

Spectrum

The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

Adventism's Methodist Roots

THE METHODIST CONNECTION:
EVANGELISM, ORGANIZATION, THEOLOGY

HOW WESLEY KEEPS
DAD AND ME TALKING

NAZI RACE HYGIENE AND
THE ADVENTISTS

ELLEN WHITE AND JOHN WESLEY

ART/ARTISTS: GREG CONSTANTINE

NEWS UPDATES

Another Woman Ordained

Church Defends Book

Outraging Catholics

SDA Arrested for Rwanda Genocide



September 1996
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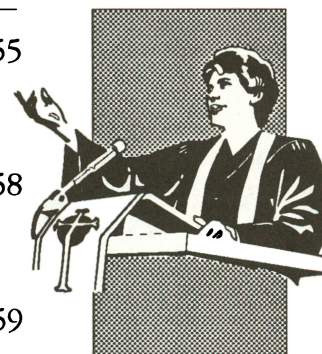
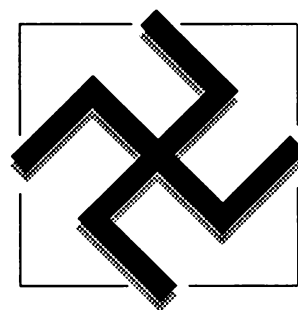
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Those Who Remember Can Heal

One warm afternoon a few years ago, I found myself two hours' ride from Berlin, following a professor down a dusty path to a small graveyard. Inside, Dieter Leutert, professor of church history at the Adventist Theological Seminary near Friedensau, led me to the gravestone of Hermann Kobs, 1890-1972. Kobs, the dominant theological influence on generations of Adventist pastors, was held by the Gestapo in a Leipzig prison for the duration of World War II. His crime? Baptizing a Jew. Not all Adventist Germans followed the path described in the article, "Nazi Race Hygiene and the Adventists." Leutert told me of other Adventists who died opposing the Nazis.

Other gravestones Professor Leutert showed me that afternoon bore the names of Adventist nurses trained at Friedensau. Growing up in Cairo, Egypt, I learned to call one of those Friedensau nurses "Sister" Erna Krueger, who sometimes cared for members of my missionary family. She had married a missionary sent to Cairo. He received only subsistence funds from the Central European Division. Erna Krueger supported the family by nursing wealthy Egyptians, some in the government. In the 1930s, her worn-down husband and then her child died unexpectedly. Erna rejected the urging of the Central European Division leaders to join the Nazi Party, and when World War II broke out, refused to return to Germany and work for an Adventist church she knew was led by pro-Nazis.

Erna Krueger remained in Cairo. In 1947, she opened an orphanage in one of the poorer sections of the city. For the next 40 years, Sister Krueger was Cairo's Mother Teresa, caring for and teaching 35 to 40 orphans a year. Most became Seventh-day Advent-

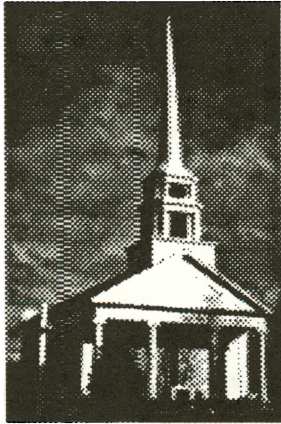
ists and professionals. Only after most of the pro-Nazi Adventist leaders had died did Erna Krueger finally return to Germany, where she now lives.

All of us cling to memories of exemplary, sacrificial lives like those of Professor Kobs, Sister Krueger, and Zoltan Kubinyi, whom readers of the December *Spectrum* will learn is the Hungarian Adventist who saved more than 100 Jews from Nazi death camps. Some may say, Let us look at only luminous lives. Why dwell at all on the dark side of Adventism, on what fellow Adventists did in Nazi Germany and more recently in Rwanda? (See the news update in this issue, and "Sabbath Slaughter: SDAs and Rwanda," in the June 1996 *Spectrum*.) Surely the answer is that we remember the evil some of us have done, to learn what none of us must ever do.

Remembering prepares us for the future. If Adventists had remembered their Methodist heritage, with its attempt to abolish slavery, its improvement of the conditions of Welsh miners, its emphasis on health reform as a way of helping the vulnerable, perhaps we would not have fallen to the Nazi temptation of invoking health as a justification for purifying society of "undesirables." Perhaps, if we had remembered and learned from our experience in Nazi Germany, Adventists would not now be indicted by international tribunals for engaging in genocide in Rwanda.

Adventists who forget can defame and destroy and kill. Adventists who remember can confess. Adventists who remember Wesley, and Professor Kobs, and Sister Krueger, and the nurses of Friedensau can heal the nations.

—Roy Branson



It Takes a Church...

To nurture hope in the face of horror . . . to encourage pilgrims of faith . . . to embrace the morally outraged.

Surprised by Grace

by *Darold Bigger*

Shortly after I arrived at the office on Monday morning, June 17, John Cress, the campus chaplain, phoned. He asked if I would come to his office; he wanted to talk with me about "a matter of some urgency." I assumed a student had gotten into trouble over the weekend and he wanted some advice. It surely wouldn't be trouble in his own family—he had lost his mother and father-in-law in recent months. I hoped it wouldn't be another crisis for him.

Barbara, my wife, was already at his office when I arrived. (She later explained that he had phoned her, too, with the same request. When she arrived he wouldn't tell her why he had called. He wasn't interested in small talk, either—just wanted to wait for me.) My goodness, I thought, surely it wasn't one of *our* kids who got into trouble over the weekend.

He asked me to sit down as he walked toward us, then said, "I have the worst news I could ever share with you. Shannon was killed, murdered, in Washington, D.C."

Shannon had been a student missionary in the Pacific, on the island of Yap, teaching first grade. Most recently, she had been working at Washington

Adventist Hospital as a development intern.

Our shock and disbelief filled most of the next half-hour. His phone call to the Montgomery County police detectives, in Maryland, verified the facts. Shannon hadn't responded to phone calls from our cousins, who live in the area, Sunday night and Monday morning. When she didn't show up to work, one of our cousins went to her apartment, found her door ajar and discovered her body in the bedroom. He ran to the manager's office; the police were called. The next day we learned of the Father's Day disaster.

Henning Guldhammer, a pastor at the college church, came to the chaplain's office and the two of them helped us organize our day. Guldhammer drove us home, where we told our other daughter, Hilary, and Rosemary Laarad, the Micronesian high school student who came to live with us two years ago.

The rest of the day is a blur of phone calls, doorbells, sobbing, decisions, questions, and sobbing and sobbing. In two weeks I was planning to move Shannon to her new job as director of development at Gem State Academy in Idaho. We knew the school would benefit from her delight at sharing good news about church institutions, her excitement at working with young people, and her easy commitment to God. And we thought the school administration, academy supporters, and the supervision of Philanthropic Service for Institutions at the General

Conference would nurture her professional development. We were all anxious to have her back closer to home.

Through a series of careful police procedures and the working of providence, a suspect was arrested on Tuesday morning. Other apartment residents described an unknown white van that had been in the parking lot on Sunday. Detectives watched the videotape from the parking lot surveillance camera, saw the van, and traced the license plate to a stolen vehicle in the District of Columbia. Late Monday night, they drove to the area of the District where the license plate had been stolen and spent several hours looking for the white van with those stolen plates. Just when they were ready to give up, the van pulled up beside them. They followed it, but could not pull it over because they were Maryland police, out of their jurisdiction in the District. Within a few blocks, they saw a District police vehicle, which pulled the van over and arrested the driver. The driver told them who his partner was and where he lived. They obtained a search warrant, which they served first thing the next morning. Several items from Shannon's apartment were in his residence. They arrested the suspect, who was watching Shannon's TV set from his bed, and charged him with the brutal murder. (He has since been arraigned on charges of murder, robbery with a dangerous weapon, and attempted rape in the first degree.)

Amazing Peace

I've always dreaded what I would do if someone tried to hurt my daughters. A man of ample temper and dogged determination, I've hoped strong friends would surround me at such a time, to prevent me from doing something I would long regret.

Some tried to provide comfort about issues that did not trouble us. Black friends privately apologized that the murderer was black. Others would commiserate with us about our suffering from the violent consequences of poverty. Still others blamed cities. If Shannon, we would be consoled, had been more suspicious of race, the desperation of the poor, the hatred and violence of cities . . . It's all right, they seemed to say; you have reason to be angry.

But those feelings didn't come. There was no clenched-teeth rage at the suspect, no seething passion for revenge. This wasn't a choice, mind you,

no lofty Christian ideal of turning the other cheek. It was a gift. God's grace surprised me. It let me ignore Shannon's attacker and helped me focus my anger on the real source of the problem.

That surprise of grace allows me to devote my thoughts and energy to the battle against evil, not the battle against Shannon's murderer. As Paul reminded us,

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12, NIV).

To be consumed with vengeance toward an individual or a race or a society would distract us from the even broader picture.

This is not to say that the accused's arrest, trial, and eventual sentencing is of no consequence. We're very relieved that he was apprehended, so that the cycle of his violence and disregard of others is stopped. But halting him does not stop evil, and that is our ultimate objective. In the trauma of death, ultimate questions seem the only meaningful ones.

When we attended Shannon's memorial service at the Silver Spring Seventh-day Adventist church in Maryland, the television stations covered the story. Our testimony of hope in spite of tragedy appeared on the evening news programs of all the television stations of the nation's capital.

Surprised by Community

It didn't take long after we first heard the horrible news to realize that we wouldn't be able to keep up with the telephone and doorbell. Our friends blanketed us with love. Even though many resisted the impulse to come or call and the telephone was constantly busy, hundreds were able to get through and make personal contact. John Brunt, academic vice president at Walla Walla College, left his office and, for several days, spent his entire time taking notes for me, answering inquiries, making telephone calls—even shining shoes. Liz Heisler, assistant to the vice-president for academic administration at Walla Walla College, and a family friend, sat for hours over several days by our telephone. She took messages and initiated calls between calls. Henning Gulddammer, the pastor, John Cress, the chaplain, and John Brunt spent hours with us, cell phones in hand, helping arrange disposition of Shannon's body and plan funeral and memorial services.

Alden Thompson, an Old Testament teacher at Walla Walla College, came the first day to share our sadness. He sat in our living room and, through his tears, recited a paragraph from memory:

Each morning consecrate yourselves and your children to God for that day. Make no calculation for months or years; these are not yours. One brief day is given you. As if it were your last on earth, work during its hours for the Master. Lay all your plans before God, to be carried out or given up, as His providence shall indicate. Accept His plans instead of your own, even though their acceptance requires the abandonment of cherished projects. Thus the life will be molded more and more after the divine example; and "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4:7* (Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol 7, p. 44).

I find myself often praying now with open hands, trying to learn how to surrender what was so precious to me.

Doug Clark, chair of the school of theology at Walla Walla College, sent an e-mail from Jordan on the Sabbath after Shannon died. "I didn't go to church in Amman today," he said. "Instead, in Shannon's honor I've climbed up Mount Nebo to look at the Promised Land."

One day a strange noise outside led us to discover a group from the campus and church tilling our not-yet-landscaped yard and planting flowers. Horse lovers fed our horses for nearly two weeks. Steve Payne, Walla Walla College's vice-president of admissions and marketing, spent hours helping us with the delicate task of meeting the media, even using his own frequent flyer miles to accompany us to Shannon's memorial in Washington, D.C.

Funds were set up at both the college and Blue Mountain Credit Union to help us with the overload of expenses. A Walla Walla College endowment fund in Shannon's memory, devoted to supporting student missionaries, has received gifts and pledges of more than \$15,000. Washington Adventist Hospital gave us the use of a car and apartment while we were in Washington. Several individuals have offered a free stay at their vacation cabins. Others have promised to give us their frequent flyer miles for our tickets to attend the trial. The Silver Spring church members have blessed us with audio- and videotapes, full of memories and lasting friendships. Families who have lost children or had relatives murdered have quietly reached out to us. Flowers, food, cards, and letters have poured in to us from near and far in such volume we have not been able to keep up in expressing our thanks.

As so many reached out to help us through this time, a paraphrase of the conclusion of John's gospel comes to mind:

Jesus' community did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written! (*John 21:25, NIV*).

Another passage that brings hope to us as we think of Shannon, we have come to connect with the Christian community that nurtured Shannon throughout her life and continues to sustain us after her death:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (*Romans 8:35, 37-39, NIV*).

Darold Bigger is professor of religion and social work at Walla Walla College, and the immediate past senior pastor of the college church. Bigger received his Ph.D. from the School of Theology at Claremont.

Pilgrims in the Hills of Carolina

by Randy Neall

A lot can come unglued in a little Adventist church when an elder lets it be known, even if only in private, that he no longer believes that Creation occurred in six days only a few thousand years ago. When that happens, a sequence of responses are in order. First, labor with that elder. If that fails, relieve him of all church offices. If the ideas appear to be spreading, preach sermons and privately meet with other members. If that fails, shut down the church.

That may sound heavy-handed, but faithfulness to Adventism leaves few alternatives. A long and gradual creation, where life, suffering, and death precede human existence is perceived as threatening the very heart of Adventism: not only the Sabbath, but our ideas about the cause of suffering and death, the nature of biblical authority, and the reliability of

Ellen White. Beyond all that, a long, gradual creation raises questions about the very nearness—or remoteness—of God himself.

So, when the Carolina Conference secretary and ministerial secretary arrived Wednesday evening, December 6, 1995, to shut down what had been the 35-member Edneyville, North Carolina, church, they were only doing what they had to do.

I sat on the back row and stared around the room at the walls and trim I had helped paint and stain, the podium where I had often stood, the whiteboard I had often used. Now that board listed the assets in the church—chairs, tables, books, dishes, clock, etc., and the old piano we had struggled to buy.

Edneyville began in 1987 as a rare experiment within this conference, as a church where there would be more than the customary latitude to discuss and probe. Our goal was inspiration through education, to be able to leave from week to week knowing more than we did when we arrived. We studied not only the Bible, but also church history and comparative religion. We studied the prophecies, too, and always retained the Adventist belief that a great testing message would someday emerge, while recognizing the limitations of the Adventist concept of what that message would be. We were Adventist, and quite conservative at that. We were a bonded, happy family.

But now this. I felt a deep sense of tragedy as the two conference men solemnly told us that complete spiritual shipwreck was all we could look forward to. Had I never said anything, this would not be happening.

I was no longer alone, and that was the problem. Among the others was Bill DuBois, who was obliged to resign as elder and Sabbath school teacher at the same time I did. Our beloved pastor, whom I still hold in highest esteem, labored with us both. At one point, he handed Bill and me a printout from his Ellen G. White compact disk. The search word he had keyed into his computer was *infidel*, which yielded a trove of quotations on geologists. He meant no offense, and how I wished I could oblige his sincere efforts on our behalf and ease his grief.

He conceded that he could not explain why the fossils of the geologic column fell into such a damning sequence, but, he argued, given missing rocks in the Grand Canyon, anachronistic radiometric readings from Hawaiian volcanoes and other such things, geologists have as many problems with their position as creationists do with theirs. So, with the scientific scores of the two sides in a dead heat, it

made sense to him to let the Bible settle the issue, particularly since God was there and we were not. Moreover, from Inspiration it can be proven that we are about to enter the jubilee millennium, the seventh since Creation, to be ushered in by the second coming of Christ.

Back in 1975, while serving as a young, earnest information officer at Andrews University, I perceived that the forces of light and darkness were engaged in battle, right on campus, over the age of the earth. Heading up the fight for Adventist truth was Robert H. Brown, then head of the Geoscience Research Institute. I publicized his research on Carbon-14 dating, where he argued against the technology's accuracy on dates prior to 2000 B.C. The local media picked it up, as did *Ministry Magazine*. Larry Geraty rebutted the piece in the school paper, but I, knowing the truth of Brown's research from the Bible itself, paid no attention.

Despite an occasional doubt now and then, my faith in the traditional viewpoint held firm for nearly two decades. Ron Wyatt, for one, helped sustain my faith by producing a video, featuring William Shea, describing the discovery of Noah's ark, complete with chambers, struts, and all. I saw to it that the video was shown at Edneyville. That anchor of faith lasted more than a year, until shattered by the *Adventist Review*. Then, in the summer of 1994, I decided to learn what I could, without bias, about origins.

I borrowed everything on the subject that I could find, including copies of *Spectrum* from a friend here who had not missed an issue since 1972, and two inches of reports from the Geoscience Research Institute. One small set of papers stood out. On the surface they were innocuous enough—a simple diagram and description of the geologic column and its fossil content, just the raw data, as it were, without much scientific editorializing.

A few things were obvious right on the surface. The farther down the column you go, the more unlike today's life fossils become, whether marine or land, plant or animal. Not a single fish, not even a single vertebra, is to be found among the low-level, Cambrian marine fossils. The fossils lowest in the column are simple cells, followed by tiny, worm-like creatures. Then follows a definite sequence, with mammals appearing only in the upper portions of the column and humans at the very top—and probably not because some animals could outrun the Flood better than others. Plants, without the capacity to run from rising water, exhibit the same progression from simple to complex forms.

All through the column, organisms are buried precisely where they formed, lived, and walked, surprisingly undisturbed. The *Adventist Review* reported rock-encased fossil dinosaur eggs arranged neatly in whole colonies of nests. How could a dinosaur, with hundreds of feet of fossil-bearing rock below it (and later plenty of rock above it) possibly be able to walk around and leave tracks, much less lay eggs, if all that underlying rock represented the accumulation of only a single catastrophe only weeks in the making?

I called the current head of the Geoscience Research Institute to learn how he interprets the sequence of fossils of the geologic column. His explanation was that the various life forms were geographically segregated prior to the Flood in patterns wildly unlike they are today. Though he did not say so explicitly, I could only gather that the pre-Flood world must have been very mountainous, and mice and all other mammals confined themselves to very high elevations, carefully avoiding the valleys, the habitats of reptiles.

Let radiometric dating be a lie, evolution a fraud, and geologists knaves and infidels, the geologic column still requires *time*, with species segregated by time rather than ecological zone. The evidence was, to me, so clear, graphic, simple, and unmediated by geologists, that my mind simply denied me the freedom of choice to come to a conclusion other than a long, gradual creation.

I once met a lady whose religion forbade her to believe that people have been to the moon. All evidence of such were an elaborate hoax foisted on a gullible public by evil men. Was God now testing my loyalty to him in terms of my ability to mimic her? If so, in what sense is loyalty to him honest, ethical, or different from any other prejudice? Those were the questions that burned within me as I staggered under the weight of my conclusion; as I listened to the entreaties and warnings of family, pastor, and fellow Edneyville members.

When sight is neither possible nor relevant, we must live by faith, but what about when sight is inescapable? Sight, particularly of physical objects arranged without human intervention, commands its own form of belief. The command not to lie is a requirement, in part, to be faithful to one's senses.

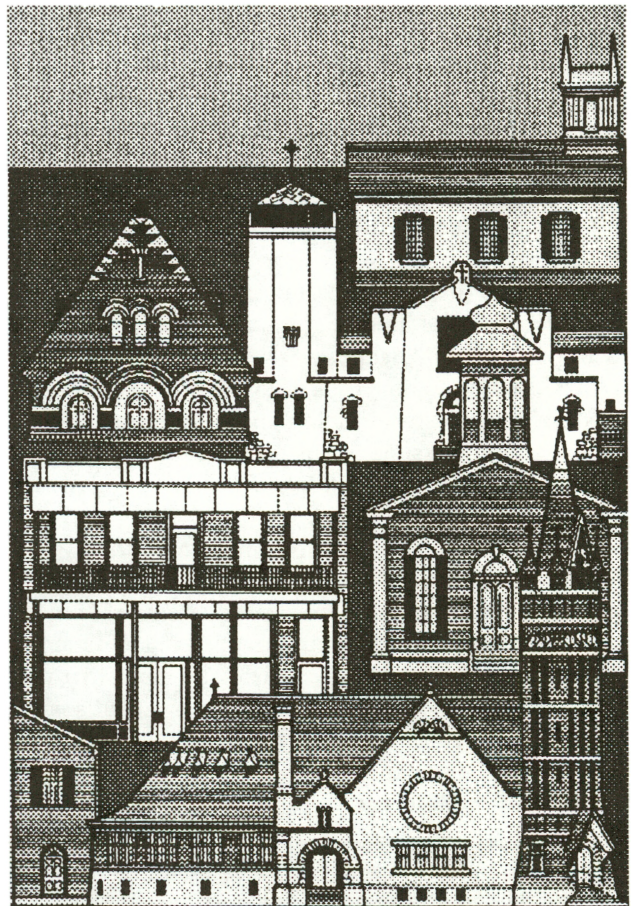
And yet, was I willing to deny the authenticity of the thunderous announcement of a six-day creation of Exodus 20 and allow that a God who is Truth would have allowed historical error in the vital first chapters of his own book? Is Adventism, with its three angels, no better than any other denomination or cult? And

how was I to account for Christ's mission to this earth, occasioned not so much by a Fall as by the sheer brutality and darkness of primitiveness itself?

