FOR THE ONE BOOK

Order your kindle or print copy of the #1 best-selling Adventist ebook. Let it nourish and challenge you, or buy it for a friend, and learn more about living "Jesus. All."

SYDNEY & PERTH 2014

The One project teams are gearing up and filling up for Sydney (registration, schedule) and Perth (registration, schedule) this July. Don't miss out.

BRASIL 2015

The first South American gathering happens in São Paulo in October. Plans continue to develop so be click here to register and view the schedule.

Seattle 2014 gathering reflections

Seattle brought with it over 750 participants and over 20 countries represented between 628 online viewers, along with inspiring and challenging messages and dialogue. We hope and pray that the Spirit of Jesus continues to challenge your heart and stir your soul with
the reflections and conversations that took place around the tables. We want to thank all of
you who took time to complete the post-gathering survey, and let you know that your
thoughts and prayers will continue to help the One project along the path of growth and
influence.

If you weren't with us in Seattle, there are a few ways you can catch up on what took
place. First of all, you can view our gallery of photos that were taken and uploaded with
great thanks and appreciation by Delwin Finch. Also, as part of the segments called, 'This
is My Dream,' you can click here to see what others shared concerning the burden on their
heart for our church and community. There have been some write-ups on the gathering by
Dr. Charles Scriven, former president of Kettering college, on Spectrum, Rebecca Barcelo,
Graduate Recruiter for La Sierra University on Spectrum and Eliel Cruz on Huffington Post.
Read here what others have said the gathering meant to them. As for the Reflections from
Seattle, be sure to bookmark the One project website which will be revamped (see below)
and released at the end of March with all of those videos included.

Lastly, though there are more people to thank than we can list in this newsletter, we did
want to give a special thank you to the following groups;

- The Westin hotel in Seattle, and their staff, for a great gathering experience.
- Walla Walla University & La Sierra University student teams for helping with
  prepping the tables, video, registration, the TOP kids program, hosting the doors,
  and so much more.
- Pacific Union College for organizing our outreach opportunity in Seattle (see below).
- Signs Publishing for publishing the new One project book called 'For the One.' (see
  below for more information).
- And last but not least, both the Kettering Health Network of Dayton, OH, and the
  Florida Health Systems network of Orlando, FL, for providing two of this year's
  resource books.

TOP Publishes first book

We are more than excited to announce that as of
the moment, our new book, released in Seattle
and available online at several stores including
an electronic version at Amazon and a print
version at the Adventist Book Center online.
Currently, the book is the best seller of
Adventist ebooks. Thanks to the folks at Signs
Publishing, especially our main editor, Nathan
For the One

Voices from the One Project

Edited by Nathan Brown with Alex Bruin and Japhet De Oliveira

Brown, for doing such a great job with the book, which is a collection of reflections shared at many of the gatherings since the One project gathering in 2011. If you want to learn more, you can check out this article on Adventist Review Online.

Utrecht growing....

Only one month left before the the early rate for Utrecht ends. With limited spaces, register now to get the best price. The schedule has also been updated. Contact Tom de Bruin, Hanes Ponte or Japhet De Oliveira for any questions.
TOP Website ReDesign coming soon

As mentioned above, we are just four weeks away from launching our revamped One project website. You can look forward to a beautiful new design, easier access to register, more videos, and more. Of course, you are also welcome and invited to download the One project app available from iTunes App Store, which was also recently redesigned with a new look and easier ways to connect with the growing number of gatherings happening around the world.
San Diego 2015 FILLING FAST

In just the last three weeks, we have already had reached 50% capacity for participants at next year’s North America gathering in San Diego, CA, on February 9-10, 2015. We expect the rest to fill quickly so don't wait until the last minute to register for San Diego or you will not only risk paying more, you may risk not being able to attend. The current registration fee is $190, which will go up to $230 on November 8. Students may email us for the code to receive the student discount. Please be sure to book your hotel as early as possible, even right after you register, because we expect the available rooms in the Town & Country Resort and Convention Center to fill up fast at the incredible rate of $129/night. You may also see the schedule. Hope to see you in San Diego in 2015.

A Thoughtful Hour

A Thoughtful Hour is designed to give a little structure and focus to a study of the life of Christ. It can be used with a study group or on your own. However you use it, you’ll find it easier “to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ.”

For a fresh look at the gospel story:

- Click here to read the first chapter.
- Free, downloadable power point files are available here.
- Or, you can go here to learn more about the book.

All Spanish Gathering at LSU, October 2015

Our second, All Spanish Speaking, gathering is set to take place on the campus of La
Sierra University on ---. Space is limited as well for this event, so be sure to sign-up early to reserve your spot. The updated schedule is here with new Reflections planned. Any questions please contact Pastor Manny Arteaga of Pastor Miguel Mendez.

Starting next year, and joinging the 2015 theme of "The Sermon", generation One will hold their first gathering specifically designed for 14-17 year olds. This gathering will be held on the Sabbath before the One project at the same location as the One project in San Diego.

Together, we will spend a day in conversation, in prayer, and in support of one another as we discover, and rediscover, what it means to stand in light of the call of Jesus as read in Matthew 5-7.

This is a call to the youth of today to journey together as we determine what it means to live out the Gospel in a personal and meaningful way. Together, we seek to find common ground with those around us. To be a generation who embodies the Gospel in a world that
isn't always supportive, understanding, or inclusive.

