

# Seventh-day Adventist Mission in the Seventies

GOTTFRIED OOSTERWAL

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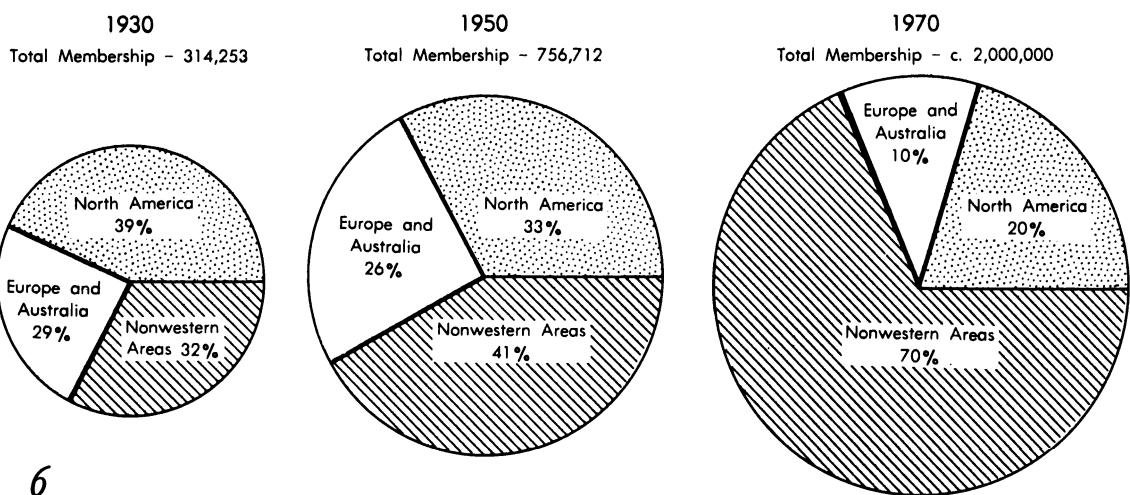
## I

Three features stand out most prominently in the present missionary situation of the Adventist Church:<sup>1</sup>

1. *The church has been planted over the whole globe and is now the most widespread single Protestant denomination (86% of all countries).*<sup>2</sup> Praises and gratitude go to our Lord, the "missionary-in-chief"<sup>3</sup> who has worked this miracle in less than a century. This rapid and far-reaching expansion has not had its equal since the early Christian church conquered the world. It is the clearest evidence of the fact that all MISSION is God's work. Continually reminding ourselves of how God has led us in the past should make us worry much less about the continuing future of MISSION. And now that the remotest ends of the world have been reached with the gospel, we have truly entered the very last days of this world's history.<sup>4</sup>

2. With the growth of this worldwide movement, *by far the larger portion of its membership came to live outside North America and the Western world in general.* Until the early 1950s the majority of Adventists lived in North America, Europe, and Australia. Since the late 1950s, however, this picture has suddenly and radically changed. In many areas in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, nothing less than a church explosion has taken place; and it will continue in the 1970s.

As a result, 80% of Adventist world membership is now living outside of the United States, where the church had its origins. In fact, it is only because of the present high growth rates of our churches in the nonwestern world (in particular Latin America, Africa, and the Philippines) that the church as a whole is still growing at a rate of about 5% per year. The an-



**FIGURE 1.** Percentages of Adventist world membership.

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nual growth rate in North America is only a little over 2.5%, and in Europe and Australia it ranges from -1% to 3%. But because at the same time the church in Latin America and Africa is growing from 9% to 15% per year (which is on the average about seven times faster than in the countries of the West), it maintains an overall rate of 5%.

We may expect, as a result, that by the end of this decade Adventist membership in North America will barely make up 10% of the total membership. This means that the Adventist Church, much more than Christendom in general, in the seventies will have become largely (85%) a nonwestern, nonwhite church. Because of its high percentage of first-generation believers, this church will remain a very viable and active church. It may be expected that these members in Latin America, Africa, and Asia will have an increasing revitalizing influence on the Adventist Church as a whole and on its missionary outreach in the seventies.

