out from the American Library) we played on our stack record player. The 78s played through quickly, but they were magic to us. Never anything but the best—classical, semiclassical, popular, folk, and religious. We'd play our favorites to death.

After chores and practicing the piano, it would be time for school, correspondence lessons being the base Mother built upon. But my real education, my real becoming, had to do with my weekly trips to the American Library (there was always a branch in the nearest capital city). I'd bring home towering stacks of books on every imaginable subject, my favorites being literature, history, biography, fine arts, mythology, nature, religion, travel, adventure, etc. In retrospect, it amazes me that my mother and father, so conservative in their own book choices, permitted me to read whatever library books interested me most. Almost invariably there was one hiding under every textbook I studied, and I'd read by flashlight under my blanket (no matter how hot the temperature!) far into the night. I had no idea why I was continually devouring entire libraries; I only knew that I wanted to know everything there was to know. That pace of reading would not ebb until I completed my History of Ideas Ph.D. some thirty years later.

### The picaresque

But that wasn't all. Always there was the world just around the corner that I hadn't seen yet. We traveled as few of my age would have back in the United States. Whether it was by plane, by banana boat (we were caught once in a



hurricane—poor weather forecasting in those days—off the Honduras coast), by train (all across Mexico and much of the United States), by bus, or by auto, I kept

houses and were forced to maintain an unreal threshold of model behavior (“What would the *people* think if you were to do such a thing!”), we existed

who think outside the box. Let’s look specifically at PKs (children of ministers, rabbis, former priests) and see what we find. Strangely enough, even in our

. . . WE EXISTED IN A LIMBO HALFWAY BETWEEN THE ADULT WORLD OF OUR PARENTS AND THE CHILD WORLD OF OUR PEERS, IN NEITHER OF WHICH WE FELT WELCOME. BUT, OF THE TWO, ALMOST INVARIABLY WE PREFERRED LISTENING TO AND WATCHING THE FASCINATING PEOPLE IN OUR PARENTS’ WORLD.

broadening my vistas, meeting people from every walk of life and intrepid travelers who had the itch to explore before there was even such a thing as a travel industry.

In literature, we have a term for a condition, story, or book: picaresque. It means learning, changing, and becoming through travel. Traveling such as Abraham did back in patriarchal days; like Homer did, twenty-nine centuries ago; Paul, two-thousand years ago; Marco Polo, eight centuries ago; and Cervantes’s immortal traveler, Don Quixote de la Mancha, about five hundred years ago. They all learned, gained insights about life and people through travel. Just so, so did we.

Normally, children learn as much (most of it not particularly beneficial) from their peers as they do from adults. Not so with missionary children. Because we were cut off from children in the homeland (even during furloughs, we were considered to be so “different” that peer friendships rarely flowered), and because we were in the same category as preachers’ kids, we lived in glass

in a limbo halfway between the adult world of our parents and the child world of our peers, in neither of which we felt welcome. But, of the two, almost invariably we preferred listening to and watching the fascinating people in our parents’ world.

Interestingly enough, there is an amazing correlation between PKs (preachers’ kids), MKs (missionary kids), and MBs (military brats), for all three grow up picaresque: the parents forever moving on after only a couple of years, hence few lasting friendships are made with peers. Children growing up in such an environment have almost no concept of home as a specific place, but rather, *home is wherever Mom and Dad are*. They have been programmed to be restless wanderers, content to remain in no one place, but always moving on, and on, and on. They are, one and all, global citizens (at home anywhere in the wide world, but not at home in any one place—not for long, that is).

There is something about this kind of an upbringing (all the parts of it) that churns out creative people

ever more secular society, there is a fascination with PKs and MKs. Always, they make good copy, not tarred at all with the brush that often denigrates the parents! Almost, it’s a badge of honor, of distinctiveness, of uniqueness.

**PKs and MKs who have succeeded**

Clearly, something about growing up in a manse significantly develops creativity in writing, research, and literature. Some, like Lloyd C. Douglas, Henry Van Dyke, Jonathan Edwards, Cotton Mather, and John Wesley, choose the same profession as their fathers, but raise it to a fine art. Some, like Lewis Carroll, choose to write primarily for children. Some, like Edward Bellamy and Isaac Asimov, specialize in utopian or science fiction. Some, such as Anthony Hope, gravitate into historical fiction. Some, like Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Hazlitt, and Joseph Addison, prefer the essay format. Some, like Ben Johnson, specialize in drama. Some, like Thomas Hobbes, become philosophers. Some, like Elsie

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Singmaster, prefer the medium of short stories. Some, like Dorothy Sayers, make a specialty of murder mysteries. Some, like Erskine Caldwell, write regional literature. Some, like Charles Pierre Baudelaire and Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, plunge into the study of evil, the dark power, and a world without God. Many, such as Samuel Coleridge, Edward Young, William Cowper, E. E. Cummings, Robinson Jeffers, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Andrew Marvell, John Crowe Ransom, and Alfred, Lord Tennyson, write primarily as poets. And ever so many, such as the Bronte sisters (Charlotte, Emily, and Anne), Henry James, Jane Austen, James Baldwin, Richard Blackmore, Stephen Crane, Samuel Butler, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, write primarily prose literature. And yet others, like Oliver Goldsmith, write in many genres.

Of missionary children, undoubtedly the best known are Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winner Pearl Buck, who was raised in China; Olive Schreiner, who was raised in South Africa; and Hermann Hesse, whose father was a missionary to India.

## Conclusion

We have seen that, for a child, missionary life is about the best thing that could happen. Even today, it's probably safe to say that the missionary world would be much more serene than its counterpart in the homeland. But the world is ever changing. Today, at speeds that exceed sound itself, the planet has shrunk so much that you can get to places before you leave! There are precious few places that are remote anymore: The super-rich think nothing of flying halfway around the world for a special meal in a fancy restaurant. To the world I grew up in, dreaming as we did of those "faraway places with strange sounding names," today's realities would have seemed like far-out science fiction.

The missionary kid, excluded from the harsher realities of mission life and without a real peer group, will likely carve out a world of his or her own, a dream world in which dreams may germinate and grow. Books and their authors

tend to become close friends, and the characters (both real and fictional) oftentimes more special and real than even the parents.

Undoubtedly the toughest time in the missionary child's life is the period of reentry into homeland life. In high school, college, or university, they are almost certain to begin as misfits, as the loneliest of the lonely. The missionary children (most being ministers' children as well) experience a double whammy upon return to the homeland, for they have no peer group to serve as a support system. In most cases, those they've identified with most, other missionary kids, they'll probably never see again.

Most will now take one of three trails: (1) Some will be so angry at having been forced to be externally good for so long that they go berserk once freed from the parental straitjacket, stomping on all the values they've been forced to live by and veering into all that is self-destructive. (2) What has been a facade for so long for some may coalesce into piousness for pious's sake, self-righteous religiosity and holier-than-thou-ism. (3) But a surprisingly large percentage will blaze new and exciting trails—neither as conservative as their parents nor as self-destructive as the wild ones. Most likely each of these will have been blessed by godly mentors who serve as bridges between the parental/mission world and the world of adult realities.

Nevertheless, one thing is absolutely certain: Any child fortunate enough to be born to missionary parents will be blessed in ways beyond quantifying—the experiences gained a mother lode to mine all life long. One might liken missionary children to the one in Christ's parable of the talents who was given five talents rather than one; the clear implication being: To those to whom much has been given, much will be required. Rather than being a liability, as some have mistakenly assumed, missionary childhood enables one to walk among the stars. ■

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# Renewal time: planning your sabbatical

Drexel C. Rankin



Drexel C. Rankin, D.Min., is a minister in the Disciples of Christ Church, Louisville, Kentucky, United States.

The symptoms are real. Energy is low. Vision for mission becomes narrowly focused as the next crisis arises. After a decade or so of intense and dedicated service, the close intimate relationship with the Divine wanes. The time spent in Scripture study includes only material for sermon preparation and teaching; reading consists primarily of “how to” or “problem solving” for the work of the local congregation; prayer, while still vitally important, too often concentrates on professional responsibilities; creative efforts are almost always linked to worship and special services; the imaginative edge of writing is limited to the pastor’s letter in the weekly church paper, the sermon, or crafting language for policies and procedures for governing boards.

If this sounds like you, then you need a time of rest and spiritual refreshment—a space of re-creating and restoring—called a *sabbatical*.

## Not a vacation

A sabbatical typically includes time for travel, rest, prayer, and the broadening of one’s sense of God’s work in the world—a time to pause, step back, and behold God and creation from a new perspective. Nourishing one’s soul and discovering a new perspective calls for both a change of pace and a change of location.

More intentional than simply taking a break, the sabbatical consists of more than just a vacation. This is a time for the pastor to distance self from the demands of leadership, to gain

fresh vision and energy—a time to focus on comprehensive renewing and reequipping for long-term ministry. The sabbatical could also be a time when the whole congregation can reflect on its ministry together, perceive new goals, and accept new vision for the future.