My crisis was bluntly but clearly articulated by one of our leading members: "I don't see how you can call yourself an Adventist." We had invited him and his wife to supper one Sabbath evening in a fruitless effort to rebuild the broken bridge. Soon afterwards, that couple and others transferred to a more reliable Adventist congregation.

I had a simple choice to make: Come up with new answers or leave the church, and I had to do so alone. *Spectrum* at least defines the problem. For instance, in an article entitled, "Negotiating the Creation-Evolution Wars," Fritz Guy catalogues the various options (including Genesis without geology, Genesis controlling geology, and geology controlling Genesis). Guy then declares, quite rightly, that there is no free lunch with any of them (*Spectrum*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 40-45). But none of the authorities in these parts had any incentive whatever to help me work out my findings within an Adventist framework.

In the months since December 6, I devoted many weekends trying to forge on paper a solution to my



own spiritual dilemma. I found myself driven to something much larger than Creation, per se: God's extreme reluctance to provide us miraculous visual evidence of himself, even when it is provable that it would be in our best interest for him to do so (Matthew 11:21-23). That reluctance—not to mention its human toll—is apparent throughout biblical history, church history, world history, and yes, natural history. Were it not for a larger purpose than the salvation of humankind, questions could be raised about God's commitment to the human race. That larger purpose I understand to be a "great controversy," played out within a race of beings who must choose the right apart from coercive visual inducement. Ethical freedom, and therein the potential for unfeigned goodness, can thus be demonstrated here under circumstances impossible in the realm of angels. Perhaps that is one way we help to resolve Heaven's dispute.

For me, the key to the problem has proven to be, ironically enough, a page right out of Adventism. I know of no other tradition that comes as close to giving humanity an intelligible role in a cosmic contest, and that tries as hard to uphold an apocalyptic denouement worthy of the tragic duration. The church seems not to recognize how profoundly in need of change many of its concepts are. But seeds of change are implied in its current holdings. And moral accountability in view of a judgment is not a bad idea. I am in debt both to geology and Adventism for goading me toward a treasure I shall never relinquish, a hint of the reason for God's persistent naturalistic disguise. To chance upon a key to that enigma is to find God's hiding place. And then he does not seem as hidden anymore. Thus, I remain, with passion, an Adventist.

Adventist congregations elsewhere have taken a pastoral interest in our little band of pilgrims. They have made it possible for us to retain our membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, for which we are profoundly grateful.

Still, I keep on display a picture of our little Edneyville group from happier days, complete with babies, children, parents, and grandparents. As we smiled in front of the camera that pleasant summer afternoon a few years ago, we hadn't a clue what was coming. Soon we were to receive our troubled script, to be played out on our tiny stage in the mountains of North Carolina. One can only guess the dimensions of the stage on which that script will be repeated.

Randy Neall, a computer programmer, graduated from Pacific Union College with a B.A. in history.

No, We Won't Let You Go

by Brent Geraty

In August 1995, following the General Conference session in Utrecht, Netherlands, Glenn Coe, an attorney in Hartford, Connecticut, and past president of the Association of Adventist Forums, wrote an open letter to "my church and its leaders." While the church's refusal to ordain women clearly was a motivating concern, Coe identified several areas in which he found the church's "literalist approach" to be problematic. In light of the "personal turmoil" Coe experienced in attempting to harmonize his personal convictions with the church's actions, Coe's letter asked for "counsel as to what I should do with respect to my church membership and further participation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church." Coe encouraged readers to share his letter openly to foster discussion and prompt "similarly conflicted Adventists" to share their disillusionment with church leaders. According to Coe's letter, "[i]f the level of disillusionment is insignificant then that will be convincing to me that I am truly out of step with Adventism and that it is now time for me to leave."

In November 1995, Coe submitted a letter to David Dennis, pastor of the Connecticut Valley Adventist church, stating that he was withdrawing his membership in the church. Coe had served the church in the past as elder, Sabbath school superintendent, chair of the school board, religious liberty director, leader of a Sabbath school class. He had given Bible studies to a number of Hartford professionals, some of whom are now church members. At a December 1995 meeting, the church board voted to "table" Coe's request rather than forward it to a church business meeting for a decision on membership. According to Dennis, the church board's tabling of Coe's request was an attempt to elevate pastoral concerns over policy concerns. "How can we by policy throw someone out of the church, even at his own request, when he is working for justice and fairness?" asked Dennis.

Spectrum interviewed Coe about matters preceding and following his request for the withdrawal of his church membership.

Spectrum: What were you hoping to accomplish by writing your August 1995 letter and encouraging its circulation?

Coe: I hoped initially for dialogue, particularly among church leaders.

Spectrum: Were you successful?

Coe: I did receive some wonderful letters from individuals whom I both knew and did not know. Except for a few, they were letters that agreed with the questions that I raised and almost uniformly urged me to stay in the church. They argued almost without exception that one is more effective within the church. I also understand that there was some lively discussion in CompuServe's Adventists On-Line service. Several individuals recruited me to join in the discussion, but my computer illiteracy and busy schedule unfortunately combined to prevent my participation at that time. A very few told me how their spirituality had actually increased after leaving the church and encouraged me not to lose my interest in spiritual matters after leaving the church.

Spectrum: What response, if any, did you receive from church leaders?

Coe: To my first letter, I received no response from church leaders (above the local church level) except for some teachers in various of our schools (La Sierra's Fritz Guy and a few from Andrews University) and from the Columbia Union president, Ralph Martin. Aside from those very few, I got no response from any church leaders. That was not entirely surprising since all are busy and have many demands on their time. It was, perhaps, a little disappointing, since I considered the three leaders to whom I sent letters to be more than just acquaintances. After the second letter went out, I did get letters from two of the three and a note from the third.

Spectrum: It does not sound as though you are satisfied with the response your letter generated.

Coe: I had hoped that the first letter might have generated a wider discussion within the church. I had hoped, further, that such a discussion might have resulted in church leaders taking another look at what had happened at Utrecht and the potential consequences that the decision would have for the church. The fact that it did not occur, that the necessary level of discourse did not materialize, in part led to my personal conviction that the prospect for change in the church was almost nonexistent. I am not talking only about the issue of women. The problem is far deeper and more intractable, and that makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the church to deal thoughtfully and responsibly with the many issues that it is confronting or needs to confront. The church's approach to determining truth creates a

barrier—whether it is insurmountable or not I won't venture to say—to God. Since the church has already charted a path for itself, it has predetermined its positions. How can God change minds that already know what God wants?

Spectrum: Having rejected the "change from within" strategy as futile, did you have any expectations regarding the withdrawal of your membership?

Coe: I really did not make my decision based on any expectation. I made my decision because I felt it was consistent with my convictions and my understanding of where the church is and will continue to be in the future.

Spectrum: Were you hoping to stir to action others who might believe similarly?

Coe: I have to leave to each individual the decision of how they see their relationship with the church. I did not, and I do not, see my role to be one of marshaling or encouraging or working toward any mass exodus from the church. I think people have to make that decision for themselves. I appreciate the respect that most people accorded me in the decision that I made, and I am going to accord them the respect they have shown me. However, I think it is fair to say that church leadership believes it has survived this issue with little loss, and that is unfortunate.

Spectrum: Describe, if you can, the personal impact of your decision to withdraw your membership.

Coe: As I think about how it has affected me, I suppose it would not be surprising to say that I am going through phases. Initially I was quite apprehensive about the road that I started down. I was concerned about whether I would be able to contain my level of interest in spirituality and the Bible. Having taught Sabbath school classes in my local church for many years, I had weekly occasion to turn my thoughts to spiritual and religious themes; I wondered if breaking with that cycle would make it difficult for me to sustain my interest in spiritual matters as well as such spirituality as I personally have. There came a time when I felt freed from the blinders we and others have a tendency to put on ourselves, and I do feel more open to insight and perception and understanding that I am not sure I would have entertained previously. Sometimes these experiences are quite exciting.

On another level, I feel quite conflicted. I have not wanted to hurt the church in my community and in the State of Connecticut. When an article comes out such as that which appeared a few weeks ago identifying me as a Seventh-day Adventist and saying the things that it said about me, I got many calls from lawyers, judges, clients, and religious people who read the article.* It gave me pause because if they were to know of the decision I made to withdraw my membership, it would become part of their understanding of Adventism. Future articles, if there are any, would or could have a negative effect on the church, and I have not wanted to see that happen. There are a few colleagues in the legal and professional community in whom I have confided about the passage through which I am traveling. When they see an article published saying that I am a Seventh-day Adventist, it contributes to some confusion.

Spectrum: In light of the decision by the local church in Hartford to table your request, what will become of your effort to withdraw your membership?

Coe: At some point, I will need a greater level of clarity with respect to my membership. Presently, I am weighing whether renouncing my membership is the only way to achieve that clarity. I am torn between my many friendships within the church, locally and elsewhere, and an issue of morality and justice being violated by the church organization. Perhaps what is needed is what was suggested by one friend—bifurcating membership so that one

could choose to be a member of a local church but not of the denomination. In the meantime, I remain appreciative of the concern that my local church has shown for me.

Nearing the one-year anniversary of his request to have his membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church removed, Coe remains an active member of his local Seventh-day Adventist congregation in Hartford. In fact, the local church nominating committee in Hartford tapped Coe earlier this year for several local church positions, and Coe accepted. According to Pastor Dennis, "Glenn is still creatively thinking about how to improve the outreach and mission of our church." In addition, when Atlantic Union officials learned that Coe was still on his local church's books, they insisted that Coe remain a member of the Atlantic Union's executive committee.

* In May 1996, the *Hartford Courant* printed a story about the hiring of Coe to investigate corruption allegations in the town of Torrington's police department. The mayor of Torrington explained that she hired Coe because "his credentials are impeccable, . . . he is precise, he wastes no time, wastes no words and he gets the job done as soon as possible. Nobody had anything bad to say about him, and that's unusual in the legal field." The *Courant's* story also noted, "Colleagues have described Coe, a Seventh-day Adventist who does not drink, swear or smoke, as straight-laced and a nice guy."

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Nazi Race Hygiene And the Adventists

A German-born Adventist scholar recounts how many Adventists equated health reform with racial purification.

by Roland Blaich

GERMAN SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS ENTERED the Nazi era with apprehension.¹ As a foreign sect which resembled Judaism in many respects, Adventists were particularly threatened by a society based on the principles of *völkisch* racism.² Yet the new state also had much to offer them, for it held the prospect of new opportunities for the church. The Nazi state banished the scourge of liberalism and godless Bolshevism, it restored conservative standards in the domestic sphere, and it took effective steps to return German society to a life in harmony with nature—a life Adventists had long championed.

One of Adventism's most distinguishing marks was—and is—its theology of health reform. Adherents perceive body, mind, and spirit as inseparable aspects of the human

being. Since the human body is the “temple” of the Holy Spirit, Adventist theology recognizes the importance of the physical being and places a strong emphasis on temperance and healthful living. This emphasis is most visible in the church's radical opposition to the use of alcohol and tobacco, and avoidance of “unclean” foods such as pork. In Germany, as elsewhere, the Adventist “health message” strongly affects all aspects of denominational work. This is evident not only in an extensive health care and welfare system and in the manufacture of health foods, but also in publishing, education, evangelism, and pastoral ministry. An evangelistic auxiliary, the Adventist health message is the “right arm” of the church.³

Nazi leaders were also committed to health reform.⁴ Men like Gerhard Wagner, head of the National Socialist Physicians' League, believed that a healthy, more natural diet would result in a healthier, fitter nation. They demanded a reduction in consumption of meat and fats, and emphasized the use of natural

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foods such as fruit, high-fiber vegetables, and whole-grain bread. Germans, they contended, should avoid caffeine, food colorings, and preservatives, and replace chemical fertilizers, DDT, and other environmental hazards with natural or organic methods of farming. Leaders also opposed drugs such as alcohol and tobacco as “genetic poisons” which were ultimately to be banned.⁵ The new state thus placed its health-care emphasis on prevention rather than cure.

However, healthful living represented only one part of prevention; the other was genetic uplifting (*Aufartung*), or purifying the genetic substance of the German people. For some time German scholars had endeavored to employ the Darwinian principles of selection to halt a perceived degeneration of the human species.⁶ In the 1890s a eugenics movement developed in Germany that by the 1920s had become a respectable part of biomedical science called race hygiene.⁷ Race

hygienists argued that in the civilized West the principle of natural selection, which was assured in primitive societies, had ceased to function. In the 1920s particularly, a variety of German academics, as well as health care professionals and politicians, were concerned about the proliferation of physically, mentally, and criminally degenerate elements. In caring for the “weak” through its health care and social welfare system, a paternalistic state took valuable resources from the productive elements and gave them to the unfit, thus “in a tragic circle diminishing the number of the healthy, and proliferating the inferior.”⁸ Population planners, biologists, jurists, doctors,

psychiatrists, as well as theologians, demanded that the state must act to halt the decline.⁹ Otherwise, they predicted, society would soon be ruled by the inferior and the entire race would ultimately be extinguished.¹⁰

The Nazi state adopted the principles of racial hygiene as part of its political and social agenda. Indeed, these were at the very core of the social-Darwinist power ideology of National Socialism.¹¹ In *Mein Kampf* Adolf Hitler had argued that persons found to be physically and mentally “unworthy” must not be allowed to perpetuate and thus “eternalize their suffering in the body of their children.” It

was the duty of the state to ensure that only those with healthy traits be allowed to procreate.¹² Less than six months after taking power, on 14 July 1933, Hitler’s government instituted eugenics—or “race hygiene,” the preferred German term—with the Law for the Prevention of Genetically Defective Progeny. This was their first in a series of steps taken

to return the German people to harmony with natural principles and to ensure the survival of the German race.¹³

In this new state, the work of their “right arm” seemed to Adventists more significant than ever. For the Nazi state offered Adventists the chance to build on their strengths, to work with the state toward a common goal, and at the same time find security. Adolf Minck, later president of the German Adventist church and then director of Adventist Youth Ministries, crystallized this attitude: “We are not unprepared for the new order. After all, we have helped prepare the way for it, and have helped to bring it about.”¹⁴ Anxious at first,

The “right arm” seemed to Adventists more significant than ever. “We are not unprepared for the new order. . . . We have helped prepare the way for it, and have helped to bring it about.”

—Adolf Minck, 1933 youth director of German Adventists, later division president

Adventist leadership soon welcomed the new order as a time of opportunity.

Over some time the Adventist church in Germany had built a well-organized, efficient welfare system that seemed particularly well suited to work with state authorities. It had no equal elsewhere in the Adventist world church, and was primarily the result of the dynamic and charismatic leadership of Hulda Jost. Jost also served as leader of the Adventist Nurses Association (*Friedensauer Schwesternschaft*), which operated several nursing homes and provided staff for numerous hospitals, including an Adventist hospital in Berlin. She used her position to establish ties with prominent social and governmental leaders, not only in Germany but across Europe, to a degree that had not been matched by any European Adventist leader.¹⁵

Jost's contacts with important persons abroad and government officials at home gave her stature and made her a good choice to represent the interests of the denomination to the government. Early in 1933, as the Nazis began the process of *Gleichschaltung* (the term describing the implementation of the Nazi totalitarian state), Hulda Jost advocated a closer association of her organization, Adventist Welfare (AWW), with the work of the *Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt/Winterhilfswerk* (NSV/ WHW), the National Socialist *Volk* welfare organization. She argued that this would offer opportunity to achieve "great things" for the denomination, predicting that it might prove critical to the survival of the church.¹⁶

When the Nazi state outlawed the denomination on 26 November 1933, Hulda Jost successfully used her contacts to bring about a reversal of the ban. This lifesaving episode confirmed the church leadership in their view that in the new state the health and welfare work was critically important. By mid-1934, Hulda Jost had streamlined the Adventist welfare work according to the *Führer* principle

(which required complete obedience to a single central authority), had placed it under the authority of the Main Office for Volk Welfare (*Amt für Volkswohlfahrt*), and had affiliated with the NSV.¹⁷ She saw in this affiliation a sign of "God's leading."¹⁸ Because of this affiliation, she was able to expand her contacts to include high officials in both the Propaganda Ministry and the NSV, contacts which time and again would prove valuable to her church.¹⁹ Under the Nazi umbrella, she felt, Adventist welfare was safe.

The Adventist press introduced its readers to the purpose of Nazi welfare, which was to restructure the entire welfare system "according to the National Socialist *Weltanschauung*. Above all it [was] the ordained guardian to ensure that the genetical-biological and race hygienic legislation of the coming years [was] carried out."²⁰ It was the "guardian of the nation's eternal life," of the "genetic traits that originate in eternity and flow like a river through our generation," through which every German was "connected and obligated." Its work was "not a mission of mercy" but instead was to carry on the "struggle for the inner strength and greatness of the German *Volk*."²¹ As with everything else in the Nazi state, the racial question figured centrally in the NSV's work.

Before long it appeared that Adventists had adopted the principles of Nazi welfare. Hulda Jost spoke of "charity on a *völkisch* basis" and of "*völkisch* social work for the family."²² She stressed that the goals of the church and those of the National Socialist state were the same. "Love for one's fellow man unites Christian and National Socialist thought in the most splendid way," and "practical Christianity means National Socialism," she assured her readers.²³ Previously Adventists had practiced charity simply on the basis of where it was needed. In 1935 *Der Adventbote*, the main church journal, stated that whereas charity extended "to all

Germans, without exception,” “asocial elements who prove . . . unworthy” could be denied care.²⁴ In keeping with the Nazi ethos, “not the individual, but the *Volk* in its totality,” was now the object of welfare.²⁵

Jost was a powerful speaker and writer because she delivered her message with the power of conviction. She evidently saw it as part of her mission to introduce her people to the social gospel, which she thought should be the main focus of the church’s work.²⁶ One of her cardinal texts was Isaiah 58, which speaks of social justice as the true worship. Because of her effectiveness the Propaganda Ministry soon enlisted her services. She frequently spoke at welfare and women’s conferences in Germany and abroad. These assignments enabled her to further develop her contacts with dignitaries, which included Swedish nobel laureate Selma Lagerlöf, Neville Chamberlain, and Joachim von Ribbentrop, then German ambassador to Britain and later foreign minister of the Reich.²⁷

Jost used her frequent public engagements to promote the Nazi state. In 1936 she made a special propaganda mission to the United States. Ostensibly there to attend the quadrennial session of the Adventist General Conference in San Francisco, she toured much of the country lecturing on the accomplishments of the Nazi state in the social welfare sector. Her lecture tour was coordinated by the Propaganda Ministry, the German Foreign Office, and the General Conference working in concert. While she failed to win all of her objectives—she had hoped for a meeting with Eleanor Roosevelt, which never came about—the tour did much to establish her credibility with the Third Reich. As a high official in the Propaganda Ministry attested, she “carried out effective cultural-political propaganda work abroad for the new Germany.”²⁸

In the field of health reform Adventists found themselves for once joined by the

mainstream. They could even claim they were there first. Adventists could join in the work of the government since they were in agreement with the National Socialist state on just about every lifestyle issue, whether it concerned alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, and natural diet, or whether it was exercise, organic farming, or raising a family in the country. That the leader of the Nazi state, Adolf Hitler, was himself an advocate of health reform who practiced what he preached, was cause for celebration. A circular of August 1933 expressed it this way: “The Christian rejoices in the fact that his country is in the hands of a man who has his office from the hand of God, and who knows himself responsible to Him. As anti-alcoholic, non-smoker, and vegetarian he is closer to our own view of health reform than anybody else.”²⁹ In the Third Reich, Adventism’s time had clearly come. As one conference president put it, “Today we will succeed to win over wide circles to a God-ordained lifestyle if we point to the Führer and Reich Chancellor as the example of our people.”³⁰ As well, Adventists joined other Christians in praising Hitler as a model to emulate, especially in appeals to youth.³¹ Sales of health food by the Adventist-owned company De-Vau-Ge grew. In some categories, like flakes and whole grain bread, they doubled between 1928 and 1938.³²

By 1937 Adventists associated with other health reform-minded Germans in a Nazi-sponsored German Movement for Health Reform. The Adventist journal *Gute Gesundheit* (*Good Health*) reported at length about the proceedings of the organization, where speakers left no doubt that “the unshakable platform for the common task” was the Nazi *Weltanschauung*.³³ “The Third Reich begins with the laws of nature,” the journal quoted one speaker, “and that is why the *Weltanschauung* of the Health Reform Movement is National Socialism.”³⁴ As Adventists joined with the National Socialist state in a common task, their health

message came to reflect that of National Socialists. Good health was no longer just a concern for the individual, but it was a matter of state. The state needed healthy people, and every German was dutybound to live healthfully. Already mentally and technologically superior, Germans needed to maintain good health to defend this birthright.³⁵ Smoking was no longer merely unhealthy, it was un-German (*nicht angemäss*). Along with many other vices, smoking had been introduced by the Jews.³⁶ As well, alcohol should be avoided as it was the enemy of the *Volk*.³⁷ In war, it interfered with one's patriotic duty and, more significantly, it "endangered genetic selection" and thus was "racially tainting."³⁸

With this kind of reasoning Adventists entered into the main current of National Socialist thought. One can learn much about the Nazi vision of a more viable society based on natural law and the principle of selection simply by reading Adventist literature.

