

ing in those situations where this ideal is not met. This would include the same gracious realism found in the New Testament.

It would be sufficiently flexible to allow for principled moral reasoning, such as we find in Paul, to be applied to specific cases. All too often, in an attempt to be consistent, the Matthean exception has been absolutized into a hard-and-fast law, with little if any reference to the Pauline approach. While this may satisfy our need to have cut-and-dried answers for

every situation, it loses the richness of the New Testament's moral thinking.

These criteria do not establish a policy but they do aid in evaluating any policy's consistency with the New Testament.

Finally, the affirmation of God's ideal for marriages must be seen not only in the church's divorce policy but in its total ministry. Even more important than how we treat cases of divorce and remarriage is what we do to promote good marriages and help troubled ones. . . .

Camp Meeting Adventist Style: Soquel Through a Glass Darkly



by Jan Daffern

Vol. 14, No. 2 (October 1983)

A graduate of La Sierra University and the recipient of an M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary, Jan Daffern was one of the first Adventist woman pastors to perform a baptism (see profile of Merikay Silver and Lorna Tobler). Now a pastoral counselor in Frederick, Maryland, Daffern revealed how memories of Adventist camp meetings are the stuff of which short stories—and theologies—are made.

The camp meeting I remember best, the camp meeting of my youth, is held each year in Soquel, a tiny coastal town in Central California. Soquel is a faded and drab town in an area of spectacular beauty. The most notable aspect of

Soquel is the light. Filtered through a gray mist, it makes lettuce grow in Salinas and illumines a whole genre of literature in and around Monterey. In Soquel, this fragile light is nearly suffocated by the yellow dust which sifts down from the hillsides and settles in the eucalyptus groves. Each August somewhere around 15,000 Adventists enter this suffusion of light and dust.

In those early years I went to Soquel only on Sabbaths. One of those years I went with my stepsister Sally [names have been changed], who did not attend church but never missed Soquel. We arrived in her 1968, metal-flake-blue Corvette. As we walked through the campground that day, Sally commented that all that was missing was a rock band like, say, Country Joe and the Fish, set up near the vegeburger stand. Although their music would have fit the scene, years later it occurred to me how utterly out of place the Fish would have been: none of them had ever attended academy with anyone I knew.

It has been estimated that a quarter of us who gathered there in

the late 60s and the early 70s were the products of the baby boom of California Adventism. Superficially we were indistinguishable from others of our time and place. As a group we participated in the restlessness of our generation and our presence resulted in the temporary doubling of the Soquel police force. We got high, celebrated free love, and as the era mellowed, turned on to Jesus and self-help. The recollection which burns through the swirl of those events is that rarely did any of us ever do these things with anyone who had not gone to academy at Fresno, or Glendale, or Rio Lindo. That we were so thoroughly immersed in the turbulence of that time only with each other, and most deeply at camp meeting, reveals a sincere obedience to sectarian Adventism.

Physically, the camp at Soquel offers the appearance of a combination parking lot and tented desert. On one end, the camp meeting tents stand in perfectly pitched rows, the remains of a time when the pious of the frontier abandoned the comforts of home for a season of spiritual refreshing. At Soquel in my teen years, the tents were giving way to recreational vehicles. These were parked in the southwest end and came complete with showers, toilets, and even color television. I can recall entering a 40-foot recreational vehicle meticulously decorated in white French provincial with accents in blue. The lady of the mobile home greeted me in a baby blue dressing gown and gold slippers.

In 1970 I made the transition from weekend visitor at Soquel to a resident for the full 10 days. I stayed in a camp meeting tent with my best friend Betsy and her family. Betsy and I walked through a cold fog at dawn to the youth tent to hear Morris Venden present the precise parsing of the phrase, "a total submission to Christ." There

we were also told that the youth of the church would "finish the work." Betsy and I were confident of our place in the cosmic struggle for the return of Christ. That we did not know what the reproduction of the life of Christ might look like in adolescent females was only vaguely unsettling. That we were responsible for the return of Christ and the end of all things was certain. However, by noon each day, the sun had burned through the layer of gray and we were headed for the beach with Scott and Bobby, where the possibility of "perfect submission" took on a more exquisite clarity. Betsy and Scott were a solid couple; that is, they were still together at the next camp meeting. I learned of the end of all things that first year when Bobby, the son of a literature evangelist, told me at camp tear-down that he was in love with someone back at home.

In scheduled camp meeting seminars Betsy and I learned how to cook without eggs or milk, develop self-esteem through the pages of *The Desire of Ages*, and discover our history and future through the *Great Controversy*. But we also joined small spontaneous prayer groups on campus. I can recall that in one such group a 19-year-old from Lodi announced, "if the Lord wants us to speak in tongues here, we're going to go with it." It was in these groups that we developed both a sense of importance and impatience. Following one such camp meeting experience, Betsy and I insisted on attending a conference executive committee meeting to ask for money to start a youth center. That we were scarcely 16 and arrived at the meeting in mini-skirts only made us more certain of our rightness for the task. When the conference president gently suggested that we work with the youth department for guidance and money, we announced that the Lord was coming, that our friends were dying, and that we did

not have time to work with committees. When we left that meeting we were confident the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the Central California Conference Committee and taken up residence with us.