3. *The scope of the unfinished task is immense.* When Christ was born, there were 200 million people in the world. Some 1,800 years later, by the time the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was organized, the world population had reached its first billion mark. In the first decade of the twentieth century about 45% (according to a conservative estimate) of the world population was Christian or under the direct influence of the gospel. Today there are 3.8 billion people in the world, a number which

by the end of the seventies will have increased to 5.5 billion. But already some 1.6 billion people have never even heard about Christ — that is, eight times as many as in the days of the apostle Paul. And there is another billion people that have never heard the advent message clearly. Prospects for the seventies are that their number will be increasing.

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Today barely 20% of the whole world population is Christian. Moreover, this 20% is very unevenly distributed over the world. Of all Roman Catholics, for instance, some 90% live in Europe and North and Latin America. But 80% of the world population does not live there. Protestants show a similar distribution: 80% of all Protestants live among 25% of the world population. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has done a little better: about 70% of its membership lives in the Christian countries of the world. But 70% of the world population does not live there. Moreover, over 95% of all Adventist converts come from a Christian background, while the vast majority of the people on earth are nonchristian and seem to be largely beyond the reach of the advent message. These people live largely in Asia with its 2 billion inhabitants.

The "optimist" sees an increase of 1% to 2% in the proportion of Christians to the total world population in the next decade. The "pessimist" expects that by the end of the 1970s the percentage of Christians in the world will hardly be 15%; he points to the powerful mission activities of Islam and Buddhism, the rise of hundreds of new religions, and the continuous and rapid process of secularization within the Christian church, particularly in the West.

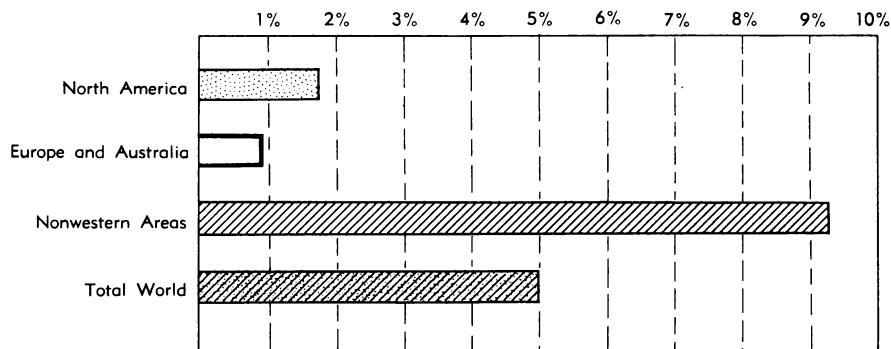


FIGURE 2. Percentage increase of Adventist world membership 1968-69.

An example from Africa may illustrate more clearly the immensity of the unfinished task and its challenge to the church in the seventies. Adventists officially have a mission station in the Sudan, a country of over 15 million people. But there are only 3 members, that is, 1 Adventist to every 5 million people. With a birthrate of 5.2% and a deathrate of 2%, the population of the Sudan is expected to increase to 22 million during the seventies. Even if the Adventist population there would increase 500% in the next ten years, the number of those not reached with the gospel would be larger at the end of the decade than at the beginning. The same holds true for Asia, where, although the Christian church grows 5% to 7% in many areas, the present population of 2 billion is expected to double to 4 billion twenty years from now.

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A word of warning is in place here. The kingdom of God cannot merely be measured by or expressed in numbers. These serve only to describe an issue more concretely. Moreover, in practically all mission territories the number of those who claim to be Adventists is far bigger than membership records indicate. Population censuses in Africa and Latin America give membership figures that are often twice or three times as high as the figures on the church's own records. Nevertheless, the immensity of the task stands out very clearly.

Add to all this the inadequacy of financial resources in the nonwestern areas of the world, the percentual decrease of mission offerings and the increased spending on themselves by the churches in the West, and the lack of missionary enthusiasm; and a picture emerges of a severe crisis. Yet never before has there been a more urgent hour, were the fields more ripe for harvesting and were there greater opportunities to participate in Christ's own MISSION of reconciliation.