Local conference (if that’s the organizational system of your denomination) and congregational understanding of the issues and support of the sabbatical concept become vital. The conference for which the pastor works, and the congregation(s) they serve, must stand fully behind the temporary departure and be prepared to fill the gaps while the pastor is away.

## Preparation

A year before the sabbatical begins, the conference and the congregation need to receive preliminary descriptions telling the nature of the sabbatical (a specific study or spiritual growth program), the period in which the sabbatical would take place, tentative plans for the pastor’s leave, financial arrangements, and possible plans for the continuation of various ministries during this time. Discussion and agreement upon such matters as salary, housing, and benefits (travel, book allowance, and study costs) must also take place. Church members should understand that these are preliminary ideas that local church leaders—working with the hiring body (again if that’s the case)—will finalize as the time draws nearer.

Frequent communication with the congregation becomes critical during these planning days, for the congregation has a commitment and a stake in this shared ministry. Part of the congregation’s work as well, this venture cannot be viewed as an individual project. These intervening months also allow the congregation to ask any questions of concern. Congregational members often have little concept regarding how pastors spend their time. In preparation for the sabbatical, logging a typical month could be beneficial for both the pastor and for the congregation. Sharing that with the church would be helpful for a fuller understanding of the pastor’s time.

A log sheet that I have used from time to time includes most everything I do over a period of three weeks: sleeping, sermon preparation, gym time, calling hospitals and/or homes, staff time, family time. I try to leave nothing out of the record.

In consultation with the church, assign administrative duties. Keeping a log will enable the pastor and church officials to identify even



those small tasks that simply get done without anyone's knowledge except for the pastor. In the pastor's absence, someone must be responsible for major pastoral duties as well as for the seemingly insignificant tasks.

Who becomes responsible for weddings or funerals with the pastor gone? Who will write the weekly pastor's column in the newsletter? Who covers calling the hospitals and the nursing homes? Who keeps the preaching schedule? Who becomes the chief administrator?

### Family planning

Include the family in the sabbatical planning and in sabbatical time. A friend who recently returned from sabbatical had encouraged his family to share in the preliminary planning so that this did not appear to be just a personal adventure. Part of their planning included the family meeting the pastor at the final stage of sabbatical. Remember that this leave will significantly impact the lives of spouse and children for one to three or more months.

### Sabbatical journal

During the sabbatical, keep a daily journal. We all know how easily some

events will slip from our minds in a matter of hours—moments that could be precious to recall in the months that will follow this sabbatical. Record those incidents, especially if they have nothing to do with the original proposals of the sabbatical. These may be the serendipitous moments of experiencing an “ah-ha” life-changing incident on this holy trek. The journal will be a valuable tool for recalling your entire time with God.

### Plan for reentry

Reentry will not be as easy as it may appear. Remember that family and congregation have not seen you for weeks, possibly months. Changes have occurred, and this may prove to be a challenging time. My friend, mentioned above, included his family in the latter days of his sabbatical. They joined him for ten days at his final destination before he returned home. Although he continued to do some sabbatical tasks during this time, the family was present with him, to reconnect with him and to understand what these days had meant for him before they all returned to their daily routines.

Reentry also includes those people who have accepted particular

administrative duties back at the church. What will happen to some pastoral duties such as letter writing, calling, preaching, and administration that have been carried out by others while the pastor has been away? These are critical questions of reentry.

### Using the sabbatical

The possibilities of study, reflection, and renewal during this sabbatical time are legion. The sabbatical could range in time from several weeks to several months. Few churches, however, can afford to offer the pastor a sabbatical year, as universities do. The duration of the sabbatical would be agreed upon beforehand.

One friend used his three-month period to renew his sense of awe about the God of creation. Traveling across the country and into Canada, he began with a time of solitude and meditation in a spiritual retreat center on a six-hundred-acre nature preserve. From there, he moved on to Niagara Falls and national and state parks in the United States, finding intentional quiet spaces where He learned more about the God who created all these wonderful things. He completed his sabbatical in North Carolina at the Topsail Island sea turtle project, using his skills to care for injured loggerhead turtles at the turtle hospital.

Another colleague focused his three-month sabbatical on communication in a media-saturated culture. During his time away from his congregation, he learned how to preach and communicate more effectively in a society where the values and the communication patterns are shaped by mass media. He attended conferences on film and language that helped him reflect on modes in which people receive messages through the arts. During the sabbatical, he consulted with the director of the Mass Media Department of a major university.

Another friend, with his wife, took a three-week journey that began in Athens and concluded in Istanbul. The travel took them across Greece, to many of the historic Greek Islands, and overland through Turkey. They visited places familiar to New Testament readers—including Corinth, Ephesus,

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and Crete—where some of the earliest Christian congregations were formed. Byzantine sites cherished by Christian traditions offered insight into the life and worship of millions of Eastern Orthodox Christians and faithful Islamic people through the ages.

Many models for a sabbatical exist, any one of which can fit the needs of the pastor. Some use this as an opportunity to engage in disciplined study. Others have combined study with travel. Whatever choice, a sabbatical may benefit the pastor with a change of

wrote, “I feel we [the congregation] benefited by this experience as much as he did. . . . We had to make decisions based on meaningful discussion and not by just looking to (our pastor) to tell us the answer to whatever issue we had. . . . (He) returned from his time away

## A SABBATICAL TYPICALLY INCLUDES TIME FOR TRAVEL, REST, PRAYER, AND THE BROADENING OF ONE’S SENSE OF GOD’S WORK IN THE WORLD—A TIME TO PAUSE, STEP BACK, AND BEHOLD GOD AND CREATION FROM A NEW PERSPECTIVE.

Another used his two-month sabbatical to enhance an already lengthy ministry when he would return home. He began his leave by attending a conference, “New Visions for the Long Pastorate,” in Baltimore, Maryland. He wanted to learn how to better serve his congregation in the years ahead. From that beginning, he traveled across the United States, visiting and consulting with ministers who were serving exceptionally long pastorates and inquiring how they were growing in ministry.

The daily journal mentioned before will give ministers a source to begin writing about their sabbatical experience with the desire of enhancing the ministries of colleagues throughout the nation. In this sharing, ministry becomes a collegial act.

Larry Kleiman, pastor of St. Peter’s United Church of Christ in Carmel, Indiana, viewed his sabbatical as “an adventure around the world” lasting for three months. Upon his return he wrote, “I realized that we had been forever changed. I also sensed a fresh and energy-filled desire to engage in the ministry of this congregation. Such surprising realizations continue to surface. . . .” He concluded his summary by saying that both pastor and congregation are “strengthened, renewed, and spirited forward in growth . . . in such an experience.”

scenery and pace, a rediscovery of the gifts and graces by which God called the pastor into ministry, and renewed energy for the tasks of ministry.

### **Congregational benefits of a sabbatical**

In the longer vision of the minister’s sabbatical, the congregation should expect to benefit from renewed leadership through ministers who are both physically and spiritually refreshed and who are aware of new developments and stimulated to more effective ministry. As a result, both the congregation and its ministerial staff have the opportunity to be exposed to new programs and ministries that will benefit the church.

A sabbatical for the minister does not have to be met with anxiety and inactivity. During the minister’s absence, the sabbatical can provide a means of partnering for effective ministry within the congregation. It may become an opportunity for individuals to discover their own particular gifts that could benefit the church even after the minister’s return.

Martin Padgett, president and chief executive officer of Clark Memorial Hospital in Jeffersonville, Indiana, was board chairperson of First Christian Church in Jeffersonville while his pastor was on a three-month sabbatical. Following the pastor’s return, Padgett

with revived enthusiasm in every aspect of his role as senior pastor. Since he has returned, we have added additional services, programs, and attendance. . . . The congregation feels the renewed energy we have.”

The sabbatical period can provide a time of growing for individuals and for the congregation as well, with worship teams getting excited about creative plans. Individuals may discover a new vision for evangelism while others may find opportunities to step into new roles. The congregation benefits from the opportunity to discover leadership skills by assuming some administrative and pastoral duties in the pastor’s absence. Sabbatical can be a time of discovering new strengths for ministry within the congregation and watching an authentic ministry of the laity emerge.

### **The sabbatical**

The sabbatical is a time of growth, risk, and change for everyone; these processes will take place in the minister, in their families, and within the congregation. These are also times of beginning again, refreshment, renewing vision, and reconnecting with those influences that led us into ministry in the first place. ■

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# The covenants and righteousness by faith

George E. Rice



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Scripture places the experience of righteousness by faith within a covenant context. Paul says, “Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:4, 5).<sup>1</sup> While this is clear about the relationship between faith and righteousness within a covenant context, it introduces an intriguing question: Is there any place at all for obedience within the stipulations laid down by God in the various covenant relationships He has established with His creatures? In Romans 4:4, 5, two approaches to God are presented. The confusion concerning these two approaches is the source of the problem Paul deals with in both Galatians and Romans, that is, applying the terms required in one covenant relationship with God to another covenant based on entirely different terms.