A generation who believes in *Jesus. All.*

For more information, please visit the generation One page.

Any questions please contact *Pastor J. Murdock.*

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**New Zealand**

The [schedule](#) for our gathering in Auckland, New Zealand is online here. Registration [early rate](#) is still available. Any questions please contact *Rod Long.*
Leaving Behind Just a "Devotional Jesus"

This is a tough topic to talk about, but one we feel called to for such a time as this. It begins with a question; when was the last time you felt Jesus calling you to change something in your life, sacrifice something you're doing that wasn't the best or healthiest for you, reconcile a broken relationship, or forgive someone for something seemingly unforgivable?

I ask these things because in the ministry that I'm involved in, I have noticed a concerning trend of people that enjoy the 'devotional Jesus,' but aren't so sure about the Jesus that calls them to actually make changes in their lives, or the Jesus that challenges us to change the way we've always done things because they are no longer what the Spirit is up to, or the Jesus that calls us "Brood of Vipers, hypocrites," because of our behavior in church, or the Jesus who flips over the tables in the temple because there was something keeping people from coming to God. Instead, we warm up to the 'devotional Jesus' that simply affirms what we're already doing and invites us to have some good conversations that cause us to feel warm and fuzzy inside, but no transformation actually occurs.

Now please here me, there is only ONE Jesus Christ who though He is One with the Father and Spirit, and though we know that He is also the fulfillment of the law, we also recognize that He is also always on the move. First, He invites us into a walk and relationship with Him and assures of us of His great love for us. Then, once in relationship with us, as many have said before, "He loves us just as we are, but He also loves us so much that He doesn't leave us the way we are." Jesus wants to come into our lives and bring about transformation now, here on this earth, even before He comes to take us to be with Him forever. But keep in mind, Jesus's work through the Holy Spirit for our
transformation doesn't finish on this side of heaven. In theological terms, as well as in the words of church historian George Knight, "sanctification is both the work of a moment and the work of a lifetime." This is what we would call, as we discussed in Seattle, Present Truth.

It is my prayer that each of us recognize the warm invitation of our loving Savior asking to be a part of our daily lives and loving us despite the brokenness in our lives. But then I pray for all of us to have the courage for what comes next; the part where Jesus shines a light on some of the brokenness and asks for permission to come in and heal us from those things. May we have the courage and strength to do what He calls us to do when He says, 'If anyone wants to come after me, let Him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.' in other words, if the cross is something that leads to death, may we cling to Jesus as we die to our old self and He creates us new (2 Corinthians 5: 16-21). And though this process, the road of growth, can be painful at times, rest assured that Jesus always has our best in mind. We just have to be attentive to His leading and trust that He knows better than we do what that best is (Proverbs 3: 5-6).

Peace be with you, and may you live out Jesus. All.

-Paddy McCoy

the ONE project headquarters is located at the Boulder Seventh-day Adventist Church
345 Mapleton Ave, Boulder, CO, 80304, USA.
This Is My Dream

As we collect these from those who attend each of the gatherings this year, we will keep on posting them. Please feel free to engage a conversation around these dreams in your local communities.

1. People are attracted to joy. They long for freedom, and they want to know how they can have a better life now. My dream - the church is a place filled with joy...A place where people can learn how life is better now with Jesus and His ways and a place where people experience the freedom that a life lived in Christ brings. (Helen Teske-Connections Church, Yakima WA)

2. That we might move in church and as a church...uninhibited...that we might dance in worship.

3. That the church would never stop dreaming...that they may never be satisfied and always are striving to grow closer to Jesus and constantly perusing God's will.

4. Of a church where labels, such as progressive, liberal, or conservative, do not divide us, but enrich us.

5. That our churches and educational institutions become safe spaces for the oppressed and marginalized and hurting- to fun towards, instead of run away from.

6. That I come to a church each week and learn more of the gracious love of God that changes me to be like Him.

7. A church that will truly be a body welcoming the human family of sinners...including those we marginalize now...woman, ethnic minorities, LGBT people...a place where we all can eat at the welcoming table here and forever.

8. For the church to be a loving, nonjudgmental haven for our young adults.

9. That He becomes greater and we become less.

10. That more tithe stay in the local congregation.

11. As a female SDA pastor I love to be treated the same as an SDA male pastor.

12. The One Project would be open to peoples of all denomination, where we can gather around a table and have dialogical conversations centered on Jesus.

13. To live in a world that is made up of unconditional love.

14. A church community that wants everyone at the table; gay people, conspiracy theorists, mystics, heretics, Doug Bachelor, and me.

15. I want my church to be a place where everybody would take care of each other.

16. That there will be more Adventist teaching in the public school system.

17. That church is REAL

18. That my church be known by my community (members in lions club, boys and girls of America, etc).

19. All Christians will consider themselves the body. Even different denominations...

20. That I will let God/Jesus help me love Him more each day! (Shawn)

21. Where Jesus is obvious in the way we live our lives. Church is comprised of fully devoted followers of Jesus.

22. A people who focus on the faithfulness of God to ALL people. (It's not all about is and what we are doing but what He is doing...WATCH for God!)

23. Where the joy of the church would come from letting Jesus live out His life through us. Galatians 2:20

24. A church that values emotional health

25. We go together as one group to the countries where many people do not know Jesus and tell His story to them: Japan, North Korea, etc.