At the official level, communication at Soquel was clear. Several conference employees worked on it full time. Those of us who stayed through the week came to depend on a voice over the loudspeaker to wake us in the morning and give a summary of the day's events. At headquarters a complete list of campers with their tent or vehicle location was posted. The bookstore handed out lists of camp meeting specials. But this kind of communication only assured me that I would be told of a sale on the latest gospel music album, or could find an old roommate, or that I might have my blood pressure checked on Tuesday. It did not suggest that I would be changed, and yet a pervasive awareness of the cataclysmic spread among us through labyrinthine channels. A young woman camped in row K had been mysteriously healed of a blood disease which might or might not have been terminal. A hitchhiker from somewhere near Los Angeles was brought to the front gate of Soquel and left by a driver who did not reveal his name or final destination. A retired minister from Merced or Modesto had a dream in which he was told that we had little time left.

I remember that in 1972 Bonnie Letcher and two seductively spiritual young men sang of our apocalyptic anxieties. "But tell me where am I now? Am I almost there? Is that heaven's bright glory I see? Is that Jesus I hear calling out my name? Is the door standing open for me?" I also remember that my good friend Brad almost died at Soquel that year after swallowing several reds and a fifth of Southern Comfort.

During my adolescence at Soquel

it was a common, even mundane, impression among youth growing up on the edges of places like San Francisco, Berkeley, and Big Sur, that change was imminent and would not be effected through established channels. Revolution had been assimilated into the mainstream of our consciousness and in the particular intensity of Soquel, 10 days was not too short a time to work a radical restructuring of our lives.

And I was changed at Soquel in ways I did not imagine. It was at Soquel that a sweet faced 18-year old from my senior class was arrested for threatening to shoot up the campground. He was carrying a concealed and loaded .38. It was at Soquel that I first realized that the thirst for souls was related to drought in the conference coffers. It was at Soquel that I learned even

We go on this ritual errand into the wilderness because there, finally, our fury of Apocalyptic words is swallowed up in a sea of glass. Camp meeting is a promise of grace, an assurance that the covenant and community still hold fast, that in a sky churning with clouds the size of a man's hand, the rainbow still shines.

the church is not always as it appears to be.

It was at Soquel that I first saw a woman, Madelyn Haldeman, preach a sermon. One evening as she walked through the youth tent, tall, forceful, and feminine, I first dreamed of preaching my own sermon. At Soquel I also listened to the wit, intelligence, and integrity of H.M.S. Richards, Sr. Summer by summer he created an oasis in a desert of chaos. That he had withstood a lifetime of camp meetings, had made peace with the "boys at the G.C.," as he called them, that he never appeared without his Bible, assured me and my generation that the center would hold.

Many question the relevance of camp meeting. It is an administrative headache. It is expensive and anachronistic. There are problems with health departments and city officials. There are summer storms

which threaten tents. But camp meeting still stands.

That we ought not to return to camp meeting another year is often the theme of the Sabbath sermon. Speakers at camp meetings in 1964 repeatedly said that we were 120 years from the disappointment and that "as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man." This same message was proclaimed at camp meetings in 1983. As surely as every Adventist camp meeting repeats these words, year after year we return again. I suspect that we go on this ritual errand into the wilderness because there, finally, our fury of Apocalyptic words is swallowed up in a sea of grace. Camp meeting is a promise of grace, an assurance that the covenant and community still hold fast, that in a sky churning with clouds the size of a man's hand, the rainbow still shines.

Radical Discipleship and the Renewal of Adventist Mission



by Charles Scriven
Vol. 14, No. 3 (December 1983)

Charles Scriven, now president of Columbia Union College, in this essay opened a drive, now joined by others, to convince Adventists that they are more heirs to the "radical reformation" of the Anabaptists, than to the "magisterial reformation" of Luther and Calvin. It is a part of his attempt to expand theological discussion

within Adventism beyond debates over theories of salvation to involvement in social reform.

Scriven is one of several theologians and ethicists who have, over the past 25 years, helped to put social ethical questions on the agenda of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (see profile of Desmond Ford). Scriven, who graduated from Walla Walla College, received a B.D. from the SDA Theological Seminary and a doctorate from the Graduate Theological Union. He has written, among other books, The Demons Have Had It (Southern Publ. Assn., 1976), and The Transformation of Culture (Herald Press, 1988). One of Spectrum's most prolific contributors, Scriven also served six years as associate and co-editor of the journal.

Historians have come to believe that both Methodism and Baptism belong to a distinctive type of Christianity, profoundly different not only from Roman Catholicism but also from the "magisterial state-church" religion of Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism. This is the "believers' church," or "sectarian," or "radical Protestant" type of Christianity. . . .

Anabaptism . . . is the founding movement among the many movements that make up the radical Protestant tradition. More than Lutheranism or Calvinism, it is the radical Protestant tradition that acquaints us with the Methodist and Baptist pioneers of the Adventist way. This radical Protestantism is what we should especially attend to as we try to faithfully fulfill the promise of the Reformation. . . .

Anabaptism helps . . . by setting before us a *distinctive and radical interpretation of devotion to Christ*. In this view, true devotion requires, first of all, discipleship. . . .

The memory of Anabaptism can give us the courage to strike a different emphasis from Luther, to stress the reality of new life in Christ as strongly as we affirm the truth of justification by faith. Until the scriptural witness to Christ persuades us to think otherwise, we may regard our church's emphasis on sanctification as a thing not to be ashamed of, but to vigorously uphold. . . .

In Anabaptism we find historical precedent for faithful lives serving as missionary witness. . . .

There are two ways in which we can make this sort of witness; both reflect the Anabaptist heritage and both are present, if not fully developed, in contemporary Adventism. Consider first non-violence. . . . Is the time not here for non-violence to become a central motif of Adventist identity? Are we faithful to our own past if we avoid the simple