As far as sinners are concerned, the only relationship that God accepts is one of faith in Christ alone. Having said that, we also recognize that this faith relationship will be accompanied by obedience. As Paul says, “For not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified” (Rom. 2:13). Obedience within the context of a faith relationship with Jesus should not be considered negatively as “works.” However, there are those who look upon any attempt to be obedient, that is, to adhere to the Ten Commandments, as works that reject God’s grace. But a profession of faith

in Jesus (the foundation of His teachings) while living in defiance of His law is a contradiction.

The reason for the requirement of faith in God’s grace in a covenant relationship with Him is because we, by nature, are sinful and corrupt. Outside of Jesus, all of our attempts (“works”) to gain salvation are vain. Speaking of the natural condition of the human race, Paul points to the lifestyle of the pagans of his day and told the Gentile Christians in Ephesus, “Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others” (Eph. 2:3). A sinner, remaining in his natural condition, cannot experience righteousness by faith in Christ alone—the term of salvation laid down in the new covenant.

Three covenant relationships with God are presented in the Bible: the universal covenant, the new covenant, and what Paul calls the first covenant. A review of these covenants and their requirements helps us get a handle on obedience, grace, and God’s plan of salvation. At the conclusion of this article, a failed covenant relationship will also be looked at, that is, the “old covenant.”

## Universal covenant

The universal covenant, the oldest of the three chronologically and present in Scripture, is not identified by name. This covenant is universal because God has placed each intelligent, created being (angels and the inhabitants throughout His vast creation) in a covenant relationship with Himself. That God’s created, intelligent beings are placed in a covenant relationship with Him is clear because clearly defined conditions are required of them. When Adam and Eve were created, they too were put into the universal covenant relationship: “Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’ ” (Gen. 2:15–17). The terms of the universal covenant are simple: obedience. Ellen White says, “Like the angels, the dwellers in Eden had been placed upon probation; their happy estate could be retained only on condition of fidelity to the Creator’s law. They could obey and live, or disobey and perish.”<sup>2</sup>

The universal covenant requires perfect obedience. Because Adam and Eve, like the



# THE REASON FOR THE REQUIREMENT OF FAITH IN GOD'S GRACE IN A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM IS BECAUSE WE, BY NATURE, ARE SINFUL AND CORRUPT. OUTSIDE OF JESUS, ALL OF OUR ATTEMPTS ("WORKS") TO GAIN SALVATION ARE VAIN.

rest of the inhabitants of the universe, were without sin, they could meet the terms of this covenant. Ellen White made clear what God required of Adam and Eve under the universal covenant: "God made man upright; He gave him noble traits of character, with no bias toward evil. . . . Obedience, perfect and perpetual, was the condition of eternal happiness. On this condition he was to have access to the tree of life."<sup>3</sup>

Perfect and perpetual obedience as required by God would lead to the formation of a righteous character. "It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law."<sup>4</sup> The expectation of the universal covenant is obedience; a righteous character results from adhering to these terms. Adam and Eve, like the rest of the inhabitants of the universe, were capable of accomplishing this because they were without sin, undefiled, without a fallen nature.

But Adam and Eve opted out of the universal covenant, and we live under the results of that decision: "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12). Because of Adam's decision to opt out of the universal covenant, we, as Adam's descendants, can no longer meet the requirements of perfect and perpetual obedience. "But he [Adam] failed to do this [obey God], and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law."<sup>5</sup> Humans must clearly understand that for this reason "works" apart from grace as a method of salvation and a basis for a relationship with God result in total failure.

Because of our fallen nature, we cannot live by the requirements of the universal covenant—perfect obedience. Paul makes this absolutely clear: "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified" (Gal. 2:15, 16).

Concerning the universal covenant, it becomes clear that the problem lies not with the covenant itself or with the law, but with our fallen condition and carnal natures. We just cannot make ourselves righteous and acceptable to God.

## **New covenant**

When Adam opted out of the universal covenant by disobedience, God confronted him in the Garden and introduced a second covenant, known as the covenant of grace, or new covenant.<sup>6</sup> This covenant is stated in the words addressed to Satan: "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel" (Gen. 3:15). This new covenant of grace makes four provisions: (1) God will break the alliance between Satan and humans by putting enmity toward evil within the human heart; (2) this enmity will work itself out in confrontation between the seed of Satan and the Seed of the woman; (3) in this confrontation God brings about the termination of Satan; and (4) in this confrontation the heel of the woman's Seed will be bruised which, in turn, brings about the salvation of any

sinner that accepts the terms of the new covenant. The new covenant rests solely upon the actions of God and the sinner's willingness to accept these actions.

Why is this second covenant new? First, it had never been offered to anyone in the universe before Adam's disobedience. Second, this covenant is designed for sinners only, those who no longer are able to meet the conditions of the universal covenant. Third, it is new because it was ratified by the death of Jesus, which, chronologically, was after the ratification of the first covenant under Moses by the blood of an animal.

Founded on righteousness by faith in Christ only, faith in this new covenant and this faith experience results in obedience to Him, which grows out of love for Him. The new covenant not only provides a means of salvation for sinners but brings sinners back to obedience: "When man fell by transgression, the law was not changed, but a remedial system was established to bring him back to obedience."<sup>7</sup>

Understanding the requirements of the universal covenant (perfect obedience on the part of sinless beings, the requirements of the new covenant, and faith in God's grace alone on the part of sinners), we now ask an interesting question: Which covenant did Jesus, as a Man, live under?

## **Jesus' covenant experience**

Jesus Christ, Second Person in the Godhead, fully divine, yet incarnate, a member of the human family, was "forever to retain His human nature."<sup>8</sup> When Jesus became a human being, He totally submitted Himself to the will of the First Person of the Godhead (John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 10:29; 14:10; 15:10,



# If you pastor more than one church—we want to hear from you

Here at the *Ministry* magazine editorial offices, we are planning another issue featuring and recognizing the work of pastors who have more than one church. In order for this issue to be valuable to ministers around the world, we need your participation. You are invited to prepare an article for *Ministry* magazine. Here are some suggested topics you may consider:

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If you pastor several churches, you will no doubt have other topics in mind.

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etc.). When the great controversy ends, Jesus will return to Him the authority and power He has received (Matt. 28:18) to fight the great controversy, that the First Person may be “all in all” (1 Cor. 15:24–28). As a human, Jesus related to the First Person from His position of submission. He called the First Person of the Godhead “My Father” and “My God” (John 20:17). In this position of submission, which covenant relationship with His God did Jesus live under, the universal covenant or the new covenant?

Remember, the universal covenant is a relationship with God based on perfect obedience on the part of a sinless being able to render this kind of obedience because He is not evil by nature nor corrupted by sin. The new covenant relationship was put in place just for sinners and built upon faith in the grace of God. It was designed for beings who are corrupted by sin, evil by nature, and who would have entered into an alliance with Satan against God if God had not intervened and put enmity toward evil in their hearts. Everything indicates that Jesus lived in the universal covenant relationship with His Father.

Consider the evidence. First, Jesus lived in perfect obedience to His Father's will and law: “Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous” (Rom. 5:18, 19). Notice, “Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character [universal covenant], and this character He offers to impart to us [new covenant]. ‘All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.’”<sup>9</sup>

Second, it becomes clear that although Jesus took a human body, He was not corrupted by sin. Consider the following: “For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens” (Heb. 7:26). Jesus is “holy” while we are “by nature children of wrath” (Eph. 2:3). Jesus is “undefiled” while we are

unrighteous (Rom. 3:10–18). Jesus is “separate from sinners” because He is the incarnate God.

Third, all of the above indicates that although Jesus assumed a human body, He did not assume our fallen, sinful spiritual nature. Examine Romans 1:3, 4: “Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” Paul talks here about the two natures of Jesus—the physical and the spiritual. Note that the phrase “according to” is used twice and a translation of the Greek preposition *kata*. This preposition used with the adverbial accusative case indicates a standard of measurement.<sup>10</sup> Paul tells us that if we measure Jesus “according to” the flesh, He is the Son of David, that is, a human being. However, if we measure Jesus “according to” the spirit of holiness, He is the Son of God. The Greek text does not say Holy Spirit but “spirit of holiness.” Rienecker makes the following observation about this phrase, *holiness*. “Here it indicates a spirit or disposition of holiness which characterized Christ spiritually.”<sup>11</sup>

Paul speaks of our two natures, the inward and the outward—the inward being our spiritual nature and the outward our physical: “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward nature is perishing, yet the inward nature is being renewed day by day” (2 Cor. 4:16). He speaks of the Holy Spirit strengthening the “inner man” (Eph. 3:16). We are cautioned of the conflict between our physical and spiritual natures: “The Word of God plainly warns us that unless we abstain from fleshly lusts, the physical nature will be brought in conflict with the spiritual nature.”<sup>12</sup> Also, we are told that Jesus’ “spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin.”<sup>13</sup>

Jesus’ sinlessness enabled Him to live by the terms of the universal covenant—perfect obedience. This perfect obedience results in a righteous character given to sinners under the new covenant of grace. Paul says, “For if when we were enemies we were

reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Rom. 5:10). Reconciled by His death, we become “saved by His life” of perfect obedience. Ellen White explains how this works out in one of the clearest statements on the new covenant and righteousness by faith: “If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ’s character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned.”<sup>14</sup>

Hebrews 2:14–18 is often quoted to defend the idea that Jesus had a sinful, fallen nature just as we do because “in all things He had to be made like His brethren” (Heb. 2:17). However, the context deals with His physical nature: “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). This context deals only with the physical—shared in flesh and blood and physical death. Jesus shared our flesh and blood, thus being made like His brethren, so He might die physically and become our vicarious sacrifice. Hebrews 2:14–18 does not deal with Jesus’ spiritual nature. Remember, Paul describes, in Hebrews 7:26, our High Priest as holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

So we can know that through Jesus’ perfect obedience under the terms of the universal covenant, we, as sinners, find righteousness by faith in Christ alone under the terms of the new covenant.