26. I dream of a church that is less of a building and more of an action...of a church that doesn't just discuss, but acts, of a church that actively lives as the body of Christ.

27. A church that wraps itself around sculpting people. Not as evangelists, not as pastors, or teachers, or worship leaders, but simply as followers of Jesus, sculpting daughters and sons of God to be and do who and what God inspires us to be and do. --Jonny Moor
28. I dream of a church where church members feel safe in being vulnerable with each other and having an open community with each other. A church where we don't turn away those wanting to be vulnerable. Have a Jesus centered and Jesus like community.

29. I dream of a fearless church. One where administrators, pastors, teachers, and all leaders respond to God's leading no matter the cost. A church that is on the cutting edge of evangelism, discipleship, ministry, media, and theology. A church our youth and young adults can be proud of. A church that lifts up Jesus at every opportunity. --Milton Marquez

30. That we will focus on Jesus and have a connected heart but then the next stop will be to appreciate and study on doctrines and understand the light that was given to us one to see and appreciate them as they were meant to be understood and valued rather than be discarded and replaced by other more popular worldly concepts and ideas that may be God's will.

31. To be a church filled with men and women who will not be bought or sold, who in their inmost souls are true and honest, who do not fear to call sin by its right name, whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, who will stand for the right though heavens fall (adapted from EGW, ed., p.57)

32. That we seek to model and to teach our children/youth to think critically and live Jesus practically...AND then we accept and respect their thinking and their doing.

33. To become so transparent in everything we do, with the love of Christ, that our lives as Christians (Christ followers) should make non-believers question their disbelief in God.

34. That these dreams would become realities, that God would prove His goodness and grace by using a mess like us SDA to further His kingdom and bring Him glory.

35. That I could invite my best friend, who happens to be gay, to Church, and he would feel the love of Jesus through us. That he would feel safe, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

36. A church that embodies Jesus person in life, assisting others to hear the message of out living God to be transformed in his spirit. May the pain in the church be the birth pain of delivery of forgiveness and love in the kingdom oh heaven. --Randy Tomkins

37. That we have unity in Jesus but the church will build each other up even when we are different that women's ordination and other hot issues will not make us and Christian to those who think differently to love each other as Jesus asked us to.

38. That we can start change with ourselves first. That we submit to guide each and every day by praying and studying his word then we can truly begin to change it starts with us first.

39. For a church that lives by life and ministry not one or the other, but hand in here and it's how we live our life which is our ministry. Move beyond on the four walls and do life well make disciples in.

40. That the doors to our Seventh-day Adventist churches will never be closed and that the sanctuary will be open for prayer and peaceful reflection.

41. People are attracted to joy. They demand for freedom and they want to know how they can have a better life. Now my dream the church is a place filled with joy; a place where people can learn how life is better now with Jesus and his ways and a place where people experience the freedom that a life in Christ alone brings.

42. Of a church that is less of the building and more of an action. Of a church that doesn't just discuss, but acts as a church that actively lives as the body of Christ.

43. That the central position of Jesus empowers Adventists lay members to love each other regardless of our differences, and those who have concerns that others only embrace facts and doctrines will show by their love and life that all doctrine and truth is originating from God.

44. That parents may come to value biblical literacy and knowing Christ as much as they value sports programs for their children. That we as leaders might empower God's people from multiple places of diversity. That we move from the house of fear to the house of love.

45. Of a church full of disciples of the one true Jesus disciples the lights testify the radical and transforming power of a living and breathing grace filled guard that we show the power of discipleship verses in doctrine all in every part of our Christian journey a perfect love casts out fear that we sent serve a guide of Life light and that we practice this as individual people and as a church.

46. That Adventists will be in the world, changing, shaping, and having a say in our culture today but not of the world which so many others believe and fear will become of us.
48. Of a church where our mothers, sisters and daughters can fully minister. Not just elders pastors and prophets. Where if we were to close our doors at community would notice in our community would plead with us to return to services.

49. There are church would realize I need for individual relationships with Jesus Christ I believe we need to disable and equipped our young people and teach them how to make that connection with Jesus through prayer appraise and devotion to gods word simple tools we can all stand on.

50. Of a church with one territory...one conference...a TRUE merger

51. Of a church that doesn't judge my legitimacy as a believer, follower, lover, worshipper, or leader, by my gender, sexuality, skin color, or social background.

52. That the Seventh-day Adventist church will begin to have an honest, and balanced dialogue with the LGBT community instead of at them. That we will love those who are fundamentally different than us not just words but action.

53. That we seek to model and to teach our children/youth to think critically and live Jesus practically... And then we accept and respect their thinking and their doing.

54. To be a church filled with men and women who will not be bought or sold, who in their inmost souls are true and honest. Who do not fear to call sin its right name, whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, who will stand for the right though the heavens fall. (Adapted from EGW Ed. P.57)

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56. I dream of a church where church members feel safe in being vulnerable with each other and having an open community with each other. A church where we don’t turn away those wanting to be vulnerable. To have a Jesus centered and Jesus like community.

57. A church that wraps itself around sculpting people, not as evangelists, not as pastors, or teachers, or worship leaders, but simply as followers of Jesus. Sculpting daughters and sons of God to be and do who and what God inspires us to be and do.

58. My dream for the church is to become so transparent in everything we do, with the love of Christ, that our lives as Christians (Christ’s followers) should make non-believers question their disbelief in God.