## II

The implications of these three prominent features will be felt very strongly in the seventies. Some will be of an administrative and organizational nature, such as the matter of proportionate representation of these overseas churches in the highest executive and policymaking body of the church. Another question deals with the priorities of spending funds on evangelism, on the service branches of the church (education, medicine, welfare, technical assistance), and on the care and administration of the members. Of the total General Conference budget 44% is now spent in capital investment. Some \$300 million has been invested in school buildings, 90% of it in North America and 10% overseas. And only \$4.5 million has

been invested in radio and television evangelism. Other questions will arise concerning the proper distribution of finances, such as: Should we spend our money largely in "fields ripe for harvesting" or should we spend it more evenly and even continue sowing on "stony ground"?

Questions like these can be answered only in the light of what MISSION really is and what the nature and task of the church is in the world. The answer not only requires a bold and honest look at what we have accomplished so far, and what the position of the church is in the world today, but also stresses the need of a clear theology of MISSION. Without such a theology a missionary movement is directionless. The choices and decisions that have to be made, and the church policies and priorities determined, all imply certain assumptions about the task and essence of MISSION. Acting without realizing that theological issues are involved means following non-theological principles, which are often only a nice expression of worldly motives.

A theology is also badly needed to evaluate success or failure in MISSION and to develop right strategies and methods. "The varying circumstances taking place in the world," Ellen White wrote, "call for labor which will meet these peculiar developments."<sup>5</sup> In the light of many new developments it is not at all improbable that certain missionary institutions, policies, methods, and priorities of the past may have to be revised, or even abandoned altogether — not because they were wrong, but simply because they have fulfilled their particular function.

New ways and new priorities may have to be developed which may even be contrary to what we considered good MISSION strategy or even "present truth" before. "Never say, therefore," Ellen White warned, "that this has never been taught. Away with these restrictions. That which God gives His servants to speak today would not perhaps have been present truth twenty years ago, but it is God's message for this time."<sup>6</sup> And "present truth, from the first letter of its alphabet to the last, means missionary effort."<sup>7</sup>

### III

So let us look at a few aspects of the present missionary situation and their implications for the seventies in more detail.

1. In the beginning of the Adventist missionary outreach, all overseas missionaries came from North America. They were sent to areas where there was no Adventist church, to preach the advent message and to plant churches. And though this work is far from accomplished, Adventist

churches have now been firmly established over the whole globe. Not only is the Adventist Church the most widespread of all Protestant denominations, but also, in many areas of the world and in particular in Latin America, it is the largest single Protestant denomination and the fastest growing.

In many nonwestern areas the ratio of Adventists to non-Adventists is already much higher than in Europe or the United States. In North America there is 1 Adventist to almost 600 non-Adventists.<sup>8</sup> In Canada the ratio is 1:1,200. But in the Philippines this ratio is 1:300; in the Central African Union 1:65; and in Jamaica 1:35. Compare with these ratios those of Great Britain, 1:5,000; the Netherlands Union, 1:4,000; or the Central European Division, 1:2,000. These questions arise: What really constitutes a mission field? What is a missionary?

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The church's present Western overseas missionary endeavor is characterized by Adventist workers leaving the largely non-Adventist areas of the West to work among large concentrations of Adventist believers overseas. These missionaries are not going out any more to work for the nonbelievers in particular. Rather they are employed by the church to work within the church especially for the members of the church. This is also evident from the nature of their work: the vast majority of overseas missionaries go out as teachers in Adventist *schools* (where we usually do not admit non-Adventists), as medical personnel to work in Adventist *hospitals* (which are left as soon as a government takes over the institution), and a small percentage as *administrators*. But hardly any missionaries at all leave the shores of North America whose main work consists of proclaiming the advent message to nonbelievers and raising up churches. The church's Western overseas movement has thus developed into an *intrachurch movement* to a large extent.