Though one Adventist journal raised questions about the principles of race hygiene as late as March 1933, from then on Adventist publications endorsed the *völkisch* state.³⁹ A whole series of articles in various Adventist journals sought to establish the racial principle on biblical grounds. "What is the biblical view of the national renewal?" asked one article that appeared in *Gegenwartsfragen* (*Contemporary Issues*) in 1933. The answer was reassuring: "The biblical historical view is not materialistic, but *völkisch*."⁴⁰ The youth journal *Jugend-Leitstern* taught young Adventists that the *völkisch* order was God-given, an order of creation, and "revealed by God in history."

That is why "the liberalist idea of the brotherhood of nations" could "never have been in harmony with God's will and Holy Scripture."⁴¹ No nation could disregard the *völkisch* principle without dire consequences. The Jewish nation served as a warning to those who violated it. Jews, the author argued, had mixed with other nations and thus incurred God's punishment.⁴² Racially mixed marriage of Aryan and Jew was a "violation" of "God's genetic law," and the "doctrine of the pure blood [*Blutreinhaltung*]."⁴³ Some authors defended the racial principle on historical and cultural grounds as well.⁴⁴

Adventists commended the state on its efforts to improve the genetic substance of the German people. They condoned forced sterilization so that resources saved might be invested in the "healthy and productive" elements of the German people.

The church's periodicals also joined the mainstream in support of "natural law," or Darwinian principle. *Der Adventbote*, in an article entitled "Forward in the Opposite Direction," blamed the liberal state for having ignored natural law, which had led to "biological decline" (*Verfall*) of the German people. "We positive Christians," it said, "can

count ourselves among those who respect natural law and moral law, and seek to live accordingly."⁴⁵ Adventist literature praised the new state for its success in reversing the population decline of the Nordic race, which had been the victim of bourgeois and materialist civilization.⁴⁶ "The decline of the West, as prophesied by Oswald Spengler, seemed to be an unavoidable fate," wrote the Adventist physician Ernst Schneider. "Even among the German *Volk* the characteristics of *völkisch* disintegration were manifest at an increasingly alarming rate, and evident in the bastardization of races, with the inevitable consequences of physical and intellectual-spiritual degenera-

tion.”⁴⁷

As the government’s new eugenics law went into effect, Hereditary Health Courts applied forced sterilization not only to those with inherited problems such as epilepsy, schizophrenia, or mental deficiency, but also to those considered social, political, or sexual deviants.⁴⁸ This law alarmed many Christians, who voiced concern that it violated Christian principles. Nazi authorities sought to allay their concerns with an educational campaign, and Adventist journals supported their efforts. One example is the edited version of an article from the Nazi journal *Neues Volk* reprinted in *Jugend-Leitstern*. Its author described eugenics as a preventive measure, designed to benefit not only society but the individual as well. “What is a political necessity for the state turns out to be humane, and a blessing as well, in every individual case,” he assured the reader. “To prevent an evil is better than to eradicate an existing one,” and “in this case state ethics and Christian ethics are completely synonymous.” Comparisons with the barbarian practices of Sparta were out of place, since the individual was not hurt in any way. The difference was one between annihilation and prevention. Far from being questionable, the writer concluded, the eugenics program was indeed a noble cause. To reinforce his argument he cited the words of Jesus: “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” And, “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” Clearly, the National Socialist state followed Christian principle.⁴⁹

Adventist authors supported the eugenics law and commended the state for its efforts to improve the genetic substance of the German people. They expressed satisfaction that since eugenics was regulated by law, there would be no misuse.⁵⁰ They condoned forced sterilization so that resources saved might be invested in the “healthy and productive” elements of the German people.⁵¹ Some ex-

plained their support in Christian terms: “Especially the Christian knows of the divine demand for purity and sound strength.” Holy Scripture taught us to keep the people from harm, “and much is being done today to increase health and intellectual potential according to the will of the Creator.”⁵² Others sounded more Darwinist. “Nature is harsh and cruel,” one writer asserted in *Gute Gesundheit*. “It is bent on ensuring the extinction of inferiority. It’s time to stop interfering with nature’s process.”⁵³ And another author in the same journal stated: “Above all smallish concerns there is the great goal of the genetical uplifting of our *Volk*.”⁵⁴ Hulda Jost was among those who voiced support for the eugenics law, and she lectured widely on this and related subjects before women’s organizations and also in Adventist circles.⁵⁵

Articles in the Adventist press stressed the importance of a “genetically healthy family” and the need to guard the purity of race as “the precondition for the preservation of every state.”⁵⁶ It was not sufficient to increase the birth rate by calling for a return to a larger family.⁵⁷ More genetical research was needed in the struggle for the purity of race to single out the best traits, argued *Gute Gesundheit*. It endorsed specifically the work of Professor Otmar von Verschuer of the Frankfurt Institute of Hereditary Biology and Race Hygiene.⁵⁸ Verschuer, who himself contributed an article to an Adventist journal, is also remembered for his close working relationship with Dr. Josef Mengele, who provided him with specimens from Auschwitz for his work.⁵⁹ Adventists even considered race science useful to the work of the church. Genetics and an understanding of inherited traits were the key that would unlock the secrets of the human soul.⁶⁰ Knowledge of the racial types could be of value in the ministry, and useful in determining a church member’s suitability for church office.⁶¹ Of course, the “Nordic type” was best suited for a leadership role.

A solution to the Jewish question was of critical importance to the German race hygienist. Although generally not racist, nevertheless German Adventist periodicals had at times described Jews as enemies of German and Christian values. An issue of *Kirche und Staat* in 1923, for example, charged that the “internationalist” Jesuits and Jews collaborated to bring about Germany’s ruin. Of the two, the Jew was seen as the greater threat.⁶² It is thus not surprising that the Adventist press extended the concept of racial purification to include the Jews. One example of this is an issue of *Gegenwartsfragen* in 1943 which blamed Jews, “a foreign body in our blood,” not only for provoking the war but also for “harming the German soul as well.” The Jew, the editorial claimed, “who is devoid of any morality, almost succeeded in making world powers into Jewish fortresses. It was rather late when those who had preserved healthy blood managed to halt the Jewish flood.” The reader was cautioned not to “grow weary in the struggle against the enemy of our race, who lives among the nations.”⁶³

Adventist authors explained away apparent conflicts between biblical tradition and Nazi racial doctrine. The Bible had predicted the domination of the Aryan race, and “Mindful of its destiny the Germanic race strove to achieve the domination which was theirs according to the Bible.”⁶⁴ The author of one article in *Der Adventbote* depicted Jesus as only partially Jewish, from his mother’s side, since his father was, after all, God. Since Christ had died for all of humanity, he was also born for all, belonged to no nation, and thus was not Jewish. The author further argued that Jesus himself had opposed Judaism.⁶⁵ And did Paul really mean to say that there was no difference between Jews and Greeks? Whatever Paul might have meant, he certainly never questioned the divine order of races.⁶⁶

Only rarely did the Adventist section of the

German chorus sound a sour note.⁶⁷ In 1937 Emil Gugel, past president of the German Adventist church, questioned the validity of racial science. It was still young, he cautioned, and “unsupported assertions” proved nothing. Gugel considered humanity as having been one unit, and he warned of the dangers which race science might pose to the concept of world missions.⁶⁸

How dangerous such criticism could be to the church is clear from an incident in 1937 involving Horst Müller. A physician at the Adventist sanitarium at Gland, Switzerland, Müller had sent letters to the editor of a German medical journal, cancelling his subscription. He made scathing remarks about German medical science which, he said, had “fallen on hard times.” Having yielded to a “rule of mediocrity,” the intellectual level of German medical journals had declined significantly: “I am of the opinion that this race nonsense and race euphoria, into which Germany has fallen, no longer permits scientific work, including in medicine.” Protesting the growing persecution of Jews, whose ranks included some of the best physicians, he predicted that the hour of retribution would surely come! Such dissent and open criticism,

Adapted from a cover illustration of *Neues Volk*, the journal published by the Nazi Party’s Office of Racial Policy. From 1933 on, Adventist publishers were under contract to distribute 10,000 copies of the journal each month.



however, was extremely rare and actively discouraged by church leaders. As it was, Adventist leaders feared that Müller's "unwise" letters, which had fallen into the hands of the Gestapo, had provoked the government into preparing a case against the Adventist church for "high treason."⁶⁹

While the main tenor of Adventist publications reflected the Nazi vision of a healthier, happier, purer Aryan nation, Adventist endorsement of race science and racial hygiene extended beyond intrachurch circles and publications. From 1933 on the Adventist publishing work was under contract to distribute ten thousand copies monthly of *Neues Volk*, the journal published by the Nazi Party's Office of Racial Policy (*Rassenpolitisches Amt*), through the church's denominational network of colporteurs.⁷⁰ In this way, as Hulda Jost wrote to the Gestapo, Adventist workers did their part to carry "National Socialist ideas" into "the most distant village."⁷¹

The Office of Racial Policy, one of the most important Nazi institutions, sought to educate the German public on the need for a racial policy.⁷² Its articles, films, and training courses promoted population growth, racial purity, and an anti-Semitism that claimed to be based on science. What cause Adventist book evangelists served when they sold *Neues Volk* may be illustrated by the following example of an 1941 article that sought to prove that a high criminality rate among Jews was racially based. It concluded:

We know what it takes to protect the German *Volk* against Jewry once and for all. There is no room for misplaced compassion. The Jew might otherwise show his true face overnight and mercilessly take his revenge on the German people. There is a kind of spiritual race crime as well. It is no less despicable than the physical one. Every kind of compassion, and be it only momentarily and toward a single person, is a waste of spiritual energy. The fate of the Jew is being carried out according to the law of justice which does not

consider smallish sentiments but serves the welfare of humanity with consistency. For Judah in world history the day of judgement has come."⁷³

The Final Solution had begun.

The final solution in the gas chambers clearly followed from the scientific system.⁷⁴ Purifying the German gene pool through sterilization was only the first part of the vision of the general racial uplifting [*Aufartung*]. The next steps came during the war, with the Nazi euthanasia program and the elimination of alien elements as "health hazards" to the German population.⁷⁵ Because they expected widespread opposition, Nazi authorities conducted the euthanasia program in great secrecy. Nevertheless, Lutherans and especially Catholics offered active opposition.⁷⁶ Adventists, however, remained silent.

Adventists instead used their strengths in health reform as a basis on which to work with the Nazi state and to court its goodwill. As the church joined with the state in working for health reform, its "health message" underwent a transformation. While continuing the traditional emphasis on healthful living, Adventist publications soon adopted elements of the Nazi racial agenda as well, thus in effect contradicting the church's characteristically anti-Darwinist stance. A curious path led from *caritas*, the caring for the less fortunate and weak, to elimination of the weak, as the work of God. Their strong right arm had led German Adventists to a *völkisch* position.

Why Adventists followed this path may be explained in part by Nazi pressures and regulations. For example, the editorial law of 4 October 1933 regulated what could be published, and subsequent guidelines forced editors to accept certain articles or be denied publishing rights. In 1934 *Der Adventbote* cautioned church members that henceforth the "presentation of Bible truths for our time requires special consideration."⁷⁷ G. W. Schubert, president of the Central European

Division, writing to a General Conference colleague, expressed his fear of an eventual takeover of the Adventist press. "The work of the Lord has ceased," he lamented, and "it seems to me as if the government is trying to capture our well-organized colporteur work, using it for the distribution of their own literature which contains the new ideals of the government with regard to nutrition."⁷⁸

While the church had little choice but to conform to Nazi standards if it wanted to publish and continue to share its health message, it is also clear that German Adventist leaders eagerly courted Nazi goodwill by accommodating the new order. It seemed prudent to join with the new state in the area of health reform, where the interests of church and state converged. Numerous documents show plainly that the church's service to the state was intentional, not incidental, and that it was anxious to convince the authorities of this. For example, in a letter of 10 December 1935 to the Gestapo in Berlin, speaking of Nazi policy on racial hygiene, Hulda Jost wanted "to prove [that our colporteurs] have put themselves completely at the service of the Third Reich. Our periodical, *Gute Gesundheit*, regularly contains articles of the same tendency to enlighten the people on healthful living and racial hygiene. In this way we, too, energetically support the propaganda work according to the National Socialist philosophy of life." This was done, she said, because "the Adventist denomination, the Advent Publishing House, and the Adventist Welfare Work" were "supporting the Führer and his plans without reservation."⁷⁹ While Jost's statement may be questioned since it was written for Nazi consumption, G. W. Schubert had no reason to equivocate when he explained German Adventist policy to a fellow vice president of the General Conference. "The main thing," he wrote, "was to keep the publishing house and the colporteur work going, because it was no little perplexity for us what to

begin with 600 regular colporteurs of our work aside from the many employees of the publishing house." He expressed the faint hope that this might be "the way of the Lord to get the same freedom later on for the distribution of our religious literature."⁸⁰ Naively, perhaps, Adventists hoped that somehow their collaboration would free them to carry out their unique evangelistic mission.

While this collaboration seemed to clash with the traditional Adventist principle of separation of church and state, German Adventist leaders evidently believed that special circumstances warranted collaboration.⁸¹ In a variety of ways they sought to educate the membership on the need for flexibility in adapting policy to fit a new political reality. Things had "changed overnight. It became necessary to take a [political] stand. A mere religious confession was no longer sufficient. What was now needed was a clear decision for or against the state."⁸² Leaders assured church members that in making this decision no tenets of faith were being sacrificed. Quite to the contrary, argued G. W. Schubert in his report to the 1936 quadrennial General Conference session in San Francisco, it had been "God's plan that there should be from time to time a special connection between his

Adapted from an illustration in the racist Nazi journal *Neues Volk*, entitled "Jüdisches Erbe" (November 1938).



people and the state authorities for the blessing of his children.” Citing examples from Scripture, Schubert referred specifically to Joseph, Nehemiah, and Esther, and noted that the “increasing difficulties that will come with the close of probation [makes] it necessary that the people of God cooperate closely with state authorities in times of distress.”⁸³

The record of this session contains no sign of protest. While privately some Americans advised caution, to German Adventist leaders, at least, it seemed that survival of the organizational structure was more important than some long-held Adventist principle.⁸⁴ Perhaps, since Adventist apocalypticism had so long focused on the enemy in Rome, they may have been blind to the growing menace on the political right.⁸⁵

Collaboration led to the inclusion of the agenda of race hygiene and racism in the German Adventist health message and its justification on biblical grounds. Evidently German Adventist leaders did not see the inherent contradiction with the church’s traditional anti-Darwinism. Much of what the Adventist press published was neither the product of pressure nor of accommodation; articles actually expressed the genuine views of Adventist authors. Eugenics and racial science may have appealed to Adventists because they offered better health through prevention. Moreover, Adventist health care and welfare professionals shared the same training and read the same journals as did their non-Adventist colleagues; that they would come to reflect the views of their academic disciplines should not be surprising.

Nor, if that were the case, would Adventists

be unique among their colleagues in other churches.⁸⁶ The erosion of liberal humanitarian values in the health sciences was extensive, and symbolic of liberalism’s demise, something underway long before Nazi racism took control. As racial science matured and the Nazi state implemented its agenda, time-honored Christian values and taboos faded. Longstanding European anti-Semitism combined with a *völkisch* interpretation of the Bible. This may help explain why in the end there was little compassion for the Jews. When eugenics reached the stage of exterminating the weak, the church was in no position to protest. Once Adventists ventured onto the

slippery slope of collaboration it was difficult to turn back. Thus the church was almost naturally silent on the final solution.

Whether or not church publications reflected what common Adventists believed, they led the reader to conclude that Nazi policies were in the people’s best interest and in keeping with God’s commission to

the church. Willingly or unwillingly, Adventist thought leaders lent their support to Nazi propaganda. As insiders, leaders had the confidence of their people, which made their propaganda more effective than the Nazi Party’s own.

In the end its well-conditioned “right arm” may well have been what impressed the Nazi state and saved the church.⁸⁷ While the state closed down nearly all church presses for the duration of the war, *Gute Gesundheit* continued through 1941, and *Gegenwartsfragen* through the autumn of 1944.⁸⁸ That Adventist periodicals were permitted to run this long

The Adventist press extended the concept of racial purification to include the Jews: “A foreign body in our blood,” “. . . devoid of any morality.” Readers should not “grow weary in the struggle against the enemy of our race, who lives among the nations.”

testifies to the importance of friends in the Propaganda Ministry, and may also prove that they served Nazi purposes well. The distinction of having the longest-lived publications of any church for general distribution, however, was dearly bought. The price

was an Adventist press stripped of virtually all religious content. Moreover, it was a betrayal of Adventist doctrine and Christ's charity. The Nazi episode raises questions about the church's ability to escape the powerful normative forces of society.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Adventist church membership in Nazi Germany was about forty thousand, and the church employed some five hundred pastors and eight hundred staff in its publishing work. See Johannes Hartlapp, "Die Lage der Gemeinschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus" (Predigerseminar Friedensau, unpublished thesis, 1979), p. 92. On Adventist apprehensions, see "An unsere Gemeindeglieder in Deutschland," circular by Wilhelm Mueller, *Der Adventbote* [hereafter AB] (15 August 1933).
2. *Völkisch* nationalists believed that cultural superiority is a function of race. In Nazi usage, the word carried strong anti-Semitic, chauvinistic, and nationalistic connotations.
3. The "right arm of the message" has long been used in Adventist circles as a metaphor for the denomination's medical work. The prophetess of Adventism, Ellen G. White, used the metaphor repeatedly; an example is found in *Christian Service* (Takoma Park, Md., 1947), p. 134. The initial historian of the church, tracing the origins of the church's medical work, refers to it as "that which afterward should be as the right arm and hand to the body in the rapid advancement of the work"; J. N. Loughborough, "Sketches of the Past—No. 129," *Pacific Union Recorder*, 22 August 1912, p. 1.
4. Hitler was a vegetarian, and did not smoke or drink. Rudolf Hess, the deputy of the Führer, supported natural homeopathic medicine. Heinrich Himmler, chief of the SS, believed in an "organic" lifestyle. Julius Streicher, a fanatical anti-Semite, was head of Germany's largest organic health movement. See Robert N. Proctor, *Racial Hygiene: Medicine Under the Nazis* (Cambridge, Mass., 1988), p. 225.
5. Proctor, *Racial Hygiene*, pp. 223-241.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-45.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 17. Eugenics movements flourished also in England, Norway, France, Sweden, the Soviet Union, and the United States; see *ibid.*, pp. 285-286, and Paul Weindling, *Health, Race, and German Politics Between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945* (Cambridge, U.K., 1989), pp. 432-433.
8. Hermann Muckermann, S.J., "Rassenforschung und Volk der Zukunft," in Ernst Klee, ed., *Dokumente zur Euthanasie* (Frankfurt, Germany, 1992), p. 50. Muckermann was director of the Department of Eugenics at the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Genetics, and Eugenics in Berlin-Dahlem. In the wake of World War I, and particularly during the Great Depression, eugenics offered a means of easing overcrowded conditions and cutting costs, which led to demands for the primacy of biology in social policy. See Weindling, p. 445 and Michael Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance: Euthanasia in Germany, 1900-1945* (Cambridge, U.K., 1994), pp. 11-42.
9. Klee, *Dokumente*, p. 42.
10. Joseph Mayer, *Gesetzliche Unfruchtbarmachung Geisteskranker* (Freiburg, Germany, 1927); excerpts reprinted in Klee, pp. 40-46. Mayer was a Catholic moral theologian.
11. In a speech of 28 June 1933 which was cited in the Adventist health journal, Nazi Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick described the genetic uplifting of the German race as the chief task of the Nazi government: *Gute Gesundheit* [hereafter GG] (December 1935), p. 179. Rudolf Hess defined National Socialism as "nothing but applied biology"; quoted in Robert Jay Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), p. 31.
12. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston, Mass., 1943), pp. 403-404.
13. For a listing of other laws, see Proctor, p. 103.
14. Adolf Minck, "Reformation," *Jugend-Leistern* [hereafter JL] (April 1933).
15. Eberhard Fischdick, *Helfende Hände: Die Geschichte des Advent-Wohlfahrtswerkes* (Darmstadt, Germany, 1988), pp. 38-40. On Jost's activities, see also Roland Blaich, "Selling Nazi Germany Abroad: The Case of Hulda Jost," *Journal of Church and State* 35 (Autumn 1993), pp. 807-830.
16. *AB* (1 November 1933), p. 327; and *AB* (1 September 1933), p. 261.
17. Directives for the AWW, 16 July 1934. Ungeordnet (Bestand Hannover). Archiv für Europäische Adventgeschichte [hereafter AEA], Darmstadt, Germany; and Fischdick, p. 45. Jost was responsible to the government; see *AB* (1 April 1934), p. 103; and Supplement to *AB* (15 October 1934), 4 pp.
18. *AB* (4 April 1934).
19. Among her contacts in the Propaganda Ministry were Dr. Curt R. Thomalla, head of its Health and Social Services section and also the author of several films on eugenics; see Weindling, pp. 380, 412. Judging from Jost's reports about the often informal nature of their meetings, Jost and Thomalla were probably friends. Jost also developed a close relationship with Reichsleiter Erich Hilgenfeld. In the judgment of German Adventist leadership, the AWW was now under the protection of the government; G. W. Schubert to C. H. Watson, 29 July 1934, RG11 (Presidential) 1934-1936—Schubert, G. W., archives of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists [hereafter GC], Silver Spring, Maryland. For a discussion of several instances where Jost's connections to Nazi leaders proved invaluable to the church, see Blaich, "Selling Nazi Germany," pp. 820-825.
20. *AB* (1 November 1933), p. 329.
21. "Berlin, Ende August 1933," special four-page issue of *AB*. The "Guidelines for Evaluating Genetic Health" of 18 July 1940 is an example of how this principle was formalized. In

March 1941, rules governing appropriations for children stated: "The aim of this population policy is to strengthen the German people. Therefore, *considerations of charity and social welfare must be avoided* in decisions on granting or refusing children's allowances" (emphasis added); cited in Götz Aly, "Medicine Against the Useless," in Götz Aly, Peter Chroust, and Christian Pross, *Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene* (Baltimore, Md., 1994), p. 52.