### **The first covenant**

How does the first covenant’s identification work into all of this? Hebrews ties this covenant to the earthly sanctuary and animal sacrifices (Heb. 9:1). It also gives this covenant the title “first”: “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought

for a second” (Heb. 8:6, 7). Verses 8 and 9 point out that the problem, again, was not with the covenant but with the people. God found fault with them because they did not continue in His covenant.

Frequently called “the old covenant,” this covenant “had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary” (Heb. 9:1). When the term *old covenant* is used, the thought behind it suggests righteousness by works apart from faith and grace.

The term *old covenant* (*palaias diathēke*) appears only once in the Greek New Testament, and it refers to a body of literature, that is, the Old Testament: “But their minds were blinded” (KJV), Paul says of Israel. “For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament [*palaias diathēke*], because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart” (2 Cor. 3:14, 15). Paul’s use of the term *old covenant* does not apply to a covenant relationship between God and human; it applies to a body of literature and particularly the writings of Moses. In this body of literature, including the books written by Moses, can be found the universal covenant, the new covenant, and the first covenant.

In Hebrews we find the following comment about the first covenant: “In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete” (Heb. 8:13). The apostle here alerts his fellow Hebrew Christians to the fact that the “ordinance of divine service and the earthly sanctuary,” which he calls the first covenant and which had directed the faith of the worshiper to the sacrificial death of Jesus, had become obsolete, passé, old.

The sacrificial system was a visible, tangible representation of what God would accomplish under the new covenant. It helped Israel to understand grace and faith. Amid the giving of all of the instructions for the sanctuary services, the giving of the Ten Commandments, and how these commandments were to be applied in everyday life, God told Moses, “ ‘Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, “Surely My Sabbaths you



shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you" ' " (Exod. 31:13). Sanctification through the Lord alone is the new covenant. The sanctuary and its services were designed to teach Israel this covenant. God did not substitute the first covenant for the new covenant for, as Paul presents it, the first covenant was a teaching device.

### Old covenant

Although the term *old covenant* in the New Testament is used only for a body of literature, Ellen White used the term in two ways. First, to distinguish the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai from the new covenant. The covenant made at Sinai is "old" because its ratification by an animal sacrifice preceded the ratification of the new covenant by the blood of Jesus. So the two covenants are identified chronologically on the basis as to when they were ratified.<sup>15</sup>

Second, God used the covenant of Sinai to teach Israel that in their relationship with Him they could not go it alone. In rescuing them from the Egyptians by dividing the Red Sea, God had taught Israel that they were totally dependent upon Him as their Deliverer. Now they must be taught that they were totally dependent upon Him for righteousness and salvation. Ellen White explains why Israel needed this help: "Living in the midst of idolatry and corruption, they had no true conception of the holiness of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts, their utter inability, in themselves, to render obedience to God's law, and their need of a Saviour. All this they must be taught."<sup>16</sup>

Having revealed His glory at Sinai and having given His law in both oral and written form, God told Israel, " 'If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me. . . . And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation' " (Exod. 19:5, 6). With misguided confidence the people replied, " 'All that the LORD has spoken we will do' " (Exod. 19:8). The fault that God found in His people was that

they tried to fulfill the terms of the Sinai covenant by adhering to the terms that are required by the universal covenant, perfect obedience, which can only be given by a holy, sinless being.

Just a few weeks later, Israel was worshipping the golden calf and behaving like pagans. Their action demonstrated (1) "they had no true conception of the holiness of God," (2) they did not understand "the exceeding sinfulness of their own hearts" nor (3) their utter inability "to render obedience to God's law," and (4) their lack of understanding how desperately they needed a Savior and His grace. The terms laid down in the universal covenant for sinless beings cannot be substituted for the terms of a covenant that God has designed for sinners.

Whereas the covenant at Sinai was based upon strict obedience to God's commands and instruction, the new covenant has, as its base, better promises—God's grace.<sup>17</sup> The golden-calf experience taught Israel that God was not only their Deliverer from Egyptian bondage but also their Deliverer from the bondage of sin. "Now they were prepared to appreciate the blessings of the new covenant."<sup>18</sup>

Unfortunately, Israel repeatedly slipped back into an attempt to fulfill God's promises by relying upon their own efforts to attain righteousness, that is, "works." Paul laments this experience in Israel's history: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Rom. 10:1–4).

What Paul calls the first covenant and Ellen White calls the old covenant are one and the same, but each gives their own emphasis to this covenant. The emphasis in Hebrews shows the function of the earthly sanctuary and the sacrificial offerings in pointing the minds of the worshipers to God's Great Sacrifice and the role of Jesus as our

High Priest. Once the type met Antitype, the first covenant was obsolete. Ellen White emphasized the fruitless attempt to obey God's commands by human effort apart from His gift of grace and strength. The golden-calf experience taught them how sinful they were and how desperately they needed a Savior.

### Conclusion

Today, we are left with only one covenant, the new covenant that was designed in heaven for sinners. This covenant stands on the following: (1) Jesus' incarnation, death, and resurrection; (2) Jesus' perfect character worked out by following the terms of the universal covenant; (3) His perfect character being substituted for our corrupt characters; (4) our faith in that He extends to us His grace and His righteousness; and (5) a willingness on our part to obey Him because we love Him and appreciate what He has done for us. The new covenant is righteousness by faith in Christ alone. **M**

- 1 Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures texts are taken from the New King James Version of the Bible.
- 2 Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1913), 53.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- 4 ———, *Steps to Christ* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1908), 62.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 370.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 363.
- 8 ———, *The Desire of Ages* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), 25.
- 9 ———, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1941), 311.
- 10 James A. Brooks and Carlton L. Winbery, *Syntax of New Testament Greek* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, Inc., 1979), 46, 47, 61.
- 11 Fritz Rienecker, *A Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, ed. Cleon L. Rogers (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980), 347.
- 12 White, *Counsels on Health* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1957), 576.
- 13 ——— in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1957), 1104.
- 14 ———, *Steps to Christ* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1908), 62.
- 15 ———, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 371.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*, 372.
- 18 *Ibid.*

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# Alcohol dependency: pastor as addiction counselor

Mickey Ask



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The first of this two-part series, “Alcohol Dependency: What Pastors Should Know” (March 2007), dealt with the statistics of alcohol abuse in order to provide statistically sound arguments for abstinence. Part two provides guidance for the pastor who has assumed, willingly or unwillingly, the role of addiction counselor.

Addiction counseling is not pleasant. Often struggling to find enough time to prepare the weekly sermon, visit the members who are hospitalized, provide premarriage (and emergency marital) counseling, and so forth—the pastor finds it difficult to achieve competency in the field of addiction counseling as well. Still, a lot can be done.

## Diagnosis

To avoid giving wrong advice at the wrong time, pastors counseling those with addiction problems should start with a diagnosis. Which of the following categories best fits the observed pattern of alcohol (or drug) use?

1. *Social use:* Alcohol used infrequently, in small amounts, on special occasions, and not used to alter mood or performance.

2. *Problematic use:* Alcohol use limited to one or two occasions where—because of inexperience, ignorance, or testing the limits—overuse occurred and led to problems ranging from a hangover to a severe car accident. Yet the user learned from this experience, and, subsequently, a reoccurrence has not happened.

3. *Dependent use:* Continuing alcohol (or drug) use associated with negative consequences, such as loss of the ability to predict when drinking will occur, how much will be consumed, or what will happen thereafter. Frequently the dependent user will set rules for use but will be unable to follow those rules. Such users are often preoccupied with obtaining alcohol, using it, or recovering from its effects—all to the detriment of relationships, health, role fulfillment, spirituality, etc.

This assessment might sound relatively straightforward, but it is definitely difficult in practice. These nicely segregated categories are really broader “way stations” on what can be a continuous downward spiral. In addition, concerned family members often will minimize the magnitude and the consequences of the dependency. The parishioner who seeks help (or who has been sent for help by family and/or friends) will often hide evidence of alcohol use, lie about it, or invent a socially acceptable reason for the symptoms of dependency. These reasons can take a myriad of forms, such as blaming overwork for their lack of mental alertness, stress for their irritability, depression, or the other driver’s poor driving skills when a car accident occurs. Alcohol dependency cannot be classed as an extraneous habit grafted onto otherwise successful coping skills; it is a lifestyle. Thus, the lines between the above categories are often blurred.