The frontlines of MISSION, that is, the boundaries one has to cross in order to be called a missionary, have been *salt water* (the deeper and wider the ocean and the farther one travels from home, the more one is considered a missionary) and the barriers of *language* (if one learns the foreign language at all), of *culture* (if indeed one crosses this boundary), and of *geography* (climate, physical milieu). These are what is considered "from homebase to frontline."

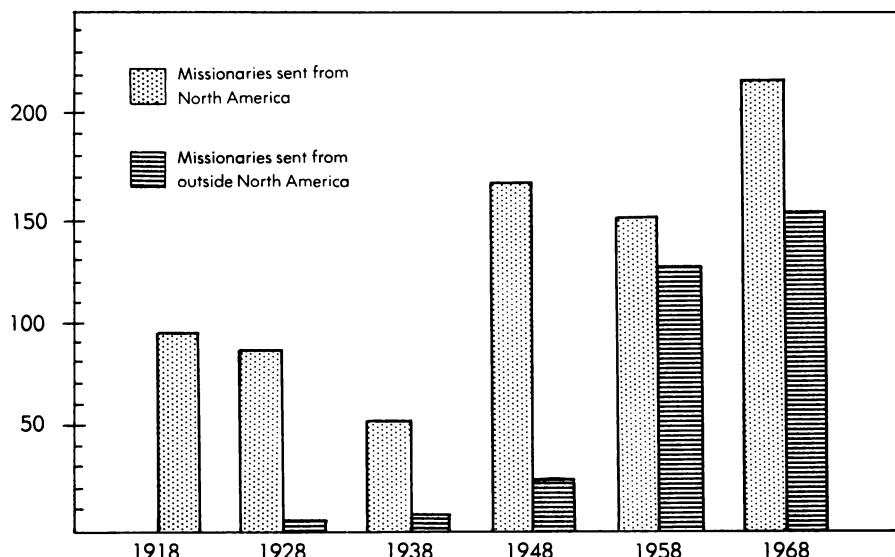
In the Bible, however, the only real frontline that makes a person a missionary is the boundary between *belief and unbelief*, between those who are "foreigners to God" and those who belong to "the household of God." Jesus never left Palestine; he never crossed salt water; and he never learned a foreign language or lived with people whose strange customs he did not

understand. Yet Ellen White rightly called him "the greatest missionary the world has ever known."<sup>9</sup>

MISSION is the imitation and the continuation of Christ's work on earth. Therefore, the only boundary that should determine what is MISSION for the church today and what is not is that boundary between belief and unbelief. This boundary runs through every nation, tribe, and tongue. The frontline of MISSION is wherever there are people who don't know Christ. In this respect the greater New York area, with only 1 Adventist to every 3,000 non-Adventists, is much more a MISSION territory than are most areas in Latin America or Africa. This understanding of MISSION boundaries ought to determine the church's priorities and help shape its future policies.

II

FIGURE 3. New missionaries sent (world field, 1918 to 1968).



2. With the rapid growth of the church overseas, and its solid establishment, the Adventist missionary movement is no longer a one-way street. At the moment almost as many missionaries are being sent out from overseas areas as from North America. This fact calls for some revision of mission policies which were made when all missionaries came from North America and Europe. The Adventist Church in the Philippines alone has sent more missionaries overseas the last few years than have the Central and Northern European Divisions combined. In the seventies this mis-

sionary movement from the nonwestern church into all the world will greatly increase.

When Adventist travel was a one-way street, the only link between the overseas field and North America was the missionary. His life and work became the standard by which the new overseas congregations judged the church and country of the missionary's origin. In general the congregations in the West had the excellent reputation of being self-sacrificing communities, burning with missionary zeal, living perfect and sanctified lives out of faith in the sooncoming Lord.

Today, however, Adventist travel is a two-way street, with workers from overseas divisions coming frequently to the United States. Some come to attend General Conference meetings. Many others, often the younger ones, come to study at our colleges and universities. What kind of Adventist Church do they find? The impressions these people take home to their own churches often carry a very heavy weight for the present MISSION situation of the church.