22. Hulda Jost, "Was tun die Adventisten in der Wohlfahrtspflege? Jahresbericht für 1935," RKM 51.01, No. 23387. Bundesarchiv, Abteilung Potsdam [hereafter BA Potsdam].

23. *Ibid.*, No. 00059-60; and Hulda Jost, "Was tun die Adventisten in der Wohlfahrtspflege? Jahresbericht für 1936/37."

24. Hulda Jost, "Winterhilfswerk 1935-1936," in *AB* (15 November 1935), pp. 346-348.

25. Otto Brozio, "Volksgemeinschaft," *Herold der Wahrheit* [hereafter *HW*], 55, no. 8 (1938), p. 117.

26. For a summary of Jost's work and thought, see Johannes Hartlapp, "Die Lage," pp. 52-57.

27. Other acquaintances were King Boris III of Bulgaria, Czech president Thomas G. Masaryk, and Lady Aberdeen; Fischdick, p. 46; Blaich, "Selling Nazi Germany," p. 824; and Hartlapp, p. 56, n. 4.

28. Friedrich Mahlo, Propaganda Ministry to Reich Ministry of the Interior, 23 July 1938. RKM 51.01/23388, No. 00062, BA Potsdam. Mahlo certified that the denomination "affirmed the National Socialist state and served it as best it could."

29. Wilhelm Mueller, "Berlin, Ende August 1933," *AEA*, U1-2, No. 0113.

30. W. Edener, "Volksfeind Alkohol," *AB* (15 February 1935), p. 45.

31. This was particularly the case during 1939, the "Year of Healthful Living"; *GG* (March 1939), p. 34.

32. Report by W. Luehr at the presidents' convention of the MED, 31 May to 5 June 1939, *AEA*, U1-2, No. 0075.

33. *GG* (December 1937), p. 188.

34. "Bericht über die Reichstagung der Deutschen Lebensreformbewegung," *GG* (October 1938), pp. 158-159.

35. E. Schneider, "Arbeitswille und Arbeitskraft: Die Waffen der inneren Front," *GG* (June 1940), p. 43.

36. *GG* (December 1941), p. 95.

37. "Ein Volksfeind," *Gegenwartsfragen* [hereafter *GF*] (January-February 1939), p. 14.

38. "Du und der Krieg," *GF* (July-August 1942), pp. 53-54; and *GG* (December 1935), p. 189.

39. In 1932 at least one Adventist journal, *Kirche und Staat* (*Church and State*), still rejected the principle of racism and race hygiene. "Not *völkisch* imperatives, a return to the concept of blood [*Besinnung aufs Blut*], not racial hygiene and eugenics will bring the hoped-for salvation," it cautioned; *Kirche und Staat* [hereafter *KS*] (April 1932), p. 55. See also Max Busch: "Here is the idea of self redemption through race and blood, which is in crass contradiction to redemption through Christ"; "Völkische Weltanschauung," *KS* (February 1932), p. 25. The last implied rejection of the racial state appeared in *Kirche und Staat* in March 1933. Without comment it reprinted the text of the Altona Confession of January 1933, a declaration of concern and protest by Lutheran pastors: "Ein mutiges Wort in ernster Zeit." *KS* (March 1933),

pp. 43-44. The journal ceased publication after the next issue, perhaps the price paid for an indiscretion.

40. "Volk und Staat," *GF* (December 1933), pp. 179-181.

41. "Heimat und Volkstum," *JL* (July 1933).

42. W. Leschowsky, "Judas Fluch," *AB* (1 April 1938), pp. 102-104. "God had already stigmatized Abraham's sin against the blood, which he committed in his union with the Egyptian Hagar. It was then that [God] taught him the principles of the purity of blood."

43. *AB* (1 April 1938), p. 103.

44. See, for example, "Die kulturgeschichtliche Aufgabe der Rassen und Völker," *GF* (August 1934), pp. 120-122; for examples from history of the destruction of nations which ignored the laws of nature, see Hulda Jost, "Was tun die Adventisten in der Wohlfahrtspflege? Jahresbericht für 1935," p. 32, *AEA*, B9-7.

45. S. R. D. Haeseler, "Vorwärts in der umgekehrten Richtung," *AB* (15 January 1934), p. 18. Otto Brozio, the leader of Adventist welfare after Jost's death in 1938, called the Nazi revolution "the greatest of all time" because it made the laws of heredity the basis of its ethnic life. A blocked quote from Hitler on the significance of blood served to reinforce his argument; in "Der Tätigkeitsbericht des Adventwohlfahrtswerkes," *AB* (15 August 1938), pp. 250-251.

46. Willy Brehm, "Das Heimatgebiet der nordischen Rasse durch Geburtenrückgang im Kern bedroht," *GG* (May 1937), p. 69. For other articles on population policy see *GG* (September 1938), p. 133; and *GF* (March 1936).

47. E. Schneider, "Volk, Kraft und Gesundheit im Kriege," *GG* (May 1941), p. 35. Schneider argued that "The higher the health standard of a race, the higher its strength, which is best and most reliably evidenced in a high birth rate [*Kinderreichtum*]." For other articles on the role of genetics in the survival of a fit race, see "Familie und Staat," *GF* (February 1934); and *GG* (May 1935), p. 74-75.

48. The gruesome inhumanity sanctioned by this law is amply detailed in Klee, pp. 60-325; Proctor, pp. 177-222; Burleigh, pp. 43-161, 220-266; Weindling, pp. 522-574; Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1995), pp. 23-186; and Aly, pp. 22-98.

49. A. von Rohden, "Verstößt das Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses gegen das Gebot der Nächstenliebe? [Does the Law for the Prevention of Genetically Defect Progeny Violate the Commandment to Love One's Neighbor?]," *JL* (February 1934), p. 20.

50. *GG* (October 1933), p. 147.

51. *GF* (January 1934), p. 8; *GF* (November 1933), pp. 170-172; and *GG* (October 1933), pp. 146-147.

52. *GF* (January 1934), p. 8.

53. "Das soziale Bleigewicht der Minderwertigen [The Inferior: A Social Millstone]," *GG* (December 1934), pp. 170-171; see also "Gesunde Eltern—gesunde Kinder," *AB* (15 April 1934), p. 122.

54. "Wohnsiedlungen, Bevölkerungspolitik und Rassenhygiene," *GG* (May 1935), p. 74.

55. One example is her lecture, "Die Mutter und das Erbgut innerhalb der Familie als Keimzelle des Staates," presented to the convention of the German Women's League in Berlin: Jost, "Was tun die Adventisten in der Wohlfahrtspflege, Jahresbericht für 1934/1935," p. 19. For other lectures, see

Jost, report to Gospel Workers Meeting at Friedensau, 7 June 1934, GC, RG21 (SDA Documents—General); and Jost, “Was tun die Adventisten in der Wohlfahrtspflege? Tätigkeitsbericht 1. Januar bis 31. Dezember 1935,” p. 9; RKM 51.01/23387, BA Potsdam.

56. *GF* (January 1934), pp. 8-10.

57. “Kinderamut” and “Gesunde Eltern, gesunde Kinder,” *AB* (15 April 1934), pp. 122-123; also, “Familienschicksal ist Volksschicksal,” *AB* (15 May 1934), p. 161.

58. The author of one article wrote: “Scientific research in genetics and knowledge of the laws of inheritance are of utmost importance in our struggle for the purity of our race.” Research on twins was considered particularly useful; “Zwillingsforschung und Erblehre,” *GG*, (April 1939), pp. 51-53.

59. *GF* (September 1933), pp. 124-125.

60. “Warum Sippenforschung?” *GF* (May-June 1939), pp. 40-41.

61. “Rassenlehre und Diakonie,” *GF* (May-June 1939), pp. 36-37.

62. “It is indeed true that the German *Volk* has been deceived by Jews and Jesuits, and still is led around by the nose like a fool by these international enemies of Germanism”; “The Vatican’s Great Power Politics Among States,” *KS* 2 (1923), pp. 19-21.

63. D. [Fritz Daniel, the editor of the journal?], “Zwischen den Nationen,” *GF* (July-August 1943).

64. *AB* (1 November 1937), p. 327; and *HW* (February 1939), p. 26.

65. *AB* (1 February 1939), p. 34.

66. *AB* (15 February 1935), p. 59.

67. Published statements did not necessarily reflect the views of church members. For example L. H. Christian, a vice president of the General Conference on visit to Germany, reported considerable restiveness among members over the policy of collaboration with the state; see GC, RG2/General Conference Officers, 23 July 1939. See also Wilhelm Mueller’s circular of August 1933, which takes great pains to justify the new policy; AEA, U1-2, No. 0113.

68. Emil Gugel, “Evangelium, Rassenfrage und christliche Mission,” *HW* (February 1937), p. 23.

69. W. Ising to McElhany and Nelson, 2 July 1937, GC, RG21/1937—Central Europe. See also action by the Central European Division Committee, 23 June 1937, GC, RG21/Special Files, Central European Division, 1937 FLD.

70. Hulda Jost to Gestapo, Berlin, 10 December 1935, GC, RG11 (Presidential) 1934-1936—Schubert, G. W.

71. *Ibid.* See also Hulda Jost, “Was tun die Adventisten in der Wohlfahrtspflege, Jahresbericht für 1935,” p. 12, RKM 51.01/23387, BA Potsdam.

72. Proctor, p. 87.

73. The original quote reads as follows: “Wir wissen, was notwendig ist, um das deutsche Volk für alle Zeit gegen das Judentum zu schützen. Für falsches Mitleid ist kein Platz; denn über Nacht könnte sonst der Jude sein wahres Gesicht hervorkehren und mitleidslos seine Rachegefühle am deutschen Volke auslassen. Es gibt auch so etwas wie eine seelische Rassenschande. Sie ist nicht weniger verabscheuenswürdig als die körperliche. Denn jede Form des Mitgeföhls, und sei es auch nur vorübergehend und auf

eine einzelne Person bezogen, ist eine seelische Kräftevergeudung. Das Schicksal des Juden vollzieht sich nach den Gesetzen einer Gerechtigkeit, die nach kleinlichen Empfindungen nicht fragt und dem Wohle der Menschheit unbestechlich dient. Auch für Juda ist Weltgeschichte Weltgericht.” See “Ahasver: Ein Blick in das Verbrecheralbum,” *Neues Volk* (December 1941), p. 9. *Neues Volk* may be found in the Bundesarchiv Koblenz, NSD17/1-1941.

74. Among the most notable recent studies are those by Klee, Proctor, Burleigh, Weindling, and Aly; see note 48.

75. Proctor, p. 7.

76. See Lifton, pp. 90-95; and Ernst C. Helmreich, *The German Churches Under Hitler* (Detroit, Mich., 1978), pp. 305-315.

77. “Zionswächter” (editorial), *AB* (1 April 1934).

78. G. W. Schubert to C. H. Watson, 5 January 1936, (Basel), GC, RG11/1936(I)—Schubert, G. W. To forestall a Nazi takeover, the church privatized its publishing house.

79. Jost to Gestapo, Berlin, 10 December 1935, GC, RG 21/1936—Central Europe.

80. G. W. Schubert to C. H. Watson, 5 January 1936, GC, RG11/1936(I)—Schubert, G. W.

81. When charged with apostasy in 1945 by American Adventist leaders, Adolf Minck, then president of the German denomination, claimed the policy of flexibility was not apostasy but mere “detouring” around an obstacle; D. G. Rose to J. L. McElhany, 5 April 1948, GC, RG 21/Documents: 1920s-1950s—Central and Northern Europe.

82. Wilhelm Mueller, circular, August 1933, AEA, U1-2, No. 0113.

83. 1936 General Conference Report No. 8, 1936; “The Central European Division,” *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, 5 June 1936, pp. 168-170.

84. Louise Kleuser, translator during Jost’s speaking tour in the United States, tells of several leaders who voiced concern, adding that “On some points, principle must be above expediency”; Kleuser to J. L. McElhany, 18 May 1936, GC, RG11/1936(II)—Jost, H.

85. Adventists were “too narrowly informed,” and had not considered the “broad currents of time and thought,” according to Fritz Holl, a retired church administrator, in an interview of 28 July 1986.

86. Klee, pp. 36-59.

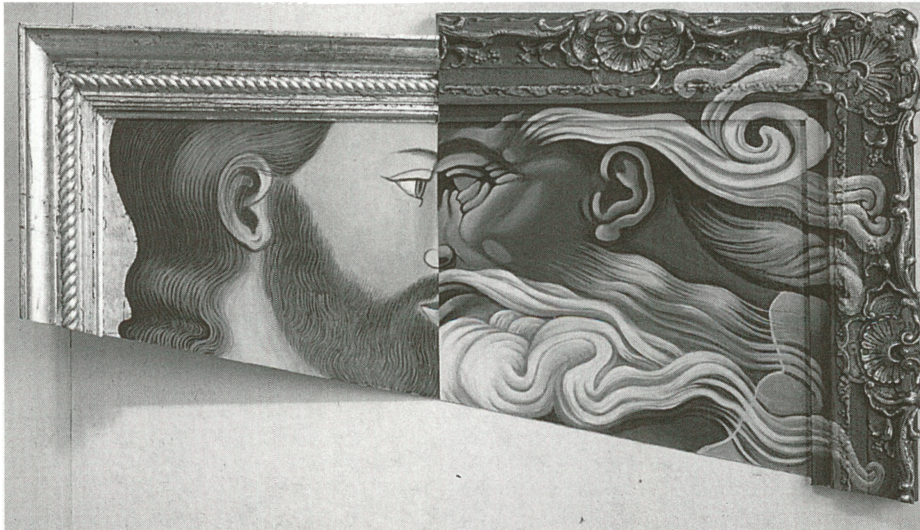
87. G. W. Schubert described Hulda Jost as a modern-day Esther who had been called to save the church; on Jost’s role, see Fischdick, pp. 41-62. “The only reason why the sect has not been the target of [Gestapo] measures” was that it had proven “useful in the area of welfare work”; Gestapo (Müller) to Haugg, 1 October 1940, RKM 51.01/23388, No. 00177, BA Potsdam. By contrast, the schismatic Reform Adventists, who refused to either conform or collaborate, were outlawed in 1936 and subjected to severe persecution. Adventists carefully distanced themselves from the “Reformers,” denying them refuge. See Roland Blaich, “Religion Under National Socialism: The Case of the German Adventist Church,” *Central European History* 26 (3), p. 267 n. 45.

88. John S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches* (New York, 1968), p. 258. The last issue of *Gegenwartsfragen* appeared 30 September 1944; *Gute Gesundheit* ceased with the December 1941 issue.

Art/



"Raphael/Michelangelo"—32" x 52" x 6"—acrylic on canvas and wood



"Giotto/Michelangelo"—25" x 44" x 8"—acrylic on canvas and wood

The Art . . .

A typical example of the paintings in my recent series of works consists of a portion of an artist's self-portrait (e.g., Leonardo) juxtaposed with the corresponding opposite half of one of his female subject's faces (Mona Lisa). While the distinction of the two halves is obvious due to the impossibility of perfect alignment or coloration, the viewer's brain, and not the eye, resolves these differences. Despite the irony of the combined image, the resultant face maintains the attributes and even the identity of each of the component halves. It has even been suggested that the artist somehow paints his own self-portrait anytime he conjures up a fictitious personage. An example is the *MonaLeo* (Leonardo).

These works also reveal an intense interest in the picture frame and the sculptural profile at the exposed cross-section.

—Greg Constantine

Artists



"Mask/Picasso"—37" x 52" x 7"—acrylic on canvas and wood



"Vermeer/Ingres"—36" x 52" x 5"—oil and acrylic on canvas and wood

. . . The Artist

Greg Constantine has taught painting, drawing, and art history at Andrews University for 33 years. He began exhibiting nationally in 1969, and since 1975 has had numerous one-man shows, including 14 in New York City. Constantine received particular national attention for his drawings of famous artists coming to well-known American cities. Exhibited in New York, Los Angeles, Frankfurt, and Chicago, the drawings were published by Alfred A. Knopf and the *Chicago Review of Books* as *Vincent van Gogh Visits New York* 1983, *Leonardo Visits Los Angeles* 1985, and *Picasso Visits Chicago* 1986.

A recent series deals with famous artists' self-portraits, which become curiously schizophrenic when sliced. These led to the present series of juxtapositions of artists and artists with their famous subjects.

—The Editors



The Methodist Connection to Adventism

Adventism's connection to the Wesleyan tradition in America.

by A. Gregory Schneider

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS ARE HEIRS OF THE Wesleyan tradition in America. Ellen White was a Methodist before she was a Millerite. Millerites and Seventh-day Adventists, furthermore, came into being at a time when John Wesley's American Methodist movement so dominated American Protestantism that the time period has come to be known as "the Methodist Age" in American church history.¹ No antebellum Protestant movement in America escaped Methodist influence. The exact nature of Methodist influence on Adventism and the concrete historical connections by which it was exerted have not been much researched. What follows does not trace firm lines of historical causation, then, but only notes similarities between Methodism and Adventism.²

A. Gregory Schneider, a graduate of Columbia Union College, received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago under Martin E. Marty. He is professor of behavioral science at Pacific Union College. Schneider won a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to write his highly acclaimed book, *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism* (Indiana University Press, 1993).

Formal Organization

One of the most obvious similarities is hierarchy. They had (and have) bishops and conferences; we have presidents and conferences. "Bishop" might suggest an all-too-high view of the church and its officials to Adventists leery of papist influence. The history of Methodism should lay most such suspicions to rest, however. The early Methodists did not have much regard for claims of either Roman Catholics or Anglicans to sacerdotal forms of authority like apostolic succession. John Wesley, in fact, acted directly contrary to Anglican tradition and policy in ordaining the first Methodist missionaries to the American colonies without himself having apostolic authority. American Methodist preachers thereafter generally shrugged off Anglican or Episcopalian reproaches about their lack of apostolic succession.