59. That these dreams would become realities, that God would prove his goodness and grace by using a mess like us SDA's to further his kingdom and bring him glory.

60. That our church will be known in the world as the compassionate church, the non-judgmental church, the uplifting church, the church that accepts and loves people the same way Jesus did.

61. For more understanding of each other, between generations, so that no more are we individuals trying to make a difference, but a whole group, with an understanding of each other, working together to bring Jesus to the world.

62. That I can feel as safe discussing my struggles and trials at church with my church family, as I do discussing those issues with my immediate family.

63. That we can know the true character of God, revealed through Jesus Christ. That my Gods character can be vindicated. We are told to love others as Christ has loved us- to love others we must know how God loves us. By beholding God we become changed. How can we love others if we don’t know who God is through Jesus Christ?
Is it the second coming of 1888? Is it radical Christo-centrism birthing a bold, new prophetic Adventism?

Is it the second coming of 1888? Is it radical Christo-centrism birthing a bold, new prophetic Adventism? Is it spiritual snack food—a feel-good Jesus—doled out like cookies for the all-too-comfortable?

Such questions invite the one activity that the One Project—a pastor-led initiative to make Jesus the center of Adventist consciousness—seems bound to stimulate. That activity is conversation among the troubled, hopeful people who bring thought to their experience in Adventism.

More than 700 such people came together for the One Project’s 2014 “gathering” last Monday and Tuesday in a downtown Seattle hotel. Similar gatherings—two in Australia, one each in Brazil, The Netherlands, and New Zealand, along with a Spanish only conference at La Sierra University—will occur later this year. Given such energy and widening reach, the One Project will certainly continue, at least in the short run, to generate, and perhaps even to shape, the ongoing Adventist conversation.

The One Project mantra is “Jesus. All.”—or, as said repeatedly from the ballroom stage, “Jesus...full-stop. All...full-stop.” In that spirit, and in Monday’s first talk, Bill Knott, editor of the Adventist Review, cited Paul’s point, from Colossians 1, that Jesus is the “image of the invisible God.” The implication was that the Bible takes readers to a culmination—in a word, to Jesus. The specific story he focused on was that of the risen Jesus talking and walking with two struggling followers on the way to Emmaus. This picture of conversation led Knott to propose the ideal of “dialogical Adventism.” “Beware of those who think Adventism is unanimity,” he
declared, saying further that the Adventist Movement “is either about a conversation and a journey, or it has lost its way.”

Alex Bryan, who is returning to the pastorate of the Walla Walla University Church and is, along with Boulder, Colorado pastor Japhet De Oliveira, co-chair of the One Project board, turned then to eschatology. Reflecting on the signature Adventist passage of Revelation 14:6-12—it speaks of the “mark of the beast” as well as of the “faith of Jesus”—Bryan said that our interpretation may lead to “paranoia” or “paralysis” or “parousia.” This last, and it alone, is authentically desirable, an experience, he said, of the presence of Jesus. Later on on the first day Sam Leonor, chaplain at La Sierra University, returned to the theme of eschatology. End-time charts don’t fit with Jesus’ insistence, in Acts 1:7, that we cannot “know the times or periods.” An eschatology shaped by Jesus, he said, convicts true followers to live—today—as the saved will live in the world made new, redeemed from indifference, oppression and hate.

Three talks addressed the relationship between Jesus and the Bible. Randy Roberts, senior pastor of the Loma Linda University Church, noted the tendency of religious movements to diminish into sclerotic bureaucracies, then argued from John 16 that Jesus is the criterion for ever-deeper insight that the Spirit continues to provide. In the Bible itself, as in Christian communities today, misunderstandings appear. But even if no community has the truth, God does move people—“as we are able”—toward profounder understanding. And the person who “rejects the New,” Roberts remarked, invoking Ellen White, “does not really possess the Old.” David Franklin, who appears on the Hope Channel’s “Let’s Pray,” said that the “same” Jesus appears in both Testaments of Scripture. “He is not an apex,” Franklin went on, thus seeming to contradict both Roberts and Mark Witas, who spoke the next morning. Witas, now pastor of the Pacific Union College Church, advanced the claim that Jesus is the transcript of God’s character. Citing Old Testament calls to genocide, and comparing Luke 9:55, 56 with the Genesis account of Sodom and Gomorrah, he said: “Jesus came to redefine the Father.”

Three women addressed the conference. Monday afternoon Dilys Brooks, a chaplain at Loma Linda University, spoke of Christian integrity, or “credible witness.” She cited Gandhi—“My life is my message”—and called attention to Job’s integrity “through pain” and David’s ability to “own” his own mistakes, God helping all the while. Tuesday morning Susan Zork, a religion teacher at Andrews University, looked to Mark 2 and Sabbath healing stories in the Gospels to back her contention that Sabbath is a day for humanity, a day for good deeds on behalf of others. Tuesday afternoon Jaci Perrin, a hospice chaplain in the Boise area, argued that Christian compassion is best communicated through “solidarity.” Citing the biblical languages, she said compassion is “wombishness”; it is like a good mother’s capacity to feel with her child, and to be present when need beckons. As God enters into solidarity with human experience, so must those who follow God. The “printed truth” is not enough; the call of Christ is a call to self-giving humanity and service.