Furthermore, former MISSION fields have now been discovered as prime tourist attractions. Hundreds of Adventists from North America, young and not so young, are visiting these remote beauty spots of the world. But the new mission-minded churches overseas judge visiting Adventists not as tourists but as representatives of the Adventist Church in North America. What image do these individuals or tourist groups leave behind? Is it still the picture of a self-sacrificing, sanctified Body of Christ? Thus every local church from Maine to Mississippi is now involved in determining the success or failure in the church's worldwide missionary outreach.

This whole new situation has caught the church by surprise; it all happened so suddenly and rapidly. But, then, the ways of God's MISSION always come as a surprise. It is high time, however, for the church to wake up. Textbooks in church schools and mission reports in church magazines and Sabbath school reports are still portraying the thatched huts of cannibals, but the people in reality are well-educated Adventists studying and worshiping in the same kind of buildings used by Adventists everywhere.

3. The fact that the Adventist overseas missionary movement had developed into an *intrachurch movement*, in the sense that most of the funds, time, and personnel are spent by the church for the church, is both the church's greatest strength and its greatest weakness. Of a total working force of some 70,000 people, roughly 40% work in Adventist schools for Adventist children, 30% in medical work, and 13% in administrative posi-

tions. Only 10% are engaged in pastoral work, and only a small percentage of these are doing evangelism. Over a billion dollars has been invested in buildings and equipment, of which barely 4% has been in publishing houses, book and Bible houses, and radio and television evangelism. Nearly 50% of this billion dollars has been invested in church buildings and educational institutions. Some \$325 million has been invested in conferences and conference associations.

Every year more than 40% of the total General Conference budget is spent in capital investment. This truly is the strength of the church, which is doing far better than any other missionary organization in taking care of its members and in providing a Christian education for its children. Even though it is losing through apostasy about 35 people for every 100 who come into the church, this rate is rather low compared with that of other denominations. But unless the church keeps the proper perspective, its greatest strength may prove to be its greatest weakness.

An increasing percentage of new members in overseas fields will come from Adventist families. Reliable statistics are not available, but it is estimated that in North America between 75% and 80% of all baptisms involve the church's own youth. In the Philippines, still a relatively young church, the percentage of new members from Adventist families is already 65% to 70%. Unless the church reconsiders its priorities, its growth in the 1970s will become more and more the result of *biological growth*. Once again, this is a strong point, for Adventists are absolutely right in considering their own children and youth their first MISSION field. But on the other hand the Master wants the church also to go out into the world to take the message of salvation and warning to those who do not know Christ. Therefore the church should aim at *conversion growth*, that is, leading people out of the world into the "household of God." This is what MISSION really stands for.

An honest reevaluation should be made to determine the priorities for the spending of money and for personnel. In North America there are some 27,000 active Adventist workers, of whom 40% are employed in medical institutions, another 37% in education, but barely 7% in pastoral work and evangelism. In this respect the Australasian Division gives a much healthier picture: some 20% involved in pastoral work and evangelism, 9% in medical work, and 25% in education.

If institutions absorb too much of a movement's money and personnel, stagnation results. This is called *institutionalism*. The expensive multiplication of colleges and universities, their concentration in a very small area of

the world field (i.e., North America), the duplication of programs, the administrative overhead, the strong emphasis on big hospital work — all these tend to hinder the church's missionary outreach. The aim of institutions is to promote the *worldwide* missionary movement, but at present institutionalism is causing stagnation and in many areas could prevent an increasing growth rate of the church in the seventies.

4. In Europe and North America 25 to 30% of the population is under 15 years of age. In the nonwestern world there is 45 to 50% under 15 and 60-65% under 25. The church explosion in various countries has resulted in a larger percentage of young people within the church also. To accommodate them, it would have to build five times as many schools in the next ten years in Latin America and Africa alone as it has built in all the world during the past hundred years.