The early Methodist view of the church prefigured what would become the effective Adventist view, whatever our doctrinal state-

ments may say. Church forms and structures in both traditions exist for pragmatic, instrumental purposes, not because they conform to precedents either of Scripture or of tradition. Indeed, a breezy, popular account of American Methodist history captured a basic element in the spirit of Methodism in its title: "Organizing to Beat the Devil." The point of the church was to spread the gospel, save sinners, and thus beat the devil. Whatever means was effective in serving that goal was likely to meet with the early Methodists' approval. Thus they created what, from today's perspective, might be called a prototype of the traveling sales corporation. In their eyes, however, it had the form of prophetic inspiration, specifically the form of Ezekiel's vision of wheels within wheels:

The *great iron wheel* in the system is *itineracy* [sic], and truly it grinds some of us most tremendously; the *brazen wheel*, attached and kept in motion by the former, is the *local ministry*; the *silver wheel*, the *class leaders*; the *golden wheel*, the *doctrine and discipline of the church*, in full and successful operation. . . . Let us carefully note the admirable and astounding movements of this wonderful machine. You will perceive there are "wheels within wheels." First, there is the great outer wheel of episcopacy, which accomplishes its entire revolution *once in four years*. To this there are attached *twenty-eight smaller wheels*, styled *annual conferences*, moving round *once a year*; to these are attached *one hundred wheels*, designated *presiding elders*, moving *twelve hundred other wheels*, termed *quarterly conferences*, every *three months*; to these are attached *four thousand wheels*, styled *travelling preachers*, moving round *once a month*, and communicating motion to *thirty thousand wheels*, called *class leaders*, moving round *once a week*, and who, in turn, being attached to between *seven and eight hundred thousand wheels*, called *members*, give a sufficient impulse to whirl them round *every day*. O, sir, what a machine is this! This is the machine of which Archimedes only dreamed; this is the machine destined, under God, to *move the world, to turn it upside down!*³

To denizens of the late 20th century, too well acquainted with the frustrations of bu-

reaucocracy, Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones might seem a more appropriate trope for such an organization. But in the half century after the close of the American Revolutionary War, when Methodism was indeed turning parts of the nation upside down, bureaucracy was not yet threatening to turn the Holy Spirit into a ghost in the machine.

Experimental Religion

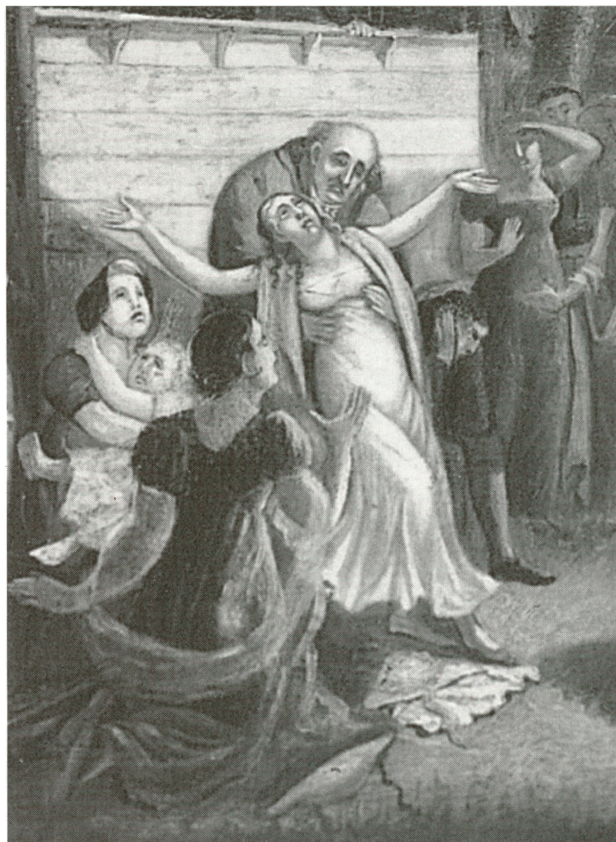
It was, after all, a salvation machine. It existed for the purpose of getting more and more people to experience a particular crisis of thought and feeling, a crisis called conversion, or the new birth. The early Methodist word for the whole process leading to conversion was "experimental religion," a phrase found occasionally also in the writings of Ellen White.⁴ Methodism was very much a religion of the heart. Millerism and early Seventh-day Adventism were also religions of the heart. Their carefully calculated prophetic schemes and doctrinal distinctives were important largely because of their power to move people into heartfelt religious experience and fellowship. So heartfelt, indeed, that early Advent believers' emotional demonstrations in their meetings earned them a reputation for disorderly conduct and fanaticism.⁵ In similar manner, American Methodists a few decades earlier had wept and shouted together and earned epithets like "shouting Methodist."

The weeping and shouting were inherent in the stages by which believers came to conversion. Every human being, according to general evangelical Christian understandings, was dead in trespasses and sins and thus bound for eternal death. This pre-religious state was characterized by spiritual dullness and disinterest in religious topics or activities. The grace of God, however, moved on all human hearts to awaken them to their dying condition. John Wesley's term for this grace was "prevenient"

or “preventing” grace.⁶ Such grace, in the first stage of experimental religion, created a restless dissatisfaction with one’s current way of life and a quest for deeper knowledge of the gospel that would change the heart. This stage was called “awakening.”

Awakening deepened into “conviction” as the quest continued. Wesley’s rules stated that there was only one condition required for joining the Methodist societies: “a desire to flee the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins.”⁷ New members were officially on probation, however, and expected to demonstrate their desire to be saved by keeping the societies’ rules. Such rules included giving up worldly practices like dancing, card-playing, and drinking “spiritous liquors.” They also required spiritual practices like private and family prayer, reading Scripture, attending preaching, prayer meeting, and other “exercises.” The church held, said one commentator on its rules, that those who were not

Adapted from a detail of Alexander Rider’s “The Campmeeting”



converted when they joined the society would soon come to the blessing as they walked in the way of obedience. In a canny understanding of human social psychology, the early Methodists saw that required actions often lead to desired feelings.

Indeed, Methodist probationers usually found that trying to act like a Christian convinced them that they were possessed of the carnal mind that was at enmity with God, that their strivings “in the flesh” could not please Him (Romans 8:7, 8). The rebelliousness they felt as they strove to keep the requirements of the societies, and their failures, made them *feel* the truth they had been taught about being guilty of sin, polluted by it, and therefore justly condemned by God. Being convicted of one’s sins naturally caused sorrow and mourning over these sins, and terror at the prospect of being lost forever. Kentucky frontier settler Jacob Young could no longer speak when he was convicted of his sins. He wept uncontrollably and fell to the floor. He regained some of his strength and then wandered for hours alone in the woods, “moaning like a dove that had lost his mate.”⁸

Such despair was but the darkness before morning, however. The normative pattern of experimental religion was captured perfectly by the psalmist:

“For his anger endureth but a moment,
in his favour is life;
weeping may endure for a night,
but joy cometh in the morning” (Psalm 30:5, KJV).

For Jacob Young the joy of the morning came at about midnight. It was then that “God, in mercy, lifted up the light of his countenance upon me, and I was translated from the power of darkness into the Kingdom of God’s dear son, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”⁹ This was “conversion,” the stage of experimental religion in which prevenient grace transmuted into justifying and converting grace. The sorrow, despair, and terror of

conviction, by their very intensity, cried out for a transformation into an opposite condition where an ecstasy of joy led to peace, hope, and grateful love. Metaphors of depths leading to heights, heaviness to lightness, and especially darkness to light pervade believers' accounts of their religious experience. Jacob Young rose early after his nighttime conversion and climbed up to a "high eminence," where he faced east: "The morning was cold, clear, and beautifully bright . . . the earth and heavens appeared new—reminding me of the 'new heavens and new earth' wherein dwelleth righteousness."¹⁰

Young's despair had never been unalloyed by hope. His Christian friends had prayed for him and with him all through his crisis. The Bible was full of promises of God's mercy and love and, most important, testified to the crucified and risen Christ who made it possible to escape condemnation and be adopted as a child of God. All this became reality by the exercise of faith, an action of the heart that claimed the promises of God and the grace of Christ for the individual who exercised it. Faith enabled believers to see, feel, and know that their guilt was removed, that they were pardoned rather than condemned, and that their pollution was cleansed sufficiently to avoid eternal death. A whole new set of affections took possession of heart and soul. Most significant and distinctive for Methodists was the description in Romans 8:16 of the feeling of being adopted as God's child: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Dubbed the "witness of the Spirit," this persisting sense of God's adoption was what believers referred to when they spoke of getting, retaining, or, sometimes, losing the "comforts of religion."

Retaining the comforts of religion in this sense, however, was never sufficient for devout Methodists. They eagerly heeded John Wesley's call to "go on to perfection." The

grace that brought the sinner from awakening through conviction and conversion continued to work upon the believer to bring him or her to sanctification. Sanctification cleansed the soul of such impure motives as pride, vanity, envy, anger, and lust. It also so filled the believer with love that he or she was enabled to love God with the whole heart. This was what Wesley meant by perfection. It was a distinctive doctrine and experience for the early Methodists. Usually a long process of spiritual struggle led up to it, just as an awakened sinner went through a process of seeking before the crisis of conversion. The experience of perfect love was, however, a discrete moment in religious experience that resembled conversion in structure and even in intensity.

Thus an anonymous contributor to a Methodist weekly paper recounted how she "contended hard and long" for the right degree of faith that would enable her to maintain the "resignation, meekness, fortitude, and patience" required by a full Christian experience. Her persevering prayer, however, issued only

Adapted from "The Circuit Preacher," an illustration from the cover of *Harper's Weekly*, October 12, 1867



in a desolate sense that God was hiding his face from her, and rightly so, she felt. She then resolved to wait patiently until God restored “the joys of His salvation.” This was the turning point. She felt a change of mind in which the impulses of her fallen nature seemed to have fled. A peace possessed her soul, a peace that deepened for two weeks and culminated in a season of communion with God. “Solemn awe and humble love” filled her whole soul, and “the Spirit and the Word” showed her that the blood of Christ had cleansed her from all unrighteousness. Her spirit soared “as on eagle’s wings.”¹¹

This kind of sanctification experience accented right feeling and motive more than right performance. To be sure, Methodists sought perfection not merely for the ecstasy of the experience, but also because it made them more useful in God’s service. They did not, however, use very much of the language that suggested a capacity to keep perfectly the law of God. This more law-and-performance version of perfectionism may be seen as the New England or Puritan translation of Wesleyan influence, a translation made widely influential by Presbyterian revivalist Charles G. Finney and his followers. Seventh-day Adventism seems to have followed Finney’s lead and thus filtered Wesleyan influence through its Yankee inclinations. In any case, it seems to me that the early writings of Ellen White and later devotional writings like *Steps to Christ* clearly reflect the structure and sensibilities of experimental religion as promoted by early American Methodists.

Adventism followed Finney’s lead in filtering Wesleyan influence through Yankee inclinations. . . . The early writings of Ellen White and her later, devotional works like Steps to Christ clearly reflect the structure and sensibilities of experimental religion promoted by early American Methodists.

More broadly, the experimental religion so widely popularized by Methodist evangelism is the root of our contemporary insistence that Christianity is essentially a “personal relationship with Jesus.” As devoted as Adventism has been to correct doctrine and right behavior, it has also always had the seeds of a pietist devotionism that insists everyone must know God as his or her own present and precious Saviour. Every generation of young Adventists, it seems, “discovers” that religion is not primarily law and doctrine but rather a “relationship,” and every generation imagines that they are the first in a long time to come to this realization. But

from at least the time that John Wesley felt his heart “strangely warmed” in 18th-century England, the idea of a personal relationship with God has been available to ever-widening circles of Anglo-American Protestants. Adventism is but one movement that has appropriated the idea and taught, or driven, its members to pursue the reality.

Pervading and driving the entire process of experimental religion was a psychological and spiritual pattern that may have eluded many an Adventist who has sought a Christian experience by following Mrs. White’s Wesleyan lead. I have dubbed this pattern “the way of the cross” in my work on American Methodism. It was a tenacious disposition to expect affliction to yield comfort, sorrow to bring joy, pain to lead to spiritual pleasure, depression to give way to exultation, and discouragement to rebound in renewed courage. “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the

morning." The affliction, pain, depression, and discouragement were all qualities of the natural self. The joy always belonged to the new self in Christ. The way of the cross was a lifelong process of dying to self and living in Christ. "Strange as it is, it is very true," marveled one early believer, "the lower we sink, the higher we rise."¹²

So tenacious was this disposition to rise high upon sinking low that it could lead to some bizarre results. Renowned Ohio preacher James B. Finley, for instance, wrote to his brother John of some personal distress. In a return letter John acknowledged his brother's trying circumstances, but then reported how his thoughts turned to their Saviour's trials on earth and the promise that God will always provide. Contemplation of the Saviour who had no place to lay his head soon led John to burst into a flood of tears because he was "filled with that love which melts the heart and sweetens all the sorrows of life." A visiting neighbor caught the spirit of John's sweet sorrow and the two of them together "had a glorious time of praising a precious bleeding Saviour."¹³ Surviving records do not inform us how James felt about his tale of woe being the occasion for his brother's "glorious time."

The Methods

Methodism taught people to act and feel the way of the cross through the methods of revivalism. The early 19th-century camp meeting, for instance, was a Methodist distinctive. The faithful from a wide region would gather to carve a holy campground out of a woods or meadow, pitching their tents around an enclosure for meetings. Morning and evening the preachers sought to proclaim the truths of experimental religion in a manner that would stir up the feelings of the congregation and create a collective contagion for salvation. Every service included a call to

those awakened or convicted through the preaching to come forward and kneel in an enclosure in front of the preachers' stand. There they would pray for salvation and be prayed for by those already converted, often members of their families or close friends.

Circuit preachers held these "altar calls" in churches too, when churches were available. Sometimes there would be only a cabin or general-purpose meetinghouse with benches. The preachers would still issue the call and set out a bench or two at the front. These benches became known as the "mourners' bench" because those convicted of their sins but not yet converted would sit on them and mourn over their sins and their lost condition. In all these settings, social pressure and emotional contagion worked powerfully to induce the appropriate feelings and actions in those attending.

These meetings worked, however, because their social and emotional dynamics were woven into the ongoing life of the congregations that hosted the camp meetings and preaching services. Every member of a Methodist "society" as the early congregations were called, was expected to attend "class-meeting" weekly. Persistent non-attendance was grounds from expulsion. Class-meetings were smaller groups, ideally of 12, usually two or three times that number, that met to keep one another accountable to the rules of the society and to share religious experience. Each class had a leader, appointed by the circuit preacher, who was expected at every meeting to inquire into each member's keeping of the rules and into the experience of God working in the members' lives.

The questioning could be uncomfortably close and personal. Indeed, published guidelines for class leaders encouraged it to be so. Suggested questions about outward matters asked whether members drank or gambled, whether they prayed in secret or in their families. Questions about inward matters asked

how members had sinned or been tempted, whether they felt forgiveness of their sins, whether they had the witness of the Spirit or not, or whether they desired to be told of their faults.¹⁴

The point of these exercises was to unify the believers around the motives, feelings, and actions of experimental religion. They were designed also to exclude all motives from individual hearts and all persons from their corporate fellowship that would interfere with following the way of the cross. The meetings were closed to all non-members except those "interested persons" who had not experienced them before.

Those who could not adjust to these methods usually excluded themselves. A tale told by some southern Methodists depicted an "interested person" who stayed to experience his first class-meeting in a very crowded cabin. As the inquiry progressed from person to person, the visitor became visibly agitated and rose to leave. The way to the door was blocked by the crowd, however, so he repaired to the hearth and scrambled up the chimney onto the roof. Hatless and sooty, he leaped down to his horse, galloped for home, and burst breathless into his house. His startled wife asked if Indians were chasing him. "Worse than Indians!" he replied.¹⁵

It is, perhaps, easier for the modern reader to understand how such exercises excluded people than it is to see how they unified them. But the class-meeting became the occasion for intense and powerful fellowship as members shared the joys and sorrows of their religious strivings. Members learned how to testify to

the workings of God in their hearts and these testimonies became powerful means of propagating the gospel of experimental religion. Testimony confirmed believers in the way of the cross and induced in their unconverted hearers the emotional patterns of the way.

Indeed, the policy of meeting behind closed doors attracted a good deal of curiosity. It was an age when modern norms of privacy were not well established and people did not feel compelled, when confronted with novelties happening in private homes, to mind their own business. Methodist laity capitalized on the curiosity by holding prayer meetings and

preaching services and inviting the seekers of social novelty to attend. At the end of these public services, they asked all non-members to leave while they held their class-meetings. The weeping and shouting and praising the Lord that then went on inside often moved those outside to want in. Thus one Benjamin Webb, who later became a circuit preacher, experienced conviction

of sin while lingering outside on the porch of house from which he and his friends had been excluded while the believers held their class. He and his friends cried out for mercy so loudly that the class leader opened the doors. Four of them joined the church that night.¹⁶

Class-meetings were also the seedbed for circuit preachers. In the early years of Methodism veteran preachers picked promising young men who could testify powerfully and move their hearers in class-meeting. Novice preachers were told that if they froze and forgot their sermon outlines, they should just

Many Adventist readers may recognize some of the methods of Methodism in their memories of evangelistic campaigns or weeks of prayer. Ellen White and her readers learned to see family life through the revivalistic ethos shaped by American Methodism.

tell their experience. A good story of personal religious experience was the essence of Methodism's appeal and its most commonly used device for spiritual formation.

This preference for the good story is another instance of the pragmatic bent Methodism shares with Adventism. It has as its corollary a certain disdain for intellectual rigor and for the pursuit of truth for its own sake apart from its personal impact or application. Peter Cartwright, the most renowned, if not the most typical of Methodist circuit-riders in the Ohio Valley, illustrated these attitudes in a tale he told of "a fresh, green, live Yankee" preacher with a diploma from back East. This educated young man, probably a Presbyterian or Congregationalist, looked down on frontier Methodist preachers like Cartwright who got their training mostly on the job. Nevertheless, or perhaps because of this supercilious attitude, Cartwright invited the Yankee to preach one night in a large frame building that was unplastered. The wind blew; the candles flared and gave bad light. The young preacher, unskilled with the extemporaneous preaching style of the frontier, had an awkward time reading his prepared manuscript. After about half an hour, observed Cartwright, "the great blessing came: he closed." Cartwright rescued the situation by delivering a strong exhortation in the style the congregation was accustomed to. He set out a mourners' bench and invited people to come, which they did in large numbers. One mourner was a large 230-pound man who was crying aloud for mercy, making a noise as big as himself. The young preacher, physically a slight man, tapped the large mourner on the shoulder and said, "Be composed, be composed."

Cartwright, exasperated that the little Yankee had not learned a lesson from his sermon's failure, crowded his way to the convicted man and shouted, "Pray on, brother; pray on, brother; there's no composure in hell or dam-

nation."

Again the little preacher soothed, "Be composed; be composed, brother."

Again Cartwright shouted, "Pray on, brother; pray on, brother; there is no composure in hell."

Then he turned to some other people crowding about and asked them to clear a way, intending to get this mourner away from the educated little preacher who understood so little. Just as Cartwright turned, however, the big mourner shouted, "Glory to God!" The Lord had converted him and spoken peace to his soul. In an ecstasy of joy he reached out to take Cartwright in his arms. Two men were in the way, however, so the big new convert wheeled around and swept the little Yankee preacher off his feet, up high into the air. Then he jumped from bench to bench, knocking people right and left as he heedlessly celebrated his deliverance. The little preacher apparently wished a deliverance of a different sort. Arms and legs splayed wide, he appeared to Cartwright to be expecting his neck to be broken any moment. "O! how I desired to be near this preacher at that moment," laughed Cartwright, "and tap him on the shoulder, and say, 'Be composed; be composed, brother!'"

The Cultural Archetype: Haven in a Heartless World

Methodism grew in numbers, wealth, institutions, and respectability even as the nation grew. So did Adventism. In both denominations a certain ambivalence has grown up about the revivalism and enthusiastic emotional religion that characterized their beginnings. Many Adventist readers may recognize some of the methods of Methodism in their memories of evangelistic campaigns or weeks of prayer they have experienced in church or school. And many may remember those expe-

riences with distaste for the manipulation of emotion, the public pressures to conform, and the emotional letdown and backlash after the “revival” was over. Some may be tempted to conclude that this style of religion accomplished little and has, for educated people at least, ended up in the dustbin of history where it belongs. The religion of the heart, of the personal relationship with God is more popular, as I have suggested above. But the personal relationship is not so easily separated from the revivalistic methods. The spread of the “celebration” worship style, with its carefully engineered and staged “spontaneity” of emotion is one bit of evidence that personal piety and corporate worship in Adventism are still under the sway of revivalistic tradition.