Tuesday morning Tim Gillespie, the “Faith Community and Health Liaison” for Loma Linda University Medical Center, echoed the Adventist Review editor’s dream for a “dialogical Adventism.” Ellen White “said such good stuff because she read so much,” he declared, contending that Adventists cannot find “present truth” for today without “safe” conversation both inside the community and outside of it—with people of other faith traditions. Late Tuesday afternoon, Karl Haffner, senior pastor of the Kettering Adventist Church in Ohio, appealed both to the “I am the vine” metaphor in John 15 and to the lifework of Adventist preacher Morris Venden. Underscoring the urgency of a disciplined, “personal” relationship with Jesus, he meant to prepare listeners for the sharing of the bread and wine, over which he presided as the One...
Project drew its 2014 gathering to a close.

Throughout the two-day meeting, attendees sat at tables where facilitators presided over conversations following every talk. Minute-long opportunities for dream-sharing—two microphones stood at the ready—followed the conversations. Mornings and afternoons participants stood to their feet for the singing of Gospel and contemporary Christian songs.

One of the gathering’s persistent themes was that of the story. God’s dealings with humanity constitute a narrative that moves toward a climax; they have a direction, a trajectory. On Tuesday morning guest speaker Leonard Sweet, from George Fox University, noted that both the Amish, who retain their children well, and Jews, who make outsized contributions to society’s well-being, build their children’s identity around a story much repeated, most often at the dinner table. Instead of what he impishly called “versitis,” there is story-telling, with children encouraged to imagine themselves in the goings-on.

For members of a church struggling to retain its youth, the point suggested that it may be time, as One Project leaders say, to “recalibrate.” If Adventist mission comes down, as some insist, to a “warning message” based on inside information, does it really address the whole person? If the church asked members to immerse themselves in a narrative of solidarity and human betterment—with a beginning, a direction and a culmination—would it be more likely to engage youthful imagination?

Everyone at the Seattle meeting received a book of sermons and essays entitled For the One: Voices from The One Project. In her essay One Project board member Lisa Clark Diller, from the history faculty of Southern Adventist University, writes that Adventists “stand in a tradition whose founding moment was a confession that Jesus was true and faithful,” even though the founders themselves “were broken and confused.” This point, One Project leaders declare, is crucial for Adventism. Taken seriously, it could inject honest humanity as well as driving hope into the story that shapes the church’s identity.

And it could invite redemptive self-criticism even for leaders of the One Project. So far, the initiative seems relatively uninterested, for example, in the Hebrew prophets. No speaker in Seattle attended in depth to what any of them had to say. Adventists continue, it seems, to be bored—or threatened—by these voices of social and political engagement.

But Jesus wasn’t bored or threatened by their words. Nor were the Adventist pioneers. This is one thing, but not a small thing. It belongs to any story that would truly and deeply engage the whole imagination of people who intend, despite their brokenness and by God’s grace, to hold fast to the whole faith of Jesus.

Because the mission of Spectrum Magazine is community through conversation, we invite participation of all readers in a respectful manner. To comment on the Spectrum Magazine website, one must register with a verifiable identity (email, twitter, facebook) and agree to the following Spectrum Magazine commenters covenant [3].
Unlike LGT, this is a project that is destined to succeed. The reason is simple, it's based on Jesus and does not rob the Cross of any of its merits. Unlike LGT.

Jeremy Vandieman • George_Tichy • 16 days ago

George, is it my imagination, or do you always find ways to trash LGT...we get it, you don't like LGT...

But let me ask you this...if LGT gets our young people excited - something the one project seems to be looking for ways to spark - isn't that at least something that's good about it...

Jeremy Vandieman • George_Tichy • 16 days ago

I think overcoming sin, not sinfulness, is at the core of LGT...

K_Lutz • Jeremy Vandieman • 16 days ago

No, getting excited about one's sinfulness is NOT something that is good about it. But I can't imagine it would be comprehensible to one that is too vain-glorying (Inappropriate. Insulting. - webEd) to capitalise at least the name of God.

But I can't imagine it would be comprehensible to one that is too vain-glorying (Inappropriate. Insulting. - webEd) to capitalise at least the name of God.

Nevertheless, the focus is sin and self, exactly as the arch-deceiver would have it.

Jeremy Vandieman • K_Lutz • 16 days ago

K, are you opposed to overcoming sin...if not, how do you do it without at least some focus on sin and self...if you tell me focus on Jesus, I'll tell you many people who focus on Jesus have no thought of overcoming, or even identifying, sin...
If there was one word to sum up my experience at the One Project, it would be “uncomfortable”. Not the kind of uncomfortable where you pack up and leave because you don’t enjoy it. The kind of uncomfortable where you know that this is good for you and, though your inner little kid doesn’t like it and is squirming, your inner adult tells you to stay.

Why all this inner controversy, you might ask? Because while the speakers at the One Project, together, left me with a beautiful collage of visions for a new definition of “church”, I am realizing the kind of self-sacrifice that it would take, and it hurts. Especially because I’m supposed to start with myself.