The pastor should be aware that the diagnostic process is a difficult undertaking that can be uncomfortable to implement. This may be simply the result of inexperience, though not always, because the very nature of the problem all but guarantees that it will be emotionally challenging. The pastor must recognize the difficulty in attempting to help solve an embarrassing problem whose existence may not yet have been acknowledged.

## Outside help

Faced with these impediments to the first step toward diagnosis, what should the pastor do? Experience helps, and so will time. Observing the behavior of a parishioner and their interaction with friends and family over a period of a few weeks will often enable a pastor to ascertain the degree of dependence and thus make an informed diagnosis.

An acceptable alternative is available. The pastor may refer to a trusted professional any parishioner about whom the question of problematic use has been raised. This approach, however, is not without problems. Likely the parishioner will feel passed off onto someone

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## THE PARISHIONER WHO SEEKS HELP (OR WHO HAS BEEN SENT FOR HELP BY FAMILY AND/OR FRIENDS) WILL OFTEN HIDE EVIDENCE OF ALCOHOL USE, LIE ABOUT IT, OR INVENT A SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE REASON FOR THE SYMPTOMS OF DEPENDENCY.

they neither know nor trust. In addition, it will still require considerable decision making on the part of the pastor. Historically, many physicians believed that alcoholism was not a medical problem to be treated by physicians but rather a spiritual or moral problem to be treated by churches or social workers. As a result, beginning in 1935, alcoholics began a self-help approach that grew into a worldwide, remarkably effective solution—Alcoholics Anonymous (AA).

Let us assume that you, the pastor, have become sufficiently conversant with the field of addiction counseling to realize that your parishioner experiences negative consequences from alcohol. The next step? Get AA involved. For that, you need to get involved with AA by attending an AA meeting so that you become familiar with the principles of the organization.

At the medical school where I teach, every medical student is required to attend at least one AA meeting. The students, almost without exception, have found this a positive, instructive, and eye-opening experience. Invariably they are surprised by the clientele attending, which can range from the well-dressed professional to the homemaker, and from the blue-collar worker to the homeless.

Before going, call your regional AA office and inform them that, as a pastor, you want to learn how to better help parishioners with drinking problems and want to come to a meeting (AA meetings are also open to nonalcoholics). Take an elder or deacon or another friend and spend some time listening and asking questions during the break and at the end of the meeting. Develop a relationship with a contact person from the regional office to whom you can

address questions. Have AA brochures and meeting directories at your desk to share as the occasion arises.

### **Getting them in**

Now comes the tricky part. How do you encourage a parishioner to take advantage of the local AA? One effective way to get over this hurdle is by creative misdirection. Do not try to convince them that they have a drinking problem, but encourage the already existing ambivalence on their part. "You may be right that you do not drink too much. Before you draw any firm conclusions, however, one way to help you decide is to attend several AA meetings and listen to the experience of others who have debated this same question." If they agree and go, arrange to get back in touch with your parishioner after they have attended several AA meetings.

AA groups have no criteria for membership other than "a desire to stop drinking." There are no dues, no fees, no requirement for when one's last drink occurred, no specifically religious thinking or denominational affiliation. Meetings occur in the mornings before work, at noon, and in the evening. No good reason exists for someone not to attend. The principles have a spiritual base and, rightly understood, do not conflict with the Bible or religious belief in general.

The "Big Book" of AA (so called because originally it was printed on oversized paper) and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are easy to read. They contain concepts that would benefit all, pastors included, if intentionally and consistently lived out.

Those abusing drugs have a similar resource called Narcotics Anonymous

(NA). To get acquainted with the help that this group can provide, the process remains the same as with AA. In addition, it is of the utmost importance to involve the family members and concerned friends.

The severity with which a problem of dependency affects the family parallels the severity of the problem in the user. No matter how educated or capable the family members might be, they will still be emotionally traumatized. They may feel even more trapped and discouraged than the user because, unlike the user, they are powerless to address the dependence directly.

Professional organizations that physicians may join are available if they are interested in working with alcohol and drug issues. The Web sites of these organizations are listed on page 21. These groups have a certification and testing process for their physician members that confirms that those members have achieved competence in the field of addiction counseling. They are a good resource for pastors because they will enable them to know the range of treatment program options and to identify qualified counselors practicing in the local area. Contacting such organizations and developing a working relationship with one or two of them can be helpful for you, the pastor.

### **Different tactics**

Most physicians who work in this field will be sensitive to the spiritual issues of patients. In your pastoral role, your responsibility includes the identification of local physicians who best address this aspect of wholeness. If you refer an individual to a physician, you should make sure that the counselors you choose are spiritually sensitive.



How you interact with the problem of alcohol dependence is ultimately driven by how you view it. If you believe that people use alcohol because they are ignorant and inexperienced, you will obviously spare no effort to educate them. Knowledge is useful, but something more than knowledge will be needed by most of your alcohol-dependent parishioners.

If you believe that people use alcohol because they are not spiritual enough, you will encourage them to pray and read the Bible more. There is no question that a deeper and more meaningful spiritual life helps in overcoming alcohol dependence. But being motivated does not equal knowing how to address the dependence, nor will increasing spirituality provide all of the necessary coping skills.

If you believe that drug abuse occurs in response to stress, you will advise your parishioner to search for ways to lessen stress. While lessening stress is often helpful, most of the time the problem is how your parishioner deals with stress and not the stress itself.

We have been given wise counsel on how to think about this issue. "Among

the victims of intemperance are men of all classes and all professions. Men of high station, of eminent talents, of great attainments, have yielded to the indulgence of appetite until they are helpless to resist temptation. Some of them who were once in the possession of wealth are without home, without friends, in suffering, misery, disease, and degradation. They have lost their self-control. Unless a helping hand is held out to them, they will sink lower and lower. With these self-indulgence is not only a moral sin, but a physical disease."<sup>\*</sup>

Substance dependence cannot be categorized as a disease with a quick fix. Addiction counseling requires patience—and a lot of it. Recovery from dependence upon the initial drug of choice takes a long time and much effort on the part of both pastor and parishioner. Unfortunately, persons who succumb to one addiction will, later, quite likely succumb to another. Thus, with alcohol dependence under control, the addict will, all too often, replace the alcohol with addictive tranquilizers or pain pills or start bingeing on food. Once the secondary addiction

comes under control, then gambling or sexual compulsivity may manifest itself. If substance abuse generally is overcome, the addictive person may become overly controlling, excessively religious, or better yet—and more socially acceptable—a workaholic. Regardless of the "drug" of choice, all forms of dependence lead inexorably to impaired emotional and relational health and to soul-destroying guilt.

If you, the pastor, find yourself overwhelmed, take it as a warning sign that you are tackling a problem too large for you alone with your present skills. This should be your signal to build a support team and a referral system. The resources listed below will help you accomplish this. As a pastor, sooner or later you will have to deal with the problem. We hope this article helps as you prepare for this part of your ministry. ■

\* Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958), 172.

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## Resources

A variety of resources are available. The list below is not comprehensive. You will find that some of them have links to other helpful groups and to resources available in various parts of the world.

### Professional organizations

1. American Society of Addiction Medicine: <http://www.asam.org>.
2. California Society of Addiction Medicine: <http://www.csam-asam.org>. Click "find CSAM physicians." You may then search by county and city.
3. American Academy of Addiction Psychiatrists: <http://www.aaap.org>. Click "Patient Referral" and fill in the requested info, and you will be granted access to the list.
4. National Association of Alcohol

and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC): <http://www.naadac.org>. Click "Certification" then "Substance Abuse Professional" then "Substance Abuse Professionals (SAP) Listed by State."

### Self-help organizations

1. Alcoholics Anonymous: <http://www.aa.org>. Click "How to find AA meetings," and then you can search by state. (For alcohol users.)
2. Al-Anon/Alateen: <http://www.al-anon.alateen.org>. (For family members or friends of users.)
3. Narcotics Anonymous: <http://www.na.org>. Click "NA Meeting Search." (For those who use any drugs or alcohol.)
4. Nar-Anon: <http://www.nar-anon.org>. Click "Nar-Anon Groups." (For family or friends of drug users.)

### Recommended books

- Alcoholics Anonymous, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*. Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.
- Brown, S. *Treating the Alcoholic: A Developmental Model of Recovery*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1985.
- May, G. G. *Addiction and Grace: Love and Spirituality in the Healing of Addictions (Plus)*. New York: HarperCollins, 1988.
- [mihran.ask@va.gov](mailto:mihran.ask@va.gov) for help in finding resources.
- Wegscheider-Cruse, S. *Another Chance: Hope and Health for the Alcoholic Family*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1989.
- White, E. G. "Helping the Tempted" and "Working for the Intemperate." *Ministry of Healing*. Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958.