Methodism, historically, was the major carrier and systematizer of that tradition. Through the Methodists many Protestant groups, Adventists among them, have partaken of a basic way of organizing experience. Stated in the abstract, this way of seeing and ordering the world postulates an inner circle of love, power, and purity that is the center of everything that is most valuable. This inner circle is set apart from hostile and polluting forces that surround it and threaten to overwhelm it. Nevertheless, the inner circle generates within itself the power to withstand and overcome the hostile forces. The shape of this abstract cultural archetype may be seen in the Methodist and, with variations, the Adventist visions of the church, the self, and the family.

The class-meeting, for instance, was deliberately designed to make participants see and feel the difference between the family of God on the inside and the world outside. People unawakened to vital religion were excluded because, said the early Methodist bishops, they would dampen if not entirely destroy “that *liberty of speech*” that made the meetings such a blessing to sincere believers and seekers of salvation.¹⁷ James B. Finley put the

matter tactlessly when he moved to correct members on one of his circuits who were letting anyone into their class-meetings. Reform your ways, he told them, Methodists ought not to give that which is holy to dogs, nor cast their pearls before swine.¹⁸

Those excluded often evinced their swinelike nature. The sources are full of accounts of “rowdies” or “roughs” of one kind or another attempting to break in and break up class-meetings, camp meetings, or other religious services. They generally failed, in the stories told by the Methodists, and often they were conquered by the very religious spirit they attempted to disrupt.

That was the fate of a whisky distiller who attempted to break up a class-meeting. When he led a gang to where the believers were meeting, he managed to break in, but a sentry inside the door quickly shut out the rest of the gang. The believers and mourners had been shouting and weeping in high excitement, and the distiller suddenly found himself very much out of his element. He became an island of reprobacy in a billowing sea of devotion. The spiritual contagion overcame him, and he fell to the floor in conviction. The sentry shouted the news to gang milling about outside and they rushed to see, many falling upon one another in the doorway, some, presumably, under conviction as well as under the weight of their comrades. The rest “ran to their horses and fled with the greatest precipitancy and consternation to their homes.”¹⁹ The spirit of Methodism’s inner sacred space had once again not only kept the world at bay, but had conquered and scattered the worldlings.

This outer battle was but a reflection of the more important inner battle that every believer fought. Every day a Christian took up the cross, yielding the worldly motives of anger, pride, and lust and undergoing crucifixion with Christ. When Ellen White wrote that every advance step heavenward must be taken by an earnest and heartbreaking confession

and repentance of sin, she reflected this understanding.²⁰ The psychological result of following the way was a configuration of motives that made the soul and its struggles a microcosm of the religious community set over against the world. The personal relationship with Jesus meant an inner sanctum of sacred affection set on God and on heavenly things. This spiritual center was beset by the remaining sinful nature of the believer, however, with all its readiness to respond to the world, the flesh, and the devil. The quest for entire sanctification was a quest to so realize the love of God within that it would cleanse the soul from all sin, leaving only a inner sphere of purity, peace, and power to do God's will.

Adventism, too, has customarily separated itself from the world and done battle with it. Indeed, Adventists expect that time will end with the world threatening to annihilate the church. Adventists also struggle to attain the inner peace and purity of sanctification. But the differences in eschatology between the two traditions imply differences in the relationship they envision between their outer and inner struggles. Methodists sought sanctification in order to be empowered for more effective work in converting the world to God. They were not, at first, very concerned about the millennium, but when they thought about it they expected it would be ushered in by God working through human instrumentalities in the course of history. Hence the importance of more and more be-

lievers attaining sanctification. The more perfected souls there were, the sooner God would be able, through their labor, to make the kingdoms of this world His own and thus usher in the Second Coming and final reign of Christ at the end of the millennium.

In contrast to this post-millennial vision, Adventists have sought the perfection of their souls in order only to make ultimately stark the contrast between the church and the world. Christ will come, says one version of Adventist theology, when the character of Christ is perfectly reflected in his advent people. At that time also, of course, the world will be cleansed by God's supernatural intervention. In both cases the spiritual and moral perfection of the individual is linked to the purification of the cosmos, but the type of link is very different in each.

Neither tradition has seen the millennium come, but each has labored to see that its version of the truth is passed from generation to generation. Hence a concern with family life. The early Methodists experienced warm and intense fellowship in religious exercises like class-meetings. Their forms of religious fellowship became models for their family

Adapted from Alexander Rider's "The Campmeeting"



lives. At the dawn of American independence, when American Methodists were just getting started, family still meant primarily the sovereignty of a patriarch over the woman, children, and servants living on his land, in his household. By the 1840s, when Methodism had become America's largest denomination, most Americans agreed that sentiment defined the family, that it was a sacred circle of affection set apart from the world. The home was a haven in a heartless world, much as the church had been a refuge against the world.

However, as the church had also been an engine of spiritual power for overcoming the world, so the home was the crucible of virtuous character that would put down the world's vice and degeneracy. Indeed, in many minds, the

home became the center of a spirituality of the new American republic, the foundation of the morality that would allow the nation to fulfill a divinely appointed destiny to reform the whole world by its democratic example.²¹ The religious practices of Methodism, as I have argued at length elsewhere, laid the foundations in American culture for the adoption of this now commonplace vision of the family.²²

The writings of Ellen White on the home seem to me to abound in themes like those discussed above, leaving aside, of course, the exaggerated millennial hope for the nation. It is likely she and her readers learned to see family life in this manner in and through the revivalistic ethos shaped by American Methodism.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Winthrop S. Hudson, "The Methodist Age in America," *Methodist History* 12 (April 1974), pp. 4-15.

2. Further caveats: The Methodism described here is early American Methodism, not the diverse and liberalized Methodism found today in the United Methodist Church. The sources for the description, furthermore, come largely from Southern border states and the Ohio Valley region rather than New England and western New York, where Adventism first thrived. The Chesapeake region was the cradle of Methodism in America from which it spread to the entire nation. See Russell E. Richey, *Early American Methodism* (Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. 47-64; and my *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism* (Bloomington, In.: Indiana University Press, 1993).

3. George G. Cookman, *Speeches Delivered on Various Occasions*, quoted in Russell E. Richey, "The Social Sources of Denominationalism: Methodism," in *Denominationalism*, Russell E. Richey, ed. (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1977), p. 163.

4. See, for instance, Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1948), Vol. 1, p. 504; Vol. 2, p. 431; Vol. 5, pp. 221, 619.

5. See, for instance, David L. Rowe, *Thunder and Trumpets: Millerites and Dissenting Religion in Upstate New York, 1800-1850*, AAR Studies in Religion No. 38 (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1985) and Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, eds., *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the 19th*

Century, 2nd. ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993), especially Appendix 2.

6. Albert C. Outler, ed., *John Wesley*, Library of Protestant Thought (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 33, 273. Wesley's idea of grace was, of course, much different from the Calvinist notions of limited atonement and double divine predestination that were inherent in America's dominant forms of Protestantism at the time.

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8. Jacob Young, *Autobiography of a Pioneer: or the Nativity, Experience, Travels, and Ministerial Labors of Rev. Jacob Young, With Incidents, Observations, and Reflections* (Cincinnati: Swormstedt and Poe, 1857), pp. 38-42.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 43.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

11. "Christian Holiness," (Cincinnati) *Western Christian Advocate* (March 27, 1840), p. 196.

12. James Henthorn to Daniel Hitt, Oct. 3, 1797, Daniel Hitt Letters, Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio.

13. John P. Finley to James B. Finley, December 15, 1811, James B. Finley Letters, Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio.

14. Robert Emory, *History of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: G. Lane and C. B. Tippet, 1845), pp. 184, 185.

15. Walter B. Posey, *The Development of Methodism in the Old Southwest: 1783-1824* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: Weatherford Printing Co., 1933), p. 116.

16. Benjamin Webb, "Contributions to the Western Methodist Historical Society," (Cincinnati) *Western Christian Advocate* (September 18, 1840).

17. Emory, *History of the Discipline*, pp. 137, 187.

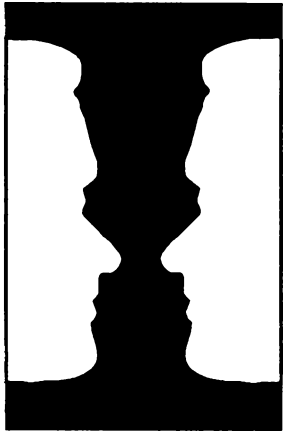
18. Finley, *Autobiography of Rev. James B. Finley*, ed. by W. P. Strickland (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern), pp. 386, 387

19. Finley, *Autobiography*, pp. 240, 241.

20. Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1900), pp. 159, 160

21. A. Gregory Schneider, "Social Religion, the Christian Home, and Republican Spirituality in Antebellum Methodism," *Journal of the Early Republic* 10 (July 1990), pp. 163-189.

22. Schneider, *The Way of the Cross Leads Home*.



Wesley Keeps Dad And Me Talking

Rediscovering Wesley's loom of faith (scripture, tradition, reason, and experience) can reknit the Adventist community.

by David Larson

THE POWER OF THE WESLEYAN CONNECTION to hold together divergent views within Adventism is illustrated by the relationship of my father and me. Ralph S. Larson was born 75 years ago. For more than 50 of those years he has served Adventism with distinction as a pastor, evangelist, teacher, and author. My father and I, both Adventist theology teachers, differ profoundly. But Wesley, whom we both admire, draws us together. My father stands on Wesley's right. I stand on Wesley's left. That accounts for our differences. It also explains why we have more in common with each other, and with other Wesleyans, than we do with those who look elsewhere for theological help. With the Wesleyan connection, we, and the Adventist Church, can stand together.

The tree of Adventist theology is more like

a banyan than a pine or palm. It has many roots and many trunks, some of which develop in "reverse order." As the banyan tree grows, it drops vines that take hold in new and diverse soil, that become additional roots and trunks nourishing the entire organism. It is long past time to emphasize that the Wesleyan heritage is one of Adventism's oldest, largest, and most deeply rooted trunks. An Adventism aware of its Methodist roots has a better chance of avoiding the contrary but equally disastrous outcomes of fundamentalism, on the one hand, and relativism on the other. Fundamentalism falls short by denying in theory or in practice the degree to which Scripture and our interpretations of it are both culturally conditioned. Relativism misses the mark in a different way by leaving the impression that Christian views and values are nothing but social and linguistic constructions of reality that are neither better nor worse than their rivals. These temptations, which strike me as opposite sides of the same counterfeit coin, are not always easy to resist.

Fortunately, Adventism has inherited from

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Wesleyans a way of developing theological convictions that can keep Adventist theology's quest for "present truth" in the middle of the road. Although it is often ignored, this approach, the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, is one of the most valuable treasures in Adventism's theological inheritance. Properly formulated and employed, it can help current and subsequent generations of Adventist theology from careening into either fundamentalism or relativism—or both.¹

Interweaving Christian Affirmations

The expression "Wesleyan Quadrilateral" was not introduced by John Wesley in the 18th century but by Albert Outler and others in the 20th.² Although the term is not Wesley's, the theological method to which it refers most certainly is. It is a way of formulating Christian convictions by interweaving converging lines of interpreted evidence from four related but distinguishable sources: Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience. Instead of appealing to any one of these, and drawing his inferences solely from it, Wesley utilized all four in ways that proved fruitful for him and others.

In seeking a "middle way" between Roman Catholicism and continental Protestantism, the Anglicanism to which Wesley was devoted for the whole of his life had long appealed to interpretations of Scripture, tradition, and reason.³ Wesley transformed this trilateral into a quadrilateral by appealing more directly and explicitly to interpretations of experience as well.⁴ He did so in ways that revealed his confidence in the fundamental intelligibility and harmony of the universe as God's creation, a primal faith that was also a part of his Anglican heritage.⁵

"I allow no other rule," Wesley declared, "whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures."⁶ He knew the whole of Scripture

"so nearly by heart that even his natural speech [was] biblical."⁷ He believed that the Holy Spirit inspired those who wrote the Bible, and that the same Spirit also inspires those who read it.⁸ He insisted that those who study Scripture should do so prayerfully, comprehensively, and contextually and that they should employ the best scholarly tools at their disposal.⁹ As Edward H. Sugden indicates, "Wesley was a critic, both higher and lower, before those much misunderstood terms were invented."¹⁰ According to Outler, Wesley held that Scripture should be read literally unless "that appears to lead to consequenc[e]s that are either irrational or unworthy of God's moral character as 'pure, unbounded love.'"¹¹ Wesley emphasized what he called the "analogy of faith," a complex of themes that unify Scripture in an unrelenting focus on divine grace and human responsibility.¹² "No Scripture can mean," he declared, especially against those who appealed to the Bible in behalf of John Calvin's doctrine of predestination, "that God is not love, or that his mercy is not over all his works."¹³

Although Wesley read widely in nine languages and wrote grammars for seven of them,¹⁴ and although he possessed a profound respect for the Christian tradition in its entirety, he preferred the English Reformation to its German, Swiss, and Roman counterparts, patristic writers to medieval ones, and the Greek Fathers to their Latin colleagues. Like many Anglicans, he was especially attracted to the Greek theology of Christianity's first five centuries. Wesley's interest in salvation as healing as well as acquittal, in divine grace as power as well as pardon, in the interactive cooperation between God's will and those of humans, in the human possibility of being "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4, KJV), and in "perfecting" rather than "perfected" perfection, all reflect his fondness for Greek Orthodoxy. It is a heritage whose metaphors are often drawn more from the

world of medicine than from law.¹⁵ “I exceedingly reverence them as well as their writings,” said Wesley of Christianity’s first theologians, “and esteem them very highly in love.”¹⁶

Wesley wondered how Martin Luther’s commentary on Galatians could “decry ‘reason’ (right or wrong) as an irreconcilable enemy to the gospel of Christ.”¹⁷ His own view, as expressed in his first *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* and many times elsewhere, was that he desired “a religion founded on reason and every way agreeable thereto.”¹⁸ He distinguished between what we call technical reason and what we call ontological reason and endorsed them both. He described the first as “the faculty of reasoning, of inferring one thing from another”¹⁹ or as “the power of apprehending, judging and discoursing. Which power is no more to be condemned in the gross than seeing, hearing, or feeling.”²⁰ He depicted the second as “the eternal reason, or the nature of things; the nature of God and the nature of man, with the relations necessarily subsisting between them” or “the essential nature of things.”²¹ In harmony with his lifelong desire “to be in every point, great and small, a scriptural, rational Christian”²² who saw “religion and reason joined”²³ because “all irrational religion is false religion,”²⁴ Wesley, who once taught logic at Oxford, viewed human reason in these two senses as necessary, though insufficient, features of Christian life.

Wesley’s appeals to interpretations of experience were complex and comprehensive.²⁵ On the one hand, the experience he weighed was public, communal, and related to what he called the “physical senses.” As Thomas Oden indicates, Wesley “was keenly interested in experiment and often displayed an investigative attitude toward the world. Scientific inquiry—observation, testing, hypothesizing, analyzing, discovering—Wesley found appealing, not appalling.”²⁶ On the other hand, however, the experience Wesley pondered

was private, personal, and related to what he called the “spiritual senses.” This included the immediate assurance of salvation as well as its enduring outcomes: love, joy, and peace (Galatians 5:23, 24). Wesley’s own account of what he felt when he listened to someone at a society on Aldersgate Street in London read from the preface to Luther’s commentary on Roman’s is illustrative.²⁷ “I felt my heart strangely warmed,” he wrote, “I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: And an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.”²⁸ Human experience—both public and private, both personal and communal, both physical and spiritual—plays a legitimate role, Wesley held, in what he often called “experimental religion.”²⁹

The Loom of Christian Conviction

Two primary views, one more interpretive and the other more interactive, have emerged in recent discussions of how Wesley ordered the elements of the quadrilateral and of how we should do so today. When they are properly formulated, however, there is very little difference between the two; so little, in fact, that it seems best to describe Wesley’s method as both interpretive and interactive.

Randy L. Maddox declares that “Wesley’s so-called ‘quadrilateral’ of theological authorities could more adequately be described as a unilateral *rule* of Scripture within a trilateral *hermeneutic* of reason, tradition, and experience.”³⁰ For several reasons, however, this way of summarizing the matter is not as helpful as Maddox’s other description of Wesley’s method as “a ‘hermeneutical spiral’ of becoming aware of and testing preunderstandings.”³¹ For one thing, Wesley functioned as part of the Anglican heritage that had long used the Protestant principle of

Scripture alone to establish the primacy of the Bible, not its exclusiveness.³² In addition, the way Wesley developed his arguments in essays like *The Doctrine of Original Sin, According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience* strongly suggests that he appealed to interpreted evidence from a plurality of sources instead of one source interpreted by others.³³ Still further, when Wesley wrote in 1771 that "I present to serious and candid men my last and maturest thoughts, agreeable, I hope, to Scripture, reason, and Christian antiquity,"³⁴ he seems to have acknowledged several sources, not one. Wesley's method, as Maddox undoubtedly agrees, was interpretive in an interactive way.

John B. Cobb, Jr. holds that "The real issue is whether reason and experience can be employed to criticize and correct Scripture as well as to interpret it. If so, our doctrine must arise out of a free interchange among them. . . . we must allow reason and experience free play, even when they criticize Scripture."³⁵ Although this statement properly highlights the dynamic, inclusive, and interactive features of Wesley's method, it does so without detailing what it means "to criticize and correct" Scripture, on the one hand, and "to interpret" it, on the other. We are in no position to "criticize and correct" what a biblical word or deed meant in its original contexts any more than we can "criticize and correct" what the *Dialogues* of Plato or the *Analects* of Confucius meant in their first settings, and we might appear disrespectful if we tried.³⁶ But we can and should "criticize and correct" proposals as to what the Bible in part or in whole ought to mean for us today and we should do this, as Wesley did it, in light

of the best interpretations of the best evidence from the best sources: Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience.

As Nancey Murphy emphasizes, "a tradition is an on-going *argument*—an argument about how to interpret and apply its formative texts."³⁷ Even if all traditions are not established in this way, the Christian tradition is constituted as an ongoing conversation about how the Bible, which Cobb rightly calls "our basic authority,"³⁸ ought to be appropriated and applied. Wesley, who edited 400 books as well as *The Arminian Magazine*,³⁹ understood that this conversation is not limited to the Bible.⁴⁰ But he also rightly held that this discussion cannot take place apart from the Bible as Christianity's formative text and primary source. The process is interactive; however, it is interactive in an interpretive fashion.

As this suggests, it is possible to misunderstand and misuse the

Wesleyan Quadrilateral in at least seven ways. One of these is to deny the primacy of Scripture. A second is to deny the legitimacy of sources other than the Bible. A third is to insist upon appealing to evidence from the four sources in some fixed temporal sequence. A fourth is to proceed as though we are appealing to Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience as such instead of to our own interpretations of evidence from each. A fifth is to presume that our various interpretations are wholly independent of one another. A sixth is to forget that our interpretations are influenced by the circumstances of our own lives as well as by each other and by the evidence they expound. A seventh is to disavow the possibility of a difference between what a text once meant and what it ought to mean now.

Wesley can help Adventists avoid crashing on the extremes of fundamentalism and relativism; he can help Adventists to the left and to the right of him continue talking to one another.

One way to prevent these misfortunes is to think of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral as a loom on which Wesley wove his Christian convictions, a loom shaped like a trapezoid instead of a rectangle, square, or diamond (all of which are also quadrilaterals). The trapezoid's four sides and four angles represent the plurality of sources of interpreted evidence to which Wesley appealed. Its longest side represents Scripture as the Christian community's formative text and primary source. Its three other sides, approximately equal in length, represent tradition, reason, and experience as additional sources. The trapezoid's unbroken perimeter represents the relatedness, as well as the distinctness, of the four sources. The web of fabric in the center of the loom represents Wesley's own Christian convictions, the attractive and coherent pattern that resulted when he interwove converging threads of interpreted evidence from the four sources.