The lessons I’ve learned come to me in pictures, and I will attempt to share them here through diagram-essay, unconventional as it may be. I see the top of my imagined diagram as being the main definition of church, with it slowly being broken down into components, and finally into the painful applications of what that would mean for my everyday life…though, as many a woman has been told, pain is beauty…. 
If I am going to take seriously the stories and sermons that I have heard at the One Project, or “other people’s realities”, I have to go even further and think about what these five components would actually look like and how they would be applied in my own life. (Of course, once I verbalize my interpretations, there will be those that disagree, therefore, my inner child will be discouraged that my applications can’t be systematized, and I will want to splinter off and do my own thing, because community will be the last thing I feel like doing!) Yet, to take the last concept of “community” seriously, I will remember that systemization is not one of the steps, and that difference of opinion is a crucial part of the process to keep the balance working correctly. I just have to keep my ears open to listening. Or, so my adult side reminds me.

Movement - I will have to acknowledge that the applications of truth will change as I change, and as my context changes. That I will continually be learning. And that, try as I might, I will never be able to fully identify, climb to the top of, and plant my flag into the mountain of Truth. It will never be fully mine to claim, because I am created, not Creator. Unfortunately, for my ego, I will always be on a journey, and just need to learn to accept that that’s okay.

Growth - As a child of God, I will never be old enough to stop growing. And, as much as I might want to say, “but I’m an adult!”, I realize that without growth, there is only death. So if I’m going to move anyways, I might as well move towards the better. This will involve efforts to better myself, educate myself, and learn how to interact with others more successfully in the future.

Discomfort - While I strongly reject discomfort for the sake of discomfort, I will have to pray that the Spirit leads me to know when discomfort is necessary. This will involve an intentionality in
listening to other perspectives when I don’t want to, apologizing when I don’t have to, and feeling what others must feel, when I don’t think I can.

Relational Trust - There is a game that God has developed with me. I usually take the first turn, writing-off someone I’ve met, or interacted with, as uninteresting, unhelpful, or unmotivated. Once my selfish move is over, it’s God’s move and He will put me in a situation where I watch that same person solve my problems, show me inordinate kindness, or teach me something new. There is a type of beauty or wisdom that can be harvested from interacting with each person around me. I just have to be open to learning from them.

Community: In order to train myself to engage in meaningful dialogue, I will have to train myself to take seriously the experiences of other people, instead of dismissing them, or superimposing my experience over another’s. Just because I don’t feel it, doesn’t mean they aren’t real in a different context or culture. This will involve a paradigm switch between me, my interests, and my worries, to we, our interests and our worries. From My God, to Our God.

While all of these things may read like an overbearing spiritual list of new year’s resolutions, I find them hopeful. They lie ahead of me as a sort of blueprint towards the church community that I would like to be a part of one day, and my role in making that happen. I find them uncomfortable for my ego, but exciting for my spiritual maturity. And, with God’s strength, maybe I can do my part in moving our church family from diatribe and judgment, to dialogue and journey.

Rebecca Barcelo is a graduate of and recruiter for La Sierra University in Riverside, California. While her undergraduate degree is in Communications, she is currently completing a Masters of Theological Studies at the HMS Richards Divinity School. In August, she will be married and move to join her husband in Boulder, Colorado, with the hope of assisting him in his work as associate pastor of the Boulder SDA Church. She enjoys the study of language, music, and meeting new people.

1 As inspired by Bill Knott's themes of journey and dialogue in his One Project presentation.

Because the mission of Spectrum Magazine is community through conversation, we invite participation of all readers in a respectful manner. To comment on the Spectrum Magazine website, one must register with a verifiable identity (email, twitter, facebook) and agree to the following Spectrum Magazine commenters covenant [3].
Thank you for your reflections on the One Project, and more specifically on Bill Knott's presentation.

Someone has said that the work of the gospel preacher is to comfort the comfortless and to discomfort the comfortable. By extension, this is also the work of every Christian congregation and communion. Thus, every Christian should feel as challenged as Rebecca does. Ideally, every Christian will not only be a fully devoted follower of Christ but also belong to a local congregation as well as a global Christian communion of like minded people.

I like to reflect on the lives of so many Christians from past generations. Recently, I learnt that my great aunt was an Englishwomen who devoted more than twenty-five of the best years of her career (1905-1931), as a missionary doctor to the woman of the Punjab and the NW Frontier of the Indian sub-continent [Ben Laden country]. She was one of the first women to graduate from medical school in the British Empire (1900) and with Honours. She may have led a comfortable life in Britain.

After she returned to her homeland permanently, she often encouraged gatherings to be aware of the needs of the women of India. According to a newspaper report on one occasion (c. 1936) "Dr Marks spoke of the activities of the mission hospitals, and the evangelistic work carried on in them. It was often said that it was better to leave other peoples to their own religions, but those that had worked in India know that the people were hungering for something better, and were searching for the truth. In the mission hospitals it was their ideal that every patient and relation should hear about Christ every day. They enjoyed hearing about Him. She gave instances of conversion." NOTICE - PEOPLE IN INDIA WERE SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH.

Dr Edith Annie Beaumont Marks worked for the Church of England Zenana Mission.

Thank you for sharing your experience at the One Project. Your last paragraph highlights for me the need for religion to help us overcome our ego (die to self) and go on toward spiritual maturity in Christ.

Unfortunately, for so many of us religion instead becomes a vehicle for exercising our ego,
Bringing It Back to the One

Eliel Cruz Become a fan President, Intercollegiate Adventist Gay-Straight Alliance Coalition; student, Andrews University Email RSS Follow

In 2010, five Seventh-day Adventist pastors got together in Denver, Colorado for rest, honest conversation and revitalization. The group of pastors sought to be better husbands, fathers and leaders by refocusing their spiritual lives during a retreat. What started as a small group of pastors has now become an international phenomenon within the Seventh-day Adventist church -- The One Project.