And the same figures, or even higher, apply to the need for teachers. The two Latin American divisions, with twice as many Adventist young people as the North American Division, have half as many academies and only a fourth the number of teachers. The picture of the concentration of college programs looks even worse.<sup>10</sup> There are six times as many college teachers in the North American Division as in both Latin American divisions.

Of all college and academy teachers in the denomination, over 60% are employed in North America, i.e., for less than 10% of all Adventist young people. Here lies, indeed, the church's greatest and most immediate need: to expand rapidly its educational facilities and personnel to those areas of tremendous church growth. Here also lies the greatest challenge for North American college graduates in the seventies: to devote a year or two in voluntary teaching in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. The Student Missionary Program is filling some of this need, but barely half of 1% of what is required.

Already thousands and thousands of Adventist children in these non-western areas are going to non-Adventist schools at an age at which they are most receptive to truth and falsehood. There simply are not enough local funds to support Adventist education. *The church explosion is taking place in the poverty areas of the world*, where parents cannot afford to pay the high tuition of a private school even if there were schools. Funds for many new school buildings are just not available, even if the General Conference could double its appropriations to these overseas divisions.

Besides, North America, which supplies most of the funds, is struggling itself to keep its schools open. But in South America and Africa the situation

is desperate: already some 70% of Adventist young people there are going to government schools. With most of the people in the world and the church soon to be in the under-25 age category, it is essential that the church give immediate consideration to these youth, in their various age groups, and explore possibilities and means of reaching them and keeping them.

In the interim, the church might approach this problem in a threefold way: (1) emphasizing the *parents'* responsibility toward their own youth and revitalizing the religious-educational function of the family; (2) strengthening the *local church* programs for youth, especially for the 18-25 age group; and (3) rallying a corps of *youth volunteers* from North America and Europe to teach in Adventist schools overseas.

With the establishment of a larger Adventist Voluntary Teacher Service Corps, people holding a master's or a bachelor's degree could voluntarily, or for a very small salary, teach for a year or two in academies or elementary schools in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. If this cannot be done — and why can't it? — then the church explosion of the 1960s may be followed by a mass apostasy in the 1970s. This has happened before in recent mission history, and it is one of the main reasons why the Protestant missionary movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries lost its thrust.

Another factor in worldwide mission of the church is the fact that more than 40% of the world population is illiterate. And every year the total number is increasing by 25 to 30 million. These people, to a large extent, are beyond the reach of the Adventist Church, which has grown and is growing largely through its publishing work. Here is where a new educational program ought to come in: *adult education*. Thousands of volunteers are needed also to do this work, and the response to this need in the seventies may determine whether millions in Africa and Asia will be won for Christ or for Communism and antichrist. It is high time for Adventists to consider the people of these ripened fields in their greatest need and make them our first priority.

Should church priorities be determined, then, by the field? Yes! We may look on the tremendous church explosion in Latin America, Africa, and certain parts of Asia as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit. Whole villages and tribes, often with thousands of people, suddenly become receptive to the advent message. And there will be much more of this in the seventies, as the prophets foretold would happen in the last days.

Adventists are not harvesting one-fiftieth of those who are ready to accept their message in those areas. This is evident from the fact, in the censuses of Latin American and African countries, that thousands and thousands of

people are listed as Adventists who are as yet unclaimed by the church. It is further evident from the phenomenal growth of other little-institutionalized Christian denominations in areas where the Spirit has prepared the harvest (although, of course, criticism is in order for the lack of "institutional care" of those brought into the fold of those churches).

For the seventies Adventists ought more than ever to keep their eyes open for people who have been prepared by the Spirit to join them. They ought to make available funds and personnel to harvest those fields that are ripe for harvest *now*. This, indeed, would require much greater flexibility in missionary approach and a shift in priorities and policies. There is too much of the "three-more-months-and-then-is-the-harvest" idea.

One of the greatest dangers threatening our church in the seventies is that because of certain traditional patterns it will let the harvest time go by in the areas that are ready now, while spending its funds, personnel, and efforts in sowing or cultivating elsewhere. But those men who are already preparing workers and funds for mainland China in order to be ready when God opens the door are evidence that there are leaders in the advent movement who are spiritually clear-sighted.