There are instructive parallels between the Wesleyan Quadrilateral and the more plausible types of post-modern non-foundationalism. According to the post-modern critique, modern thinkers are too optimistic about finding some single, neutral, and unquestionable basis upon which to construct all their other beliefs.⁴¹ Some forms of this school of thought, both Christian and non-Christian, are relativistic—vacuously so.⁴² Others, however,⁴³ think of a set of beliefs and practices as neither a building with one indisputable foundation upon which the whole edifice rests, nor as a set of arbitrary human projections upon a chaotic and meaningless universe. Rather, they think of belief as a web, net, fabric, or mesh woven from a variety of threads, each of which has some link to the larger world.⁴⁴ For these post-moderns, non-foundationalism does not mean that all views and values are equally valid. It means, instead, that all our claims, including our own most cherished religious convictions, are influenced in part by our

circumstances; that the overall validity of a network of beliefs and practices depends upon a variety of related considerations, not just one; and that a “web of truth” is more tightly woven, and therefore less likely to fail, where various lines of interpreted evidence converge and cohere in mutually supportive ways.⁴⁵

Wesley understood that lines of evidence converge when, and only when, they are properly interpreted. If a serious divergence emerges, we have no responsible choice but to review and, if necessary, revise all our interpretations of evidence from all sources, and we must do so without preference or prejudice in any direction. Accounts of what a particular portion of Scripture ought to mean for us today properly change, whenever incorrigible interpretations of other evidence—biblical and non-biblical—require such adjustments. This rightly happened, for example, when their experience of the universe caused believers to stop reading the Bible with Ptolemaic eyes and to start reading it with Copernican ones instead. It also happened when their experience of the Great Disappointment of October 22, 1844, prompted those who eventually founded our denomination to review and revise their interpretations of biblical prophecy.

Reweaving Adventist Teachings

Illustrations from the development of Adventist theology abound. To take just one positive example, consider the Adventist conviction that the human self is a mortal psychosomatic unity. This conviction does not rest on Biblical, traditional, rational, or experiential considerations alone, but on interwoven interpretations of evidence from all four sources. It reflects the view that the preponderance of biblical evidence favors a wholistic account of

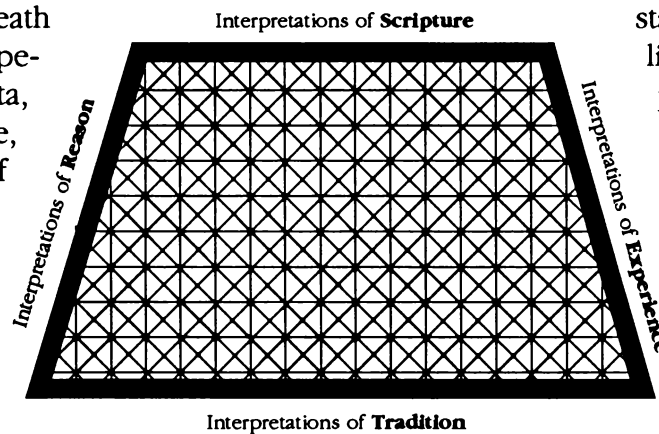
the human self, even though some passages of Scripture can be read another way.⁴⁶ It also rests upon a narrative of the Western intellectual tradition that detects an important difference between Hebraic and Hellenistic views of the human self. Adventism sees Christianity's appropriation of Hellenistic ideas of human nature in the patristic era as an "unfortunate fall" from which Christianity should recover as soon as possible.⁴⁷

Adventist conviction that the human self is a psychosomatic unity accepts that dualism (whether Platonic, Cartesian, or otherwise) is rendered irrational by its own incoherencies. For example, dualism leads to fierce struggles between idealism and materialism, parallelism and interactionism.⁴⁸ Conviction that humans are a unity leads to skepticism regarding "near-death experiences." Such experiences are reliable data, not about the afterlife, but about distortions of reality caused by biochemical changes in deteriorating human brains, illusions that are easily replicated by inducing similar biochemical alterations of neurological functions.⁴⁹ Thus, from an Adventist point of view, depicting the human self as a psychosomatic unity that lacks inherent immortality makes more sense than any other current option, all things—biblical and non-biblical—considered.

The Wesleyan Quadrilateral can help clarify another important issue for Adventists—how the writing of Ellen White ought to relate to Scripture. Two approaches that seem less than promising in opposite ways are those of elevating these publications to the doctrinal authority of the Bible, on the one hand, or relegating them to the status of mere devotional use, on the other. There are many

advantages, I believe, in following the English Reformation and the Methodist Revivals in understanding *sola scriptura* to refer to the primacy, not the exclusiveness, of biblical authority. This is the first step.

The second is to recognize that the writings of Ellen White provide the only access many Adventists around the world have to their own religious heritage. In harmony with her own observation that "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history,"⁵⁰ it would be helpful if her writings were utilized more widely and more responsibly throughout the denomination. This leads directly to the third step, that of helping Adventists and others understand the relationships between the circumstances of Ellen White's life and her views. Her publications can become a window through which Adventists in all parts of the world come to see their own religious tradition, with all of its richness and complexity, more completely and clearly.



If something like this is not done, and quickly, Adventism may forfeit its future by forgetting its past.

Taking account of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience is the kind of process for which we Adventists, like others, should strive in all of our doctrinal efforts.⁵¹ The procedure of reviewing and revising our interpretations of evidence from Scripture "in light of"⁵² our interpretations of evidence from tradition, reason and experience, as well as reviewing and revising our interpretations of evidence from each of them "in light of" our interpretation of Scripture, presses toward a "reflective equilibrium" of all four. This equipoise is neither

permanent nor perfect in every detail; nevertheless, it commands itself as the most adequate and coherent integration now available, not of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience by themselves, but of the interactive web of all four.⁵³

However, as Wesley realized, Protestants are tempted to shield their interpretations of Scripture from review and revision. Of course, Roman Catholics, rationalists, and mystics or charismatics can be just as protective of their interpretations, respectively, of tradition, reason, and experience.⁵⁴ Wesley was painfully aware, for instance, that the Protestant expression *sola scriptura* is often used, not only to promote the primacy of the Bible, but also to protect particular interpretations of Scripture, interpretations that frequently work to the advantage of some at the expense of others. As seen in his strong opposition to slavery and racism, which were defended in part on biblical grounds, Wesley detected and denounced such subterfuges, especially when they are used to defend ignorance, bigotry, and injustice.⁵⁵ His attitude toward

his own work was quite different. "It is very possible that I have," he replied to the charge that he might have erred in his interpretations, "but I trust, whereinsoever I have mistaken, my mind is open to conviction. I sincerely desire to be better informed. I say to God and man, 'What I know not, teach thou me.'"⁵⁶

As Albert Outler once observed,⁵⁷ "the 'quadrilateral' requires of a theologian no more than what he or she might reasonably be held accountable for: which is to say, a familiarity with Scripture that is both critical and faithful; plus, an acquaintance with the wisdom of the Christian past; plus a taste for logical analysis as something more than a debater's weapon; plus a vital, inward faith that is upheld by the assurance of grace and its progressive triumphs, *in this life*."⁵⁸ Such a comprehensive approach from our theological progenitors can help contemporary Adventists from crashing on the extremes of fundamentalism and relativism. Wesley can help Adventists to the left and to the right of him continue talking to each other.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Woodrow W. Whidden has written an excellent account of how the Wesleyan Quadrilateral can do justice to fundamentalism's legitimate interest in promoting the primacy of Scripture without discrediting itself by making unsupportable claims. It is scheduled for publication by *Andrews University Seminary Studies*.

2. Albert C. Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral—In John Wesley," and Ted A. Campbell, "The 'Wesleyan Quadrilateral': The Story of a Modern Methodist Myth" in Thomas A. Langford, ed., *Doctrine and Theology in the United Methodist Church* (Nashville: Kingswood Book [Abingdon Press], 1991).

3. The English Reformation was often more self-conscious and self-confident than the Continental Reformation about appealing to tradition and reason as well as Scripture. But even Martin Luther, who sometimes thundered against reason, declared in the midst of his ordeal before the Diet of Worms: "Unless I am convicted by *Scripture and plain reason*—I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they

have contradicted each other—my conscience is captive of the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant" (Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1950], p. 185). Emphasis supplied.

4. Donald A. D. Thorsen, *The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience as a Mode of Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), pp. 96-124.

5. Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral—In John Wesley," pp. 78, 79.

6. John Wesley, Letter to James Harvey, March 20, 1739, in Thomas C. Oden, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity: A Plain Exposition of His Teaching on Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), p. 56.

7. Albert C. Outler, *John Wesley's Sermons: An Introduction* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), p. 77.

8. Thorsen, p. 129.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 147-150.

10. Edward H. Sugden, "Introduction" in *John Wesley's*

Fifty-three Sermons (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), p. 7, as cited by Thorsen, p. 148.

11. Albert C. Outler, "Introduction" in Frank Baker and Richard P. Heitzinger, eds. in chief, *The Works of John Wesley, Bicentennial Edition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), Vol. 1, pp. 58, 59, as cited in Thorsen, p. 148.

12. Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books [Abingdon Press], 1994), pp. 38, 39.

13. John Wesley, "Free Grace" in Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, p. 39.

14. Oden, p. 67.

15. Outler, *John Wesley's Sermons: An Introduction*, pp. 75-103.

16. John Wesley, Letter to Dr. Conyers Middleton, January 4, 1749, in Thorsen, p. 155.

17. John Wesley, "Journal" (Monday, June 15, 1741) in Albert C. Outler, ed., *John Wesley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 366.

18. John Wesley, "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," in Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 394.

19. *Ibid.*

20. John Wesley, "Journal" (Monday, June 15, 1741) in Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 366.

21. Wesley, "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," in Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 394. In our time, process theologians take note of Wesley's views on "necessary" relations.

22. John Wesley, Letter to Freeborn Garrettson, January 24, 1789, in Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 85. Wesley was 86 years old when he affirmed this lifelong ideal once again.

23. John Wesley, Letter to Joseph Benson, October 5, 1779, in Oden, p. 71. Also see Rex D. Matthews, "Religion and Reason Joined": A Study in the Theology of John Wesley" (Doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1986).

24. John Wesley, Letter to Dr. Rutherford, March 28, 1768, in Oden, p. 71.

25. Thorsen, pp. 201-225.

26. Oden, p. 75. For a discussion that contrasts Wesley's positive attitudes toward scientific innovation with the negative views of some contemporary spokespersons, see Ronald Cole-Turner, "Religion and Gene Patenting," *Science*, Vol. 270 (October 6, 1995), p. 52.

27. For a study of the variety of ways in which the "Aldersgate Experience" has been understood in the Wesleyan tradition, see Randy L. Maddox, *Aldersgate Reconsidered* (Nashville: Kingswood Books [Abingdon Press], 1990).

28. John Wesley, "Journal" (May 24, 1738), in Thorsen, p. 219.

29. Thorsen, pp. 83-100.

30. Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, p. 46. Emphasis in original.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

32. Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral—In John Wesley," pp. 78, 79.

33. "We see Wesley's quadrilateral theological method more consciously unfolding here than anywhere else in his writings. We see him first working with historical arguments, then experiential and sociological arguments, and finally with early patristic and scriptural arguments" (Oden, *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity*, p. 160). "Thus the defense of 'original sin' begins with general and pervasive human experience, turns on an argument about how it is to be explained, and engages in Biblical exegesis. Although 'tradition' does not function as an explicit court of appeal in this essay, it is clear that the idea of original sin comes to Wesley from tradition and that his interpretation of both the facts of history and the Bible are deeply affected by this tradition" (John D. Cobb, Jr., *Grace and Responsibility: A Wesleyan Theology for Today* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, p. 173).

34. John Wesley, "Preface" to the 1771 edition of his *Works* in Oden, p. 65.

35. Cobb, pp. 174, 176.

36. It is easy enough to "criticize" but very difficult to "correct" what others said or did centuries ago. At this point, we can only decide how we will appropriate their words and deeds and apply them to our own lives. This can be done in a variety of ways that do justice to what was said and done then as well as what ought to be said and done now (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). Researcher and physician Paul Gien informs me that good scientists never discard data; they interpret and reinterpret until everything eventually "fits." Good theologians do likewise.

37. Nancy C. Murphy, *Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion* (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1994), p. 206. Emphasis in original.

38. Cobb, p. 155.

39. Oden, p. 56; Outler, *John Wesley*, p. 23.

40. "To those who propose to read only the Bible, Wesley replied: 'You are got above St. Paul. He wanted others too. 'Bring the books,' says he, 'but especially the parchments'" (Oden, p. 56).

41. Cobb would probably agree with Maddox, who states that Wesley's theology "is quite amenable with contemporary non-foundationalism and the attempt to recover theology as a practical discipline" (Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, p. 42). I do not have a similar statement from Cobb except his observation that his own process theology "is in fact one continuation of Wesley's influence" (Cobb, *Responsibility and Grace*, p. 12). Nevertheless, at least since Cobb used the term in

this way in an essay he published in 1964, process theology has often presented itself as one form of post-modern thought. Cobb has consistently functioned as one kind of non-foundationalist insofar as he has acknowledged the contingency and conditionedness of all theological formulations, his own and others; nevertheless, he has avoided relativism by placing his proposals before those who evaluate them from very different points of view. I cannot help but believe that in this respect, as in so many others, Cobb "stands in Wesley's connection."

42. Please see Nancey Murphy and James William McClendon, Jr., "Distinguishing Modern and Postmodern Theologies," *Modern Theology* 5 (April 1989), pp. 145-168; David Ray Griffin, *God and Religion in the Postmodern World* (Albany: State University of New York, 1989); David Ray Griffin and Huston Smith, *Primordial Truth and Postmodern Theology* (Albany: State University of New York, 1989); David Ray Griffin, William A. Beardslee, Joe Holland, eds., *Varieties of Postmodern Theology* (Albany: State University of New York, 1988); William C. Placher, *Unapologetic Theology: A Christian Voice in a Pluralistic Conversation* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989); and William C. Placher, "Postmodern Theology" in Donald W. Muser and Joseph L. Price, eds., *A New Handbook of Christian Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992).

43. These individuals follow people like W. V. O. Quine and Imre Lakatos in philosophy of science and Nancey Murphy in philosophy of religion.

44. Nancey Murphy's contributions have been exceedingly helpful to me. Please see her work in *Theology in an Age of Scientific Reasoning* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), *Quantum Cosmology and the Laws of Nature: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action* (Vatican City State and Berkeley, Calif.: Vatican Observatory Publications and the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, 1993), *Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion* (Valley Forge, Penna.: Trinity Press, International, 1994), and *Theology Without Foundations: Religious Practice and the Future of Theological Truth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994).

45. "The requirement of coherence is the great preservative of rationalistic sanity. But the validity of its criticism is not always admitted. . . . Disputants tend to require coherence from their adversaries, and to grant dispensations to themselves. . . . After criticism, systems do not exhibit mere illogicalities. They suffer from inadequacy and incoherence. Failure to include some obvious elements of experience in the scope of the system is met by boldly denying the facts. Also, while a philosophical system retains any charm of novelty, it enjoys a plenary indulgence for its failures in coher-

ence. But after a system has acquired orthodoxy, and is taught with authority, it receives a sharper criticism. Its denials and its incoherences are found intolerable, and a reaction sets in" (Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology*, corrected edition, edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: The Free Press [Macmillan Publishing Co.], 1978), p. 6).

46. Richard Rice, *The Reign of God: An Introduction to Christian Theology from a Seventh-day Adventist Perspective* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1985).

47. LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers: The Conflict of the Ages Over the Nature and Destiny of Man*, 2 volumes (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1965, 1966).

48. Jean R. Zurcher, translated by Mabel R. Bartlett, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: An Essay on the Problem of the Union of the Soul and the Body in Relation to the Christian Views of Man* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1969).

49. Jack W. Provonsha, *Is Death for Real? An Examination of Reported Near-Death Experience in Light of the Resurrection* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1981).

50. Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publ. Assn., 1915), p. 196.

51. "The key to a legitimate appropriation of a past text or event by a present community lies in preserving the integrity of *both* of the contexts involved—that of the original event and that of the present community. To use the terms of Hans-Georg Gadamer, a proper interpretation must 'fuse these two horizons.'

"Such a fusion requires that the two horizons be self-consciously identified in the process of their dialogue. . . . In this process, however, we must exercise extreme caution that we do not simply impose our current agendas upon an ill-fitted historical authority. The best way to determine if a legitimate "fit" has been found is to forward a proposed interpretation into the community of interpretation and see how it survives the questions of those with differing perspectives" (Randy L. Maddox, "Aldersgate: A Tradition History," in *Aldersgate Reconsidered*, pp. 145, 146).

52. Oden, p. 55.

53. For a discussion of "reflective equilibrium" in a very different context, please see John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 48-51.

54. "What happens when one has striven long and hard to develop a working view of the world, a seemingly useful, workable map, and then is confronted with new information suggesting that that view is wrong and the map needs to be largely redrawn? The

painful effort required seems frightening, almost overwhelming. What we do more often than not, and usually unconsciously, is to ignore the new information. Often this act of ignoring is much more than passive. We may denounce the new information as false, dangerous, heretical, the work of the devil. We may actually crusade against it, and even attempt to manipulate the world so as to make it conform to our view of reality. Rather than try to change the map, an individual may try to destroy the new reality. Sadly, such a person may expend much more energy ultimately in defending an outmoded view of the world than would have been required to revise and correct it in the first place" (M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values, and Spiritual Growth* [New York: Simon and Schuster,

1978], pp. 45, 46).

55. Manfred Marquardt, translated by John E. Steely and W. Stephen Gunter, *John Wesley's Social Ethics: Praxis and Principles* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), pp. 67-75.

56. John Wesley, "Preface," in "Sermons on Several Occasions" in Thorsen, p. 125.

57. Albert C. Outler, "The Wesleyan Quadrilateral—In John Wesley" in Thomas A. Langford, ed., *Doctrine and Theology in the United Methodist Church* (Nashville: Kingswood Books [Abingdon Press], 1991), p. 86. Emphasis in original.

58. I am grateful for the assistance and encouragement I received while preparing these remarks from Gary Chartier, Gayle Foster, Phil Nist, Bronwen McQuistan, and Genie Sample.



Ellen White and John Wesley

Wesley and his American children laid the foundation for the very core of Adventist teachings of salvation.

by Woodrow Whidden

WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT ADVENTIST THEOLOGY does not seem to be exclusively indebted to any one major Protestant theological tradition, the present article argues that the most immediate and essential influence on Adventism has been the Wesleyan tradition.

Emphases in the Adventist tradition regarding eschatology (such as imminence of the Second Coming and the Millennium) arose out of the broad impulse of American millennialist concern in the early 19th century. Other doctrines espoused by Adventists have been shaped by the Lutheran, Reformed/Calvinistic, Radical Reformation (Anabaptist), Puritan, and Pietistic traditions. However, Adventist understandings of salvation, and the closely related doctrines of the nature of humans, the

law,¹ and sin have been most directly formed by the Wesleyan tradition.²

Other teachings by Adventists reflect a Wesleyan flavor—trinitarianism, biblical authority, and church organization. However, I will concentrate on the Wesleyan influence on Adventist views of salvation, most notably in the writings of Ellen White.³

Under the broad category of salvation, the most notable concepts are divine calling and election, and relationship of justification and sanctification. Along with Wesleyans, Adventists have spoken of salvation by grace through faith alone intimately connected with faith as active participation in God's grace. Such a participating faith receives grace in a responsible way. This conception of faith and grace has given strong emphasis to a version of sanctification that involves extensive character transformation. Not surprisingly, such an emphasis has led to a carefully nuanced understanding of perfection in the Wesleyan tradition that has affected Adventist theology.

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Human Nature and Sin

While Adventists have not been comfortable with the Augustinian/Calvinistic understanding of original sin, taught in terms of original guilt, we are very much in what could be termed the “total depravity” tradition. John Wesley clearly argued for “original sin” as original guilt; but due to the effects of “prevenient grace” this guilt was canceled and the basic ability to freely respond to God’s redemptive initiatives (popularly known as *free will*) was re-created in the individual’s soul. Wesley and his early American followers certainly wanted to talk more in terms of “free grace” than “free will.” But no matter how it was expressed, the essence of the Wesleyan understanding emphasized the human will more than the Calvinistic, Reformed denominations—like the Presbyterians and United Church of Christ—could tolerate.⁴

Redemptive Calling and Prevenient Grace

Wesley always spoke of the redemptive response of the penitent as the fruit of free grace that was “preveniently” bestowed by the calling, convicting, and converting work of the Holy Spirit. But it was always calling and convicting that took human freedom very seriously and sought to avoid the deterministic, predestinarian categories of Calvinism.⁵

The concept of “prevenient grace” was one of Wesley’s more finely nuanced teachings, but the essence is clear: God comes to awaken sinners to their great need caused by sin—both original and habitual—and to assure them of his redemptive love. Such an understanding has helped Wesleyans avoid the extremes of deterministic Calvinism.⁶ This perspective understands that sinners do not naturally seek for God; rather, God earnestly

seeks sinners to come into a redemptive relationship with him. Such gracious seeking “creates” a proto-renewal that enables the convicted soul to respond to God’s redemptive offer. While Adventist theology has not usually used the technical term “prevenient grace,” its evangelical thrust certainly expresses the essence of the concept.⁷

Justification and Sanctification In Balance

Wesley’s teaching on justification by grace through faith alone was clearly in the Protestant tradition. His views stoutly opposed any concept that smacked of works righteousness as the grounds for acceptance. In the order of salvation, justification, and sanctification are closely related, but clearly distinguished.⁸

While Wesley understood the priority of justification (logically, not temporally), he saw it as not just the door to sanctification, but its essential, constant companion. However, he was wary of the way that Protestants (especially the Reformed/Calvinistic wing of the 18th-century English evangelical revival) used the concept of the “imputed righteousness of Christ.”