Centered on the "one," this gathering -- not conference, they're really serious about that -- is all about Jesus. Their mission statement: Jesus. All. Or as said on stage, "Jesus... full-stop. All... full-stop." This is a revival for those of us who want to get back to the root of it all. It's incredibly simple yet revolutionary in a church that is stereotypically legalistic and historically fundamentalist. A born-and-raised Seventh-day Adventist, I found it almost too good to be true. In my experience, I've seen much more focused on the law than on the One.

The 2014 USA One Project Gathering had over 700 current, and former, Seventh-day Adventists meet for two days in Seattle. I was one of those in attendance. Growing up in the Seventh-day Adventist church, I've been attending bible camps, theology conferences and camp meetings my entire life. This is by far the best event I've been a part of, in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. One of the reasons this gathering was so monumental was in its shift in focus from legalism, to present truth.

Present truth, a concept that began at the very birth of the Seventh-day Adventist church, is a belief that the Holy Spirit will continue to reveal truths to us throughout our time here on earth. Present Truth is a belief that we have not yet discovered everything that there is to be discovered in scripture. It's a belief that started from the beginning and a belief my church leadership has seemingly forgotten. Said Timothy Gillespie, one of the founders of the One Project:

One of the unique things that makes us Seventh-day Adventist is present truth, and that should make us the most inquisitive theologians. Present Truth: a perpetuating relocating theology.

We've become afraid of having questions and asking questions. We've become afraid of doubt and, in its essence; we've become afraid of Present Truth.

As topics like homosexuality (or really same-sex sex) and women's ordination are making strides in other denominations, the Seventh-day Adventist church has barely acknowledged these topics. They refuse to see that these two topics, among others, are causing many SDA's, especially those in my generation, to wonder why we seem so far behind other Christian denominations. Our fundamentalist, literal creation-believing (no, Ken Ham does not speak for me), conservative, biblical literalist beliefs have painted the church as pompously "all-knowing," and somewhat elitist, making the church afraid to ask questions.

Doubt is not an admission of unbelief; they are a statement of our innate need for more. Questioning beliefs is a healthy, natural process. It is only by questioning that we will continue to grow in our faith. When we settle, we become complacent and we lose out on the opportunity to have a closer relationship with Jesus Christ, who is both the message and the messenger. As Christians, if we use present truth as the foundation for our beliefs, we should continue to grow -- not change. This is not a process that ends, but a journey in which we take steps forward into the dark with faith that Jesus is at the beginning and end of it all.

David Ferguson, the Senior Pastor at One Place, a worship service co-founded by One Project co-chair Japhet De Oliveira located at Andrews University, said this about One Place a few Sabbaths ago:

You're safe here to ask. You're safe here to ask those disturbing questions. You're safe here to say you don't believe the same things we do. Even if you don't believe in a God or that God loves you, just know and understand that someone in this congregation loves you. I love you.

A bold statement made in grace. One that creates a safe space for those wrestling with their beliefs, and even pastors who wrestle with
beliefs in God, to be there; to be present and honest in a safe space.

Our theological conversations should not be lead with matters of the law. While the law helps us discern sin, it cannot be our focus. There must be a balance and as history shows us, we've continually tipped the scales in favor of legalism and condemnation. While that is not a true representation of those of us still in the pews, it seems the loudest, misogynistic, anti-science, homophobic voices get the microphone in the church. How would the scales tip if our base wasn't a list of "do's and don'ts" but our base was Jesus? If our base was present truth? Where would our emphasis be then?

Would we spend less time keeping sinners out of the church and spend more on bringing them in? At what point will we be able to say that we have truly done all we can "to the least of these?"

Throughout the gathering, attendees were given a chance to share publicly their dream for the church. Here is mine: My dream for the church is that it learn to love and accept those who are fundamentally different than us. My dream is for the church to finally show love, compassion and acceptance of LGBT people. Not just in words, but in action. That we can allow for balanced, honest dialogues to take place without fear. My dream is that we understood our savior was coming not to condemn us but to save us. My dream is that we can accompany each other on the Christian journey, allowing the Holy Spirit to do its job, while completing good works in reflection of God's character. My dream for the church would be to bring it back to the One.
Seattle Remembered

A breath of fresh air amidst toxic vapors :) hahahaha -Sara-May Colón

It was a fantastic worship experience that created thoughtful conversation. -James Reynaert

One project spoke to my soul, inspiring me to follow hard after Christ. -Alicia Johnston

It was great to fellowship openly with others who shared my own Christo-centric focus and delights. I left thoroughly enriched, encouraged, ready to face my local congregation again. This has been long overdue. I praise the Lord that I have lived long enough to see it. -Jim Ayars

It helped me to understand that both young and old generations of our church want the same thing to be present in our communities: the assurance of love and acceptance from others and ultimately from Jesus. -Mackenzie Thompson

I felt like it was a taste of heaven. Not since I heard Morris Venden speak while in academy have I experienced such a Jesus focused message. Even though I'm a third generation SDA, I have never been so proud of my church. -Danni Sherwood

The opportunity to interface with a group of young and older people who might not hold the exact same understanding of truth as I do but are there to listen as well as share in an atmosphere of grace was priceless, one I wish we could afford more frequently. -Pastor (ret.) Lynn Baerg