5. One of the greatest contributions the rapidly expanding congregation in the nonwestern world will make to the Adventist Church as a whole in the seventies may well be the *rediscovery of the church as a lay church*. This concept was characteristic of the early Christian church; it also was the mark of the early advent movement. There are signs that the rediscovery of this biblical concept of the church and its MISSION has already begun. The tremendous church growth of the sixties is not primarily the result of big evangelistic campaigns or the work of ministers. It is the work of lay members who have lived out their faith and given an account of it in the fields, in the factories, and in the villages. This is the secret of rapid growth.

The developing church in the nonwestern world is a lay church after the New Testament fashion; for it is the laity who win the converts. It is also the laity who establish new congregations and who should form the leadership of the church. However, in many of the exploding churches in the non-western areas there is still a high rate of illiteracy; although the laity have produced the church growth, they are not yet educated to become its leaders. What is needed right now, therefore, to accommodate the increasing number of new members and churches, are *institutes for lay church leaders* — institutes to prepare these laymen who have produced the growth, to become its leaders.

This is a very crucial issue. If the Holy Spirit can use these often un-educated members of the church to win thousands of converts and establish hundreds of new congregations, it is only a small thing for the church to give them extra training and entrust them with the leadership of the church. Such men ought to be *ordained*, even though they are not in the regular employ of the church. If the Holy Spirit has ordained these people to be coworkers with Christ, what right does the church have to withhold its official recognition?

Right now, lay institutes are of far greater priority than the establishment of a theological seminary, however important that is, in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. For the time being, such a seminary should be organized in the form of *extension schools*. It is high time a special committee started working out the details of a greatly expanded system of seminary and university extension schools in all the world. Such a program would solve the immediate problem of providing sufficient church leaders, teachers, pastors, and trained lay workers.

6. Another aspect of a lay church is its lay missionaries. The success of a missionary movement is proportionally related to the degree to which it has been able to rally the whole church (that is, all of its members) to the task of mission. Ellen White never grew tired of reiterating this truth. "All are alike called to be missionaries for God."<sup>11</sup> "All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men."<sup>12</sup> And it is because of a failure to enlist all of the church in this task that it has remained unfinished so long. "If all of them would have their appointed work as the Lord ordained, the whole world would have been warned ere this and the Lord Jesus would have come in power and great glory."<sup>13</sup>

There are two primary reasons for developing a lay mission program — one theological and one practical.

Theologically speaking, it is to the laity as a whole that Christ has entrusted his work of reconciliation. When he said, "Go ye into all the world,"<sup>14</sup> that *ye* meant *all* who believe on his name. To prepare the people for their task of MISSION, God has given special gifts: apostles, preachers, supervisors, teachers, etc.<sup>15</sup> The main responsibility of these "special ministries" is to nourish, equip, help, and sustain the community of believers in carrying out its MISSION.

In other words, the ministers and leaders are called to assist the people of God in carrying out the MISSION of the church — not vice versa, as is done too often. "In laboring where there are already some in the faith, the

minister should *at first* seek not so much to convert unbelievers, as to train the church members to work for others.<sup>16</sup> In the New Testament church, authority rested on a man's ministry and the word he preached, not on a position. Success or failure in the work of God depends on the way in which the church prepares and rallies its whole membership to MISSION.

Practically speaking, the possibilities of *lay witness* constitute the church's greatest opportunity in the seventies to penetrate into the whole world with the gospel. In many areas of the world, and many spheres of life, the minister cannot work or is no longer listened to. In the Sudan, where there are 3 Adventists in a population of some 15 million, missionaries are not allowed to enter; yet at the same time the university at Khartoum is crying for staff members and the government desperately wants engineers, doctors, and teachers. Senegal shows a similar picture. And so do hundreds of other areas in the world where the church cannot get official permission to enter or to expand its missionary work, while at the same time governments are craving specialists of all sorts.