# Giving the gift of life

David A. Becker



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Organ and tissue donors give genuine hope to people in their time of greatest need. As a hospital chaplain, I witnessed how human life hinges on the stewardship of the heart. Most religious organizations encourage organ and tissue donation and transplantation. Seventh-day Adventists, for example, support the best transplant research facilities, including Loma Linda University Children's Hospital in California, that specialize in pediatric heart transplantation and cutting-edge technology in xenotransplantation (animal-to-human organ transplants).<sup>1</sup>

The demand for usable organs for transplantation always exceeds the supply. During 2006, for example, 22,000 people in the United States received transplanted organs, and 11,200 individuals were organ donors. Near the start of 2007, more than 94,800 people remained on the waiting list for organ transplants in the United States. Most of those people died before an organ became available. You can get the up-to-the-minute count of people waiting for transplants at <http://www.unos.org>.<sup>2</sup>

Whether transplant surgeons procure organs from matching living donors or the donation of human organs arrives from a healthy human being who died, *donation* is an act of grace. The decision to give without reward—for the health and well-being of another person—is the essence of the Christian faith. It expresses our Christian calling to love one another.

The United States is one of the few nations in the world that legislates and funds a network

to identify potential organs upon the death of an individual. The National Organ Transplant Act requires that, immediately upon death of any patient, a member of the hospital staff must call the area organ procurement organization (OPO). Within ten minutes the OPO representative calls back and notifies the hospital which organs or tissues may be eligible for transplant.<sup>3</sup> If the deceased gave informed consent or explicit written instructions ("opting-in"), the hospital harvests the deceased's organs or tissues immediately.

Often, however, family members override the decision of the deceased. Fewer than two families in ten choose to donate loved-ones' organs and tissue. Many people sign the back of their driver's licenses, preprinted in most states as organ donor cards. However, few of these people actually donate because medical personnel do not receive consent documents at the time of death.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon the donor to inform family members of their explicit wishes to donate tissue and organs. Give family members written copies of wishes because first responders in hospitals very often request organ donation directions from the next of kin. According to the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, "If your family doesn't know you want to be a donor, [the family] may not allow the donation, even if your driver's license identifies you as a donor."<sup>4</sup>

In 2000, when a raging tornado sliced through downtown Fort Worth, Texas, falling debris killed a healthy nineteen-year-old man. His family agreed to donate whatever organs and tissues that the area OPO needed. The OPO determined that he was healthy enough to donate lungs, corneas, skin, pancreas, bones, and veins.

Within 36 hours of his death, doctors transplanted his lungs into the chest of a young woman suffering from cystic fibrosis. His corneas immediately allowed two youngsters to see for the very first time. Surgeons transplanted his pancreas into a diabetic and his veins into the legs of an elderly man who needed restorative blood flow for circulation. Hospital technicians carefully preserved and stored the valuable bone marrow. Within weeks, it extended the life of a young father with leukemia. Plastic surgeons in a hospital across the state made skin allografts on burn patients and then stored bones, tendons, and cartilage for use in reconstructive surgery. This young man's death created an abundance of life for many others.

Decisions concerning organ and tissue transplants force people of diverse cultures, traditions, beliefs, and religions to discuss and codify standards for regulating transplant decisions. This

The possibility exists that a person desperate for a transplant might select a diseased organ over impending death.

Most donors matched with a recipient through [matchingdonor.com](http://matchingdonor.com) desire no

seeds for discussion as a component of Christian education or in sermons gives people permission to discuss the topic openly rather than when they are under duress.

## MOST DECISIONS ON TRANSPLANTS COME AT THE LAST MOMENT. WHEN A PERSON DIES, IT IS OFTEN TOO LATE. THERE IS SUCH A NARROW WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCESSFULLY HARVEST AN ORGAN, PREPARE A RECIPIENT FOR SURGERY, AND COMPLETE THE TRANSPLANT.

requires making ethical and legal choices about the procurement and distribution of human organs and tissues long before a medical crisis occurs.

The sheer number of people seeking these medical procedures increases each year. Every hospital establishes litmus tests for surgery. Societal ethicists guide congregants about good judgment and common sense concerning decisions regarding transplant programs.

Every person has the same opportunity to have a transplant, regardless of age, sex, wealth, or any other factor. Medical bioethics and international felony law prohibit and penalize anyone who traffics in human organs. It is illegal to donate an organ for profit and illegal for a health-care worker to knowingly participate in the transplant of an organ procured through a commercial transaction.<sup>5</sup>

The National Organ Transplant Act provides a network of medical schools and screened suppliers who furnish organs for transplant. An independent Internet broker (<http://www.matchingdonor.com>) brings together willing donors with desperate recipients. This upsets the establishment. Dr. Douglas W. Hanto, head of the ethics committee of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons, said that the practice of “brokering” undermines the trust in the procurement system set up by established hospitals.<sup>6</sup>

compensation, but there are exceptions. An inmate in a Kentucky prison offered a kidney for \$900,000. The inmate estimated that her only risk in offering an organ for sale in violation of the law was felony arrest and a prison sentence.<sup>7</sup>

The second part of the ethics litmus test concerns the care of living transplant donors. In 2001, the number of living donors outnumbered deceased donors in the United States for the first time.<sup>8</sup> No longer did people have to wait for someone to die to obtain a transplant.

Bioethicists believe that donations from living people must be accomplished using a routine to “minimize the physical, psychological and social risk to the donor and not undermine the confidence and credibility of the transplant program.” Decisions should be “autonomous but informed” because the risks are “small but not inconsiderable.”<sup>9</sup>

Third, and the most important piece of the ethics foundation in organ and tissue transplants, is security and traceability. Every transplant alliance requires a quality control program that includes “registration, identification, monitoring, coding and biosurveillance” of every step of the process from the donor to the recipient.<sup>10</sup>

Pastors encourage congregants to think about organ and tissue donations as part of a healing ministry. Planting the

Pastors draw from Scriptures lessons on death, faith, justice, proclamation, charity, self-sacrificing service, and compassion. Some pastors talk about organ donations at the funerals of a donor or during Easter when we celebrate new life through Christ.

Most decisions on transplants come at the last moment. When a person dies, it is often too late. There is such a narrow window of opportunity to successfully harvest an organ, prepare a recipient for surgery, and complete the transplant. In the case of corneas that will assist blind children to regain sight, the transplant teams take them immediately from the donor on the hospital bed or emergency room gurney. When congregants call the pastor at the last minute to help them make an important decision, little time remains to discuss the issue. Pastors have time to pray and ask for God’s guidance but must think ahead so they anticipate the congregant’s queries about whether or not it is appropriate to donate.<sup>11</sup>

Saying “no” to a request for a donor organ is always an acceptable answer when someone in the hospital asks the next of kin to donate an organ or body tissue from the deceased. No additional explanation becomes necessary.

Requests for organs and tissue come as a difficult choice for a grieving family.

# Ministerial Student Writing Contest

**Ministry, International Journal for Pastors, announces its first Ministerial Student Writing Contest. All students enrolled in a full-time ministerial preparation program on the undergraduate or graduate level may participate.**

## Submission requirements

1. Writers must choose a category from the list below for their submission and state this information on the first page.
  - (a) Biblical studies
  - (b) Historical studies
  - (c) Theological studies (including ethics)
  - (d) Ministry (preaching, leadership, counseling, etc.)
  - (e) Mission studies
2. All submissions must follow the Writer's Guidelines as to length, endnotes, style, and other features of the manuscript. Please carefully read the guidelines found at [www.ministrymagazine.org](http://www.ministrymagazine.org).
3. Submit your manuscript in Microsoft Word to [MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org](mailto:MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org). Please include the following information at the top of the manuscript: your name, address, email address, telephone number, category for which you are submitting (see above), religious affiliation, name of college/university/seminary you are attending, and title of your manuscript.

## Prizes

<b>GRAND PRIZE:</b> <b>\$750</b>	<b>FIRST PRIZE:</b> <b>\$500</b>	<b>SECOND PRIZE</b> (five possible): <b>\$400</b>	<b>THIRD PRIZE</b> (five possible): <b>\$300</b>
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The evaluation panel will determine if all prizes will be awarded. The decisions of this panel are final.

## Publication

1. All submissions become the property of *Ministry Magazine* and will not be returned.
2. Writers who are awarded a prize give the rights to *Ministry* as outlined in the Writer's Guidelines. While the editors intend to publish such manuscripts, publication is not guaranteed.
3. Manuscripts that are not awarded a prize may be purchased by the editors at a price to be negotiated.

## Submission deadline

All submissions must be received by the editors no later than **Monday, 1 October 2007**.



The next of kin often cannot donate the organs from their loved ones after just facing the trauma of death. During times of grief, family dysfunction peaks with some families. Perhaps some members of the family favor organ donation while others oppose it. Most transplant surgeons prefer a consensus before they harvest organs.

Appropriate pastoral intervention works wonders to calm this issue in a time of high stress. Grief fills the hearts of staff members when a patient dies. They remove a heart or liver, for example, with respect for that dead human being. They take great care to treat the organs gently so as not to damage them. In turn, families can hold open casket funerals with *no* fear of scars where the hospital staff removed organs.