The biggest take away I received from The One Project 2014 was that if we are to change our context and how we see Jesus in our church, it must start with each person sitting in the pews. It is about my personal relationship with Jesus. It's not the responsibility of my church or my pastor, it is about having a relationship with Jesus -James Christianson

This was an opportunity for personal reflection and much needed spiritual renewal. I am so accustomed to serving others, it was great to be fed personally! Very refreshing to see that my personal spiritual journey is shared by others. -Rick Anderson/Principal- MPA

The One Project gave me much needed recharge. I have been discouraged about the lack of progress toward making life, church, and everything all about Jesus. It is easy to get distracted by the little issues and lose sight of the bigger picture. I was reminded that it is worth the fight for change because everyone needs Jesus. All. -Tami Rowe

This gathering meant an expansion of the mind. Hearing these presentations gives me hope for the openness of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We are open to seeking...open to searching...open to learning and that's good. -Donavan W. Childs

It was wonderful to be with a community of authentic searchers to know Jesus more intimately and practically. -Ron Bunch

I love the one project. I always leave feeling blessed and loved by an awesome community of Jesus Christ, a community that continues throughout the year. -Nathan Long

One Project is cognitively and creatively and spiritually stimulating. So many ideas to try out to tell the story of Jesus to everyone! Inspiring and wonderful fellowship! -Lane Ford

It was fantastic! It was my second time attending in Seattle and we were able to bring a group of 9 from our church in Kelowna B.C. I can hardly wait to see the impact on our church. What an incredible thing to realize that others share your heart for Jesus and passion to restore His rightful place in our lives and churches. I had expected to fall more in love with Jesus, but didn't expect to love my church more as well. Thank you! I am so grateful for the One Project! Bless you all!! -Jill Stickle

Like a cold drink on a blistering day the One Project is refreshing. I always leave feeling challenged to re-encounter Jesus in my daily life, my home church, and in the people He places in my path. He continues to the the Source of my strength. Jesus. All. - Jenniffer Ogden

It was like a modern day camp meeting, fast passed, focused & relevant. Loved it! -Janell Wilson

More than any other Adventist meetings, I find at the One Project a chance to hear thoughtful and very helpful presentations and
immediately respond to them by interacting with others in a group setting. I am inspired by the many young people who attend, who love Jesus and have a vision of connecting with Him and their fellow human beings. It is a chance like few other gathering to be in community across generations. Thank you! -Jim McMillan

It was an amazing and glorious experience! I wasn't on guard like I usually am. I could smile freely and talk to people because they were there for the same reasons I was! I am determined to cling to Jesus and love even those who I feel judge me. I was immensely blessed and am looking forward to the Gathering in 2015. -Beth Anderson

It was so freeing to realize I am not the only one with concern for the future of our church and its relevance to the world and culture around us. That others also desire to make Jesus our all. Period. -Jim Fazio

Up lifting, refreshing, full of hope for a future that seeks Jesus as our example, teacher, friend, and redeemer. I have stayed in the church to see this movement! -Dawn Kleinhuiizen

This experience showed me that there is a massive and overwhelming voice of Christians within the Seventh-Day Adventist Church who desire to seek the truth of God in the present day, not waiting for it to become uncomfortable not to do it, but desiring to be pioneers in the world's moral progress. This experience showed me that fellowship with other people is definitely not pointless and there are people with whom I can speak without being dismissed. -Jack Blashchishen

It was so exciting to see such a wide range of ages there, all with the same purpose of making Jesus Christ our focus and His living example of God's love. If we can get that message to the world, our job will be done. -Karen Bunch

I was blessed and educated by the college students and younger attendees. -Bill Waring

Outstanding! I look forward to TOP as a time of spiritual renewal. Courage as you continue this very important ministry. -Lois Blackwelder

As a bisexual Seventh-day Adventist, it is the safest space available in the SDA church. -Eliel Cruz

Amazing!!! So excited to see a serious initiative to bring our original commission to life again...the Gospel!!! Jesus. All. -Jennifer Woody

My "Dream" has been and is that our church will focus more on Jesus and less on what divides us. Overall, I saw the One Project in Seattle as at least a partial fulfillment of my "Dream". -Ben Maxson

For me a fantastic and fruitful emphasis on grace-filled community where believers, trusting in the promise of the Holy Spirit guiding us into all truth and unafraid of disagreement, will walk and talk and eat together on their journey to know and love and share Jesus. All. -Randy Wright

My experience at The One Project Seattle was just what my life needed! The praise team was fantastic, as were the speakers and our facilitator. It revitalized my walk with Jesus. It was a much needed reminder that Jesus truly is all that matters! Terri Michalenko
It was a meaningful time of refreshing of my spirit in the corporate setting which provided encouragement for the joy set before us in Jesus and His leading us in His story. -Dennis Crane

There is hope for our church! There are people that are willing to do something about our current situation. Its inspiring, challenging, transformative! Jesus is Lord! -Pr. Edwin Vargas

The One Project is my mountain top experience each year. I am challenged and inspired by the messages and conversation. -Chris Grissom

The OneProject Seattle Gathering gave me hope for the future of our church. There were so many young adults there with a true desire to see after Jesus. -Anne Lamberton

The One Project was by far the best conference I have ever attended. It was the spiritual renewal that I needed and gave me hope for the future of our church. -Heidi Indermuehle