Here are the greatest opportunities for mission work in the seventies: Adventist engineers working for the Arabian Oil Company, Adventist secretaries going overseas for companies in areas where the church is weak; Adventist teachers, doctors, and technicians applying for jobs with governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Last year alone some 26,000 job openings were listed in these areas. Of course, the same principle applies at home, where ministers often cannot find a hearing: the universities, industry, and mass communications. We have often been told that the church should go into such areas; but the fact is that the church is already there in the person of its laity.

For salt to fulfill its function on the dinner table and in the kitchen, it must be spread (after it has been obtained, collected, and purified), and so it is with the church.<sup>17</sup> This fact may require Adventists to break up their large concentrations of churches and settle in areas where there are no Adventists. Already some 30% of the church membership in North America lives in California alone, largely in the southern part. Another concentration of believers is found around Battle Creek and Berrien Springs, Michigan, and another in the Baltimore-Washington area.

At the same time, New York City has only 1 Adventist to every 3,000 non-Adventists, and in Montreal the ratio is 1:20,000. Ellen White warned the church that its members should not congregate in large concentrations but should live scattered in small companies,<sup>18</sup> as was the pattern (and therefore the success) of the early Christian church. Who could forecast

how the church might grow in the seventies if Adventists spread themselves out and began a concerted lay mission effort — some moving to the needy rural or thickly populated areas of the United States and others going into the world field to make their application of Christian witness to whatever job they chose?

To put all this into practice and make our lay witness operation most effective, I would propose a *Development Assistance Service*: an organization that would inform Adventist businessmen, professors, technicians, doctors, engineers, and others of the specific opportunities for service in areas of Africa, Asia, and elsewhere, and then bring them into contact with the appropriate recruiting services in order to apply for these positions. Most important, before these people would leave on their overseas assignment, the agency could offer a short, high-powered training and orientation institute (at the church's expense) in Christian witness. Continual communication between these laymen and the agency, in the form of letters and visits from church leaders, would promote MISSION as soon as they were overseas.

Beloved, "the church of Christ on earth was organized for missionary purpose, and the Lord desires to see the entire church devising ways and means whereby low and high, rich and poor, may hear the message of truth."<sup>19</sup> With vision, faith, and power in the church, God's MISSION may be finished in the seventies.

#### REFERENCES AND NOTES

- 1 This article is adapted from a lecture given February 15, 1970, during Mission Emphasis Week at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. The lecture was sponsored jointly by the Andrews University chapter of the Association of Adventist Forums and the department of missions of the seminary.
- 2 Unless notation is made otherwise, statistics have been taken from annual church reports.
- 3 ELLEN G. WHITE, *Fundamentals of Christian Education* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association 1923), p. 293.
- 4 See Matthew 24:14.
- 5 WHITE, Manuscript 8a, 1888.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 WHITE, *Counsels on Health* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1923), p. 300.
- 8 It should be kept in mind that children are not included in the number of Adventists reported.
- 9 WHITE, *Welfare Ministry* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1952), p. 118. See also WHITE, *Medical Ministry* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1932), p. 15.

- 10 A question the church should study is whether it is wise to continue to spend so much of its money on its colleges and universities. According to N. R. DOWER, Europe — Land of Promise, *Review and Herald*, January 1, 1970, p. 16, even though no Adventist schools are there, 70% to 80% of Adventist youth in the Central European Division stay in the church. That percentage is barely reached in North America where the church is better equipped with schools than in any other area in the world. Apparently the retention of youth in the church may depend much less on having Adventist schools, particularly colleges and universities, than has been assumed.
- 11 WHITE, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1905), p. 395.
- 12 WHITE, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association 1898), p. 822.
- 13 WHITE, *Review and Herald*, October 6, 1906.
- 14 Matthew 28:19.
- 15 Ephesians 4:7, 11-16.
- 16 WHITE, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1915), p. 196.
- 17 Matthew 5:13.
- 18 See, for example, WHITE, *Christian Service* (Washington, D. C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1947), p. 178.