As a chaplain in a children's hospital, I witnessed both death and the glory of new life. A little after midnight, I lifted a young baby into his mother's arms as doctors prepared to remove him from life support. The grief that filled that room was overwhelming. Human initiative could not heal the catastrophic physical injuries this child sustained. The baby's parents agreed to donate his organs and tissues to help another child live.

About four-thirty in the morning, the intensive care nursing supervisor summoned me to talk with a family whose ten-month-old girl was about to receive a donor heart. I found a single mother in her late teens who spoke no English. Her language was Spanish, and I speak *only* English.

This mom was not alone. A Spanish-speaking aide came from the operating room to stay with the family until the baby went into surgery, so he translated my queries to the mother.

"Do you want the chaplain to pray for the baby?" asked the aide.

The frightened mother saw the medical technicians searching for a place to place the intravenous tube. I asked the mother if it would help to pray the Lord's Prayer. The translator spoke to her and she nodded.

"Our Father in heaven," I began.

I could do little more as chaplain. An entourage of people entered the operating room. As the door shut, the

mom turned and wept on my shoulder.

My time serving as a chaplain for that day ended and I went home to sleep. I read the obituary of the child who died in the weekend paper. In some ways, the dead child lived on.

The child who received the heart is doing fine with checkups three times a week to monitor for any signs of rejection. Improving immunosuppressive drugs and divine intervention gave this child many more days to live.

I witnessed the "resurrection" of the baby who received the new heart. Her life was close to being snuffed out by disease until another baby gave new life.

That's why I believe in organ donations. ❏

- 1 *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 77, no. 1 (1999): 54.
- 2 United Network for Organ Sharing, <http://www.unos.org/data/default.asp?displayType=usData>. Accessed January 1, 2007.
- 3 S.2048. A bill to provide for the establishment of a Task Force in Organ Procurement and Transplantation and an Organ Procurement and Transplantation Registry, and for other purposes. Sponsor: Senator Orin G. Hatch, Utah. Introduced November 3, 1983; became Public Law No. 98-507 October 19, 1984. <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d098:SN02048:@@L%7CTOM:/bss/d098query.html>.
- 4 Medical Essay, supplement to the *Mayo Clinic Health Letter*, October 2004, 3.
- 5 *Strengthening of National Programs for Organ Donation and Transplants*, 6.
- 6 Dr. Sally Satel, "An Internet Lifeline, in Search of a Kidney," *New York Times*, November 22, 2005. <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/22/health/22essa.html?ei=5070&en=99c48a8bf4a7cd27&ex=1167800400&pagewanted=print>. Accessed January 1, 2007.
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 Living donors (6,528) outnumbered deceased organ donors (6,081) for the first time in the United States in 2001. *Transplant Living*, <http://www.transplantliving.org>. Accessed January 1, 2007.
- 9 *Strengthening of National Programs*, 6.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 Father Michael J. Lynch, "A Personal Story," *Organ and Tissue Donation Reference Guide for Clergy*, ed. M. Lisa Cooper and Gloria Taylor (Richmond, VA: South-Eastern Organ Procurement Foundation and United Network for Organ Sharing, 1998), IV-2-8.

Tell us what you think about this article. Email us at [MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org](mailto:MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org) or write to us at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

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*(Steps to Christ, 94, 95)*

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# Dateline

## HeartQuest

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Mike Tucker

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- United States (mountain time): 8:00–9:00 P.M.
- United States (Pacific time): 7:00–8:00 P.M.

Register today at <http://www.HeartQuest.info/host/>, <http://www.acn.info>, or call 1-800-ACN-1119.

## Motorbikes for church leaders

**Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo**—Getting around the vast territory of the South Katanga Field was made a lot easier with the purchase of six motorcycles.

The purchase of the motorcycles—made possible by generous contributions—will enable the church leaders to more effectively supervise

their districts throughout the eastern sections of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, according to **Kasereka Kavis**, president of the South Katanga Association.



South Katanga pastors with their motorcycles

If you would like to contribute funds that will assist in other significant projects like the one just mentioned, please send them to General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Attn: James A. Cress, Ministerial Association secretary; 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD, USA 20904-6600. If you have questions please email [CressJ@gc.adventist.org](mailto:CressJ@gc.adventist.org).

## Religious Liberty World Congress 2007

**Cape Town, South Africa**—The **Sixth International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA)** World Congress convened in Cape Town, South Africa, February 27–March 1, 2007, with more than six hundred attendees from approximately fifty countries.

Thirty experts on religious freedom and church-state relations were invited. Fifteen workshops with sixty panelists stimulated the interaction between experts and participants. University professors from the United States, Europe, Russia, and religious representatives from various countries brought with them an outstanding level of knowledge about religious freedom. Twenty-six regional and nongovernmental organizations (NGO) reports helped the participants to measure the

effects of religious freedom violation on believers and nonbelievers alike.



Bishop Ricardo Ramirez from the United States and Ray Coombe from Australia

**The Reverend John Oliver**, rector of St. Mark's Anglican Church and founding chairperson of the Cape Town Interfaith Initiative, led a panel featuring **Ela Gandhi**, the granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, who represented Hinduism, **Nokuzola Mndende**, who represented African Traditional Religion, along with other religious representatives.

According to **John Graz**, IRLA secretary general and general coordinator of the World Congress, the goal for next year's world congress will be to gather eight hundred participants from all religions and beliefs.

## UN expert defends importance of combating religious intolerance

**Geneva, Switzerland**—Ending religious intolerance is “far from a reality” concludes United Nations special *rapporteur* **Asma Jahangir** in her latest report to the UN Human Rights Council. She reiterated her concerns at a special meeting with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) on March 28 at the UN Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Responding to a question from Seventh-day Adventist Church representative **Jonathan Gallagher**, she said that her religious freedom mandate was “wide and important, and as deep as you want to go,” and because of limitations on financial and human

*continued on page 28*



Asma Jahangir

resources, she had addressed “so far only the periphery.”

The whole process of independent UN experts is under review by the new UN Human Rights Council, with some states actively campaigning to end independent investigation of their own poor human rights records, while others cite financial constraints as an argument to limit the work of these UN investigators.

Jahangir referenced these issues and said that it “depends on political will, and the sincerity of member states” in making better contributions and strengthening the mandate to counter religious intolerance. She appealed to the NGO community to support her Freedom of Religion or Belief work, and to cooperate in researching and reporting abuses of religious freedom wherever they occurred.

The role of this special *rapporteur* derives from the 1981 UN Declaration against Religious Intolerance that received input from Adventist Church representatives and is widely regarded as one of the best international documents for defending fundamental religious human rights. [PARL News] ❏

letters continued

### The ministry of teaching

I appreciated Kathy Beagles’s emphasis in her article “The Ministry of Teaching in the Congregation” (November 2006) on the need of sound teaching. However, I would not agree that teaching is distinctive from preaching. In my opinion, preaching should have a strong element of teaching in it. I realize that my years as an evangelist may affect my thinking. On those occasions when I am not in the pulpit, I am longing to be fed from God’s Word, because spiritual power comes through the agency of the Spirit’s work through the Scriptures.



**Sense of the Call: A Sabbath Way of Life for Those Who Serve God, the Church, and the World** Marva J. Dawn, *Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006.*

In a world where Christians and non-Christians alike struggle to keep up with their stressful and busy lives, Marva Dawn’s book *The Sense of the Call* confirms the growing awareness of the need for rest beyond leisure. Though she brushes past the significance of the seventh day as the Sabbath, Dawn fully embraces the principle of Sabbath as a means through which God restores, reclaims, and revitalizes those who serve Him in the church and the world.

Dawn explores how the all-encompassing gift of Sabbath renews the mind and the body, restores relationships, and reconnects those who serve to the God who first called them. The joys and challenges of the Sabbath way of life are described under four principles: resting, ceasing, feasting, and embracing. These principles, Dawn believes, are vital for the health and wholeness of all Christians.

Dawn encourages readers to embrace the countercultural approach to life that the Sabbath embodies. She challenges church leaders to resist the status-quo that prevails not only in our culture but also

in congregations where truth has been compromised to make Christianity more attractive to broader audiences. In addition to promoting a full day of rest, Dawn discusses the benefits of regular sabbaticals and touches on ways in which pastors and others who serve can make their Sabbath experiences more meaningful.

Throughout the book, Dawn infuses her writing with a rich assortment of quotes from other authors and thinkers, bringing the collective weight of the Christian experience to bear on this topic. She also draws from her own experiences and includes examples that, at first, may seem too personal but ultimately serve as a testimony to the truth found in 2 Corinthians 4:7: “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us” (NIV).

For those who have felt the restless desire to find a better alternative to the frenzied lifestyle that our culture offers, this book will confirm what the heart whispers in moments of rest, when truth can most clearly be understood. It also serves as a useful reminder that the world needs to know more about the treasure we have discovered in entering God’s Sabbath rest. Dawn assures us that across denominations and around the world, the Spirit of God is actively calling believers to enter into His rest and experience the renewal and the peace that can only be found in trusting Him wholeheartedly.