The reason for his sense of discomfort (sometimes almost churlish opposition) was his perception of the way Calvinists were using the concept to denigrate sanctification and opening the door to rejection of law. In other words, while Wesley was clear that justification granted gracious acceptance through the pardon of past sins, he was uncomfortable with the teaching that the life of Christ (his active obedience) was imputed, or reckoned to the believer’s account to “cover” present sins. He felt that such a concept of imputed righteousness imperiled an appreciation of the work of the Spirit in our lives.

Many in the 18th-century English evangeli-

cal revival were claiming that since Christ covered their present actions, sins included, they need not be concerned with overcoming sin. For Wesley, justification by faith alone must be accompanied by sanctification by grace through faith.

Such a vision of Christian life is certainly much more participatory than the conceptions of Calvin and especially his Reformed Scholastic heirs.⁹ In other words, for Wesley, believers “are pardoned in order to participate.” The thought that pardoned believers could abdicate the life of active appropriation of Christ’s character, through the workings of the Holy Spirit, was simply anathema to Wesley.¹⁰

Such a participatory model of Christian experience is better understood as a “way” of life, rather than a series of discrete redemptive events. In this vein, Randy Maddox has argued that Wesley’s view is better expressed as a *via salutis* (way of salvation) rather than the more Reformed/Scholastic expression *ordo salutis* (order of salvation). This Wesleyan “way” of salvation involves distinct waystops, but each one is intimately related to what has happened at previous stops and prepares the way for future events in the march to the kingdom.

Maddox has probably caught the spirit of this imagery of the way by characterizing Wesley’s key organizing principle as “responsible grace.” Each pause on the way of salvation is vitally related to what goes on before and after. In addition, the work of God at each waystop calls for interrelated “responses” from the believer. The result is graciously “responsible” behavior—morally, spiritually, and socially. God’s prevenient awakening and conviction are meant to elicit a “response” to God’s pardon, and pardon inevitably calls for “responsible” (as opposed to irresponsible) transforming participation in salvation. This “responsive” participation results in “responsible” growth in grace, that leads to that fullness of transforming grace called Christian perfection.

The resonance of such Wesleyan categories with Ellen White’s *Steps to Christ* is quite striking. Adventism, under the powerful influence of the very Wesleyan Ellen White, has not always been comfortable with emphases perceived as denigrating either salvation by grace through faith alone, or the importance of obedience and sanctification. Along with Wesley, Adventists have sought to hold together both justification and sanctification. We have wanted to speak of salvation in juridical or forensic metaphors (justification, satisfaction of divine justice, and judgment) and also in healing or therapeutic metaphors (reconciliation, recovery from sinful infection, and participation with the Great Physician).

Ellen White’s presentations on justification and sanctification are, for all practical purposes, nearly identical to Wesley’s. While she was not as reticent as Wesley in using such terms as *imputation* and the *covering* of Christ’s righteousness, the differences in their respective understandings of justification by faith amount to mere theological quibbles or a “strife about words.” Although the comparison of their thinking on sanctification and perfection calls for a more nuanced treatment than does justification, the gist of what John Wesley and Ellen White strove to express bear striking similarities.

Sanctification and Perfection

Not only on justification, but also regarding sanctification and perfection, the essence of Wesley’s position was repeated by Ellen White. For Wesley, the appropriate response of the penitent to God’s offer of regenerating pardon is transforming participation. Such character transformation had much more to do with process than with discrete events. In other words, Wesley saw sanctification as a dynamic experience of growth in grace. But he did not exclude the necessity of reaching

an important, instantaneous waymark that he variously referred to as “entire sanctification,” “perfection,” “Christian perfection,” “perfect love,” “holiness,” and “fullness of faith.” this waymark or state could be reached quite early in the “way,” but more normally came after a lengthy walk with God—usually just before death.

The key to understanding the dynamics of perfection as a second, distinct work of grace, is to grasp Wesley’s distinction regarding human nature and sin. Regarding human nature, Wesley made clear distinctions between soul and body. While the body was certainly affected by sin, the very seat of original sin was the soul. In the moment of perfection, original sin was deemed to be eradicated. Perfected persons would no longer feel the promptings of inward sin. As a result, “sins proper” would no longer be manifest. That meant, for Wesley, that the perfected would no longer willfully sin. To choose to sin would cause a free-fall from grace.

There, however, could (and usually would) still be “sins improper.” These were understood as nameless defects and lapses due to the lingering infirmities produced by the effects of sin. While these “sins improper” still needed pardoning grace, they were not in the same culpable category as “sins proper.”

These distinctions corresponded to the difference Catholics made between “venial” sins. Put another way, for Wesley, sins “proper” would be freely chosen—high-handed sins of habit, presumption, and rebellion. Sins “improper” would be more in the category of benign neglect—fruits of infirmity (forgetfulness, lack of knowledge, etc.)—the blind-side

hits of life. Stated more positively, the perfected were full of love, praise, joy, humility, and rich in works of charity, service, and obedience. But, for Wesley, such an experience was subject to loss if the perfected believer did not persevere in a trusting participation in God’s imputed and imparted grace.¹¹

Along with Wesley, Ellen White¹² wanted to emphasize sanctification as a process (a *via*), not simply a single event. However, in contrast with Wesley, White’s writings are replete with warnings about teaching sanctification as an instantaneous experience. Adventists know in the marrow of their beings Ellen White’s favorite expression that sanctification is the

“work of a lifetime.” She tended to speak, not in terms of eradicating original sin, but of gaining victory over sinful tendencies and habits.

While Wesley never used the term “sinless perfection” to describe the state of the perfected, many understood it to be such, and the door was opened

to numerous bouts with fanatical perfectionism.¹³ But for all practical purposes (minus the instantaneous eradication of original sin—possibly to be likened to the extraction of a rotten tooth),¹⁴ Ellen White used most of Wesley’s essential categories: a strong accenting of sanctification as process and the distinction between willful sin and the incidental sins of immaturity and infirmity. My own research into Ellen White’s understanding of salvation underscore that her major emphasis, both by dint of theological accent and sheer bulk of literature, was on sanctification, perfection, and character transformation.

Many Adventists, especially those more directly influenced by Reformation (especially

Ellen White used most of Wesley’s essential categories. Her major emphasis, as evidenced by theological accent and the sheer bulk of her writings, was on sanctification, perfection, and character transformation.

Reformed/Calvinistic) categories, are somewhat troubled by these holiness emphases. What these Adventists seek to preserve, with their emphasis on Reformation categories, is an emphasis on justification by faith alone. They want to avoid anything that smacks of tendencies toward legalistic salvation by works.

Actually, when both Wesley and White are clearly understood, all of the “faith alone” categories that these Adventists would ever want are present. But they are not accompanied by the antinomian temptations captured by phrases such as “irresistible election” or the “imputed righteousness of Christ.” In other words, for Wesley and White, salvation is understood to be by grace through faith alone (not by works). But the nature of true salvation (in Christ) is such that faith will never stop there. Participation in the grace of Christ always leads to the fruits of faith—loving obedience, service, joyous witness, and worship.

Wesley’s Synthesis and the “Investigative Judgment”

The genius of Wesley’s theological effort was to create a carefully drawn synthesis of the juridical categories of the Latin West (filtered, especially, through Calvin) with the therapeutic categories of the Eastern tradition.

One other important fruit of this synthesis needs elaboration. While Wesley did not greatly inform Adventist eschatology, his emphasis on responsible grace led to a concept he designated as “final justification” or “final salvation.”¹⁵ This teaching has played an important, formative background role for the development of the Adventist doctrine of the investigative judgment.¹⁶

In his polemical jousts with the Calvinists, Wesley often provoked their wrath when he spoke of “final justification.” The essence of what he meant by this expression was this: While we cannot “merit” final salvation, or

assume that our works are a prerequisite to God’s acceptance, the truly saved person will have the evidence of genuine faith in the inevitable fruits of his or her experience of sanctification. Thus, while sanctification is not “immediately” necessary for initial justification (only trusting faith is), sanctification is necessary for final justification. It is the fruits of faith that become the grist for any judgment regarding works.

The basic implications of this understanding of “final justification” go like this: If one accepts that salvation can be lost, as opposed to the predominant emphasis of the Reformers that it could not be, then on what basis can salvation be lost? Luther and Calvin, strongly influenced by Augustine, emphasized that salvation was bestowed irresistibly upon the elect. The moment anything like categories of free will are interjected, the process of salvation becomes just as essential to salvation as what transpires during the early moments—i.e., justification.

For Wesley, God’s grace calls on humans to both freely accept grace and to freely choose ongoing participation in the life of grace. It is the quality of this ongoing participation of the responsible saints that finally legitimates the genuineness of their election. It is then only a very short leap to correlate the biblical doctrine of a judgment according to works as the legitimate fruit and evidence of genuine saving faith. Believers are not saved by works, or faith plus works, but by a faithful participation in God’s grace—which works!

It is no accident that the great enemies of Wesley’s views on final justification (those shaped by the Reformed Tradition) have also stoutly opposed the Adventist teaching of the investigative judgment. All of the works of sinful humans (including Wesley’s perfected ones or Ellen White’s hearty saints—even those in the “time of trouble”) need the merits of Jesus accounted to them. Nonetheless, they give witness to the genuineness of faith in the

judgment. The moment any theologian posits anything like choice, free will, or free grace, or suggests that salvation can be lost, it is at that moment that an investigative judgment (pre-Advent, at the Advent, or post-Advent) becomes a distinct possibility.

For Calvinists, such a judgment according to works becomes a rather perfunctory footnote to the history of salvation. For those in the Wesleyan tradition, such a judgment reveals not only the will of God, but also the evidence that justifies or vindicates the carefully weighed decisions of the judgment.

I would suggest that Thomas C. Oden's use of the expression "investigative judgment" to refer to Wesley's teaching about the great judgment scene at the Second Coming is no carelessly chosen or accidental phrase.¹⁷ True, Wesley did not teach that such an investigative judgment was pre-Advent. However, he clearly taught that it was "co-Advent"¹⁸ and he deemed it to be a genuine judgment based on the evidence drawn from fruitful works of those who trusted Christ's merits. In other words, their works had arisen out of an

experience of having been pardoned. Of course, Adventists who regard both Luther and Calvin as normative for their theology will continue to dismiss the concept of an investigative judgment.

Adventist Fruits of the Wesleyan Tree

Wesley's carefully articulated expositions of "responsible grace" have certainly provided the more immediate backdrop for Adventism's understanding of salvation—heavily mentored by Ellen White. Adventist attempts to hold to a balanced synthesis of law and grace, faith and works, justification and sanctification, have been clearly anticipated and broadly mentored by the teachings of Wesley and his American children. It was such categories that helped to lay the foundations for the very core of Adventist teachings of salvation and one of its distinctive contributions to eschatology—the pre-Advent, investigative judgment.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Space does not permit a treatment of the consonance of Wesley's view of law with Adventism's emphasis, but the similarities are striking. I urge a thoughtful perusal of Randy Maddox's "Excursus: Wesley on the Nature and Uses of the Law" in *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books [Abingdon Press], 1994), pp. 98-101.

2. As an introduction to Wesley's theology, the following recent works should prove helpful: Thomas C. Oden has given an excellent digest of Wesley's major primary theological documents in his *John Wesley's Scriptural Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); Randy Maddox's *Responsible Grace* is the best recent survey of Wesley's theology; Maddox gives a thorough digest of Wesley (especially as his theology unfolds during the Revival) and an exhaustive interaction with Wesley's major interpreters. Both Oden and Maddox provide extensive bibliographic references to the primary and secondary literature.

3. For further background and documentation of this contention, see my "Adventist Soteriology: Wesleyan

Connection," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 30 (Spring 1995), pp. 173-186 and *Ellen White on Salvation: A Chronological Study* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publ. Assn., 1995), pp. 15-22.

4. For a more extensive treatment of Wesley on sin and prevenient grace, see Oden, pp. 149-176; 334-343 and Maddox, pp. 73-93 and 180-185.

5. Wesley would have said a hearty amen to Stephen Neill's elegant description of human freedom: "The characteristic dimension of human existence is freedom. On this narrow sand-bank between existence and non-existence, between coercion and chaos, God has withdrawn his hand so far as to make a space in which we can be really, though not unconditionally, free. In Jesus we see what a free man looks like" (*Christian Faith and Other Faiths* [Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 1984], p. 23).

6. Oden's comments are especially trenchant; see pp. 149-159, 175, 176.

7. The classic expression can be found in Ellen White's *Steps to Christ* (Washington, D.C.: Review and

Herald Publ. Assn., 1908), pp. 24-29, 32, 35, 36, 40, 49, and 54.

8. For a more extensive treatment of Wesley's views on justification and sanctification (including perfection), see Oden, pp. 187-212; 311-334; and Maddox, pp. 148-151; 166-191.

9. Calvin's understanding of sanctification is much closer to Wesley's teaching than was the emphasis given by many in the Lutheran tradition.

10. Wesleyan scholarship is indebted to Albert Outler for this "pardoned to participate" terminology; see Maddox, p. 168.

11. In other words, perfection was remissible—it could be lost.

12. For a popularized study of Ellen White's understanding of justification and sanctification, see my *Ellen White on Salvation*, chapters 9-17. For a more detailed study, see my "The Soteriology of Ellen G. White: The Persistent Path to Perfection, 1836-1902" (Ph.D. disser-

tation, Drew University, 1989), especially chapters 4-6.

13. Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), pp. 205-211.

14. The terminology is that of R. Newton Flew; see Hans K. LaRondelle's *Perfection and Perfectionism* (Berrien Springs, Mich.: Andrews University Press, 1971), p. 323.

15. See Oden, p. 329 and Maddox, pp. 171, 172.

16. I know of no instance where Ellen and James White, Joseph Bates, or J. N. Andrews expressed direct, conscious dependence on Wesley as a source for the development of the investigative judgment teaching. I am simply arguing that such a doctrine of "final justification" is the logical outworking of the whole Wesleyan thrust of "responsible grace" and the Adventist, eschatological counterpart is the investigative judgment.

17 See Oden, pp. 351 ff.

18 My descriptive term, not Wesley's.



On July 6, 1996, at the Garden Grove Seventh-day Adventist Church, another woman, Margot Pitrone, was ordained to gospel ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The total number of women ordained to gospel ministry has risen in less than 12 months to seven—three in the Potomac Conference and four in the Southeastern California Conference.

Pitrone's ordination was one of three major developments regarding women in ministry to take place during a three-week period this summer in the Southeastern California Conference. The week before, June 29, Hyveth Williams preached her first sermon as senior pastor of the 1,500-member Campus Hill Seventh-day Adventist church in Loma Linda, California. The Campus Hill church is the largest Adventist congregation to have chosen a woman as its senior pastor. Eight days earlier, June 17, the Loma Linda University church, in business session, adopted a policy that commits it to the principle of ordaining women to the gospel ministry. According to its newly adopted policy, one woman appears already qualified to be or-

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Southeastern California Churches Ordain, Advance Women Pastors

by Pam Dietrich

daigned to gospel ministry by the Loma Linda University church.

Garden Grove Ordains Margot Pitrone

The Garden Grove church is the largest Adventist congregation in Orange County, California. Earlier in the year, the senior pastor, Duff Gorle, conducted a survey of his congregation, and 80 percent supported the ordination to gospel ministry of their associate pastor, Margot Pitrone. During the July 6 ordination service, Jared Fulton, the youth pastor of the Garden Grove church, was also ordained to the gospel ministry.

Pitrone, who holds bachelor's degrees in social work and in religion and psychology, received her M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary. She has served on the pastoral staffs of several Adventist congregations in the Southeastern California Conference. At the service, the senior pastor extolled Pitrone's and Fulton's many gifts, including Pitrone's abilities for planning and administration of congregational funds. Many others from the congregation joined in testimonies to the pastoral ministry of both candidates. As is usual in Adventist ordination services, all ordained pastors in the congregation—some 20 male and three female—came to the front and joined in the prayer of ordination.

University Church Adopts Policy

The Loma Linda University church, in its June 17 business session, the highest authority in the congregation, approved, by a margin of 89 to 49, a policy document, "Ministry at Loma Linda University Church," which states that "Those who receive these gifts of the Spirit (male and female), and are called to full-time ministry by the church, are candidates for full credentials and ordaining. . . ." The statement outlines the education, experience, and supervision necessary for candidates to be ordained. The document, drafted by a committee of two pastors and two lay persons, was introduced by William Lovelless, the senior pastor, in a presentation of almost two hours.

Although the document does not explicitly state that even without the concurrence of the local conference and union, Loma Linda University church will proceed with ordination of women it deems qualified, debate at the church business session assumed that to be the case. In the University church newsletter (June 1996), Edmund Haddad, chairman of the church board, states that the Southeastern California Conference has declined to approve the document, adding rather enigmatically, "to help solve this problem, church practice will precede policy rather than policy pre-

ceding practice." The likeliest candidate for ordination is Margaret Hempe, a long-time associate pastor at the Loma Linda University church.

Campus Hill Picks Hyveth Williams as Senior Pastor

At a Sabbath morning service 15 years ago, a representative of the Campus Hill church board announced to the congregation that the board was not ready to ordain women as local elders. This year the search

committee reduced a list of 50 names to five who were interviewed. Hyveth Williams, pastor of the Boston Temple, and a frequent week-of-prayer speaker at Adventist schools, is an adult convert who received her B.A. from Columbia Union College, her M.Div. from the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University, and is completing her D.Min. at Boston University. Her autobiographical memoir, *Will I Ever Learn?* has been published this year by the Review & Herald Publishing Association. Williams began her tenure as senior pastor in September.

splinter group makes this offense particularly egregious," he said.

"This raises the ante and makes it all the more serious."

"It's typical anti-Catholic bigotry," said Sister Mary Ann Walsh, spokeswoman for the United States Catholic Conference.

Sibley Towner, professor of biblical interpretation at Union Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian institution in Richmond, said he was surprised the Adventists published the book.

"It's outrageous and inflammatory and untrue biblically in any sense."

George Reid, head of the Biblical Research Institute of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, said the book merely follows the lead of such Protestant reformers as Martin Luther and John Calvin.

"We still believe that it's the reasonable way to understand these prophecies, arising from the text itself and not political correctness," he said.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is based in Silver Spring, and traces its origins to William Miller of Hampton, N.Y., who predicted that the world would end in the 1840s.

The Church says it has 9 million members worldwide.

The book is published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, one of [the] denomination's . . . main publishing houses.

Richard Coffen, vice president for editorial services at the publishing house, said he did not know how many copies of the book had been distributed.

Coffen said the book was a critique, not bigotry, and that it attacks the papacy, not specific popes.

"Our position is that we are criticizing the system and not individual Catholic Christians."

Donohue said he has heard that

GC Confirms for U.S. Media: SDA Book Calls Pope the Devil's Ally

by Jan Cienski

The Associated Press news service in August distributed the following story to the media on its national wire. Fifteen newspapers across the United States, for certain, and an estimated total of 50 published the story, including the Bangor Daily News, the Los Angeles Times, the Orlando Sentinel, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, and the San Diego Union.

The book, a 112-page 1989 abridgement of Bible Readings for the Home Circle, was a project of the Association of Self-Supporting Institutions, providing student colporteurs with a volume to sell, particularly during summers. The Review and Herald Publishing Association published both the original, edited by its book committee in 1888, and the present abridged editions.

This summer, students sold the book, among other places, in the Richmond, Virginia, area, the home base of Jan Cienski, the reporter who wrote the story.

—The Editors

Roman Catholics and some Protestants are denouncing a book published by a major Protestant evangelical denomination that claims the pope is in league with the devil.

"God's Answer to Your Questions," likens the papacy to the beast in the book of Revelation, an