—A. Grace Brown, *creative principal of The Write Design, LLC, lives in Columbia, Maryland, United States.*

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Her article actually makes a strong case for the importance of our Sabbath Schools. There has been no other setting where small group ministry, centered on the teaching and study of God’s Word, has been successful. We must not let it wither and lose its importance.

As I travel in my work I see churches with still fairly strong Sabbath School programs. However, in recent years, there has been a growing trend in some of our churches to minimize the Sabbath School to the point that it has become largely unimportant to many. We need

to value our Sabbath Schools and revive their importance to the spiritual welfare of our people and those that we bring to Christ.

—Jim Reinking, *email.*

### Thanks!

I received a copy of your January issue. Excellent articles. Highly practical. This is the right direction for *Ministry* for the developing world.

God bless.

—D. R. Watts, *president, Southern Asia Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Tamil Nadu, India.* ❏



# Breakaway pastors

JAMES A. CRESS



This article is not addressed to dissident, offshoot pastors who have departed the faith to establish their own independent ministries.

Instead, I'm writing to continuously overworked, overstretched, overextended ministers whose typical response to successful pastoral ministry means doing more of the same with even greater diligence.

One of the greatest reasons for serious reflection about which activities bring success for pastoral ministry may be our inability to distinguish what *busy works* are less effective than others and discard them. If we fail to comprehend which functions do not make us successful, our only recourse for maintaining excellence is doing more of everything until we collapse under the weight of attempting too much.

Let's face it: You probably need a serious breakaway. Of course, a few slackers exist in every profession, including ministry, whose self-starter disengaged years ago and who simply go through the motions of ministry—awaiting the glorious arrival of retirement. These few pastors have much greater potential for rusting out than for burning out. They don't need a vacation; rather, they need a jumpstart to reenvision their potential and to begin functioning at full speed.

On the other hand, the majority of pastors work hard—typically too hard. They need a breakaway. They need a vacation. They do not need one more thing to do. They need the rest, recuperation, restoration, relaxation, renewal, and revival that come only from a sabbatical. In fact, if more Sabbath-teaching pastors were really Sabbath-keeping believers, there would be much less burnout. We even cite

Jesus' mention of priests laboring in the temple without breaking the Sabbath commandment—in an effort to excuse our pastoral behavior of working harder on the Lord's Day than any other day of the week.

In that same context, however, we forget Jesus' example of regularly taking meaningful breakaways from His own ministry. And remember, Jesus took these breakaways in full advance knowledge from Daniel 9 that His public ministry would last only three and a half years. Busy as He was, Jesus regularly experienced specific breakaway opportunities.

**Spiritual retreats.** Although He was so exhausted from meeting the needs of the throngs that He even fell asleep in the bottom of a boat in stormy seas, Jesus also knew the necessity of engaging with heaven in spiritual retreats. Whether late at night or in all-night communion with God or arising a long while before dawn to pray, Jesus consistently experienced spiritual retreats for strength and guidance from His heavenly Father whose will He had come to earth to accomplish.

**Social retreats.** Jesus also enjoyed relaxing times with friends and family. Often He was present at celebrations, banquets, parties, and wedding feasts. In fact, He so often mixed with sinners that some accused Him of gluttony. He so often partied with sinners that some assumed He was a winebibber. Despite Jesus' unsullied character, He repeatedly sought opportunities to mingle with

individuals who quickly realized that His interested focus on their individual needs was as One who desired their good.

**Recreational retreats.** Sometimes the Savior took a day off just to have fun. He would go fishing with the disciples, enjoy a cookout on the beach, or relax in the fellowship of a hearty meal at the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. If Jesus was around, you knew you would enjoy a good time.

So, follow Jesus' example. Become a breakaway pastor. Experience the blessings of spiritual, social, and recreational retreats. If a weekly day off isn't your thing, then strive to schedule recurring week-long breaks. In my own ministry, I need a couple weeks' breakaway just to become creative again. After several months of extended work, I find that the first few days of a two-week break bring restorative sleep and virtual mental inactivity as I unwind. Slowly, but surely, as my body rests and my mind clears, the creative process reawakens and I can begin to think in new ways, design fresh projects, and plan bright sermons, articles, or lectures. Creative ideas, which I could never have forced into an overextended schedule or into an overcrowded mind, spring up with surprising freshness once I am rested.

Returned missionary Denele Ivins describes some specific tips for planning such a personal breakaway\*:

*Admit your need for rest.* There is no shame in being tired because you are serving others. You are only human.

*Put it on the calendar.* Once you determine your need for rest, schedule a date on the calendar before it fills up. Stick to it!

*Get the support of your family, friends, and members.* Share why you need a  
*continued on page 30*

retreat and ask your friends to pray for you through the process. Recognize that your spouse may carry an extra load while you retreat, so be prepared to reciprocate during your spouse's renewal opportunity.

*Resist taking someone along.* A personal retreat sounds like such a good idea that others who hear your plan will want to join you. Keep it solo for maximum renewal effectiveness while encouraging others to schedule their own.

*Don't feel guilty.* While it is true that you are leaving behind needs and tasks, the unselfish thing to do is to make being renewed a priority. You will return strengthened for the tasks at hand.

*Customize your retreat.* Think through what *restful* means for you. Rustic or luxurious? Active or quiet? Mountains, ocean, or desert? Near or far?

*Include the nature element.* The heavens do declare His glory, and the great outdoors provides the perfect setting in which to be renewed.

*Take advantage of resources.* Check with your colleagues for retreat venues in your area designed especially for ministry workers. These are usually lower-cost and sometimes offer counseling and other resources. Think creatively. Consider off-season church camps, a friend's cabin, or a place you'd like to visit.

*Address the whole person.* Include elements of rest and renewal for your body, mind, and soul. Visit a museum, attend a ball game, read a book, take a walk, or ride a riverboat. Just do it!

*Take a well-stocked tool chest.* Go prepared with your Bible, devotional book, hymnal, and journal. Pack lighter reading and favorite snacks. Retreat is not the time to fast—or even diet.

*Have great expectations.* Expect God to meet you in a special way. He specializes in giving rest to the weary and just asks us to come! ❏

\* Denele Ivins, "Rest for the Weary," *Just Between Us*, Spring 2007, 10.

Tell us what you think about this article. Email us at [MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org](mailto:MinistryMagazine@gc.adventist.org) or write to us at 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

## BOOK REVIEW

### The Embrace of a Father: True Stories of Inspiration & Encouragement

Compiled by Wayne Holmes, Bethany House. 232 pages, U.S.\$14.99.

Though one would not list this book as a theological tome, it is all about God, His character, and His relationship to His children. Compiler Wayne Holmes has gathered stories of human fatherhood that illustrate profound attributes of our heavenly Father. The individual authors recount personal experiences with their own fathers, ranging from the dads of Gary Smalley, James Dobson, Philip Yancey, Rick Warren, Richard J. Foster, and other well-known Christian writers to relatively unknown names with equally heartwarming stories.

Each narrative is two to three pages long, readable and enjoyable. And though the author may acknowledge that his or her father was far from perfect, each particular incident portrays one of the best acts of love in our earthly fathers and shows us a glimpse of yet another facet of God's love.

The book is attractively printed, and my copy-editor eyes appreciated the rarity of reading a whole book and having only three minor copy errors jump out at me. While there is an occasional reference to an immortal soul—a concept with which I do not agree—there is not an objectionable emphasis on that, and the main thrust of the book is the incredible love of God our Father.

For a pastor, this little book could make a good gift for a new dad. It could also provide a wealth of sermon illustrations. And it could be used as an adjunct to counseling, showing (as opposed to telling) a father how to truly love his child. Nor does it hurt for pastors occasionally to be reminded of how to model good parenting for their parishioners. It would also make a nice, easily read addition to a church library.

—Madeline S. Johnston, copy editor, *Andrews University Seminary Studies*. ❏

## RESOURCES

### Resources for ministry to the blind

Two great resources are available for churches and ministry leaders who desire to have a ministry to the blind in their community—ideal for pastors, elders, personal ministries leaders, and disabilities ministries leaders.

#### Missionaries of the Blind: volunteer manual

By David M. Klindedinst.

This 15-page booklet introduces the Missionaries of the Blind outreach program (also known as the MOB) and explains how a church can have a simple and effective visitation ministry to blind people in their community. It explains step by step how to set up this ministry and get interested church members involved.

#### At Ease with the Blind

By Christian Record Services.

This 15-page booklet provides valuable training and instruction on how to relate to and interact with a blind person. These principles are written in an easy-to-learn format that is perfect for teens and adults. It covers subjects such as how to talk, walk, and socialize with a blind person and how to meet their needs.

These two booklets are available free from the Personal Ministries Department of Christian Record Services. You may contact them by calling 1-877-288-1188 or by sending email to [personalministries@christianrecord.org](mailto:personalministries@christianrecord.org), or you may visit their Web site at <http://permin.christianrecord.org/>. ❏



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To register your church as a host site for this event or to learn more, please have your pastor call 1-877-507-3239 or visit [www.thinairevent.com/host](http://www.thinairevent.com/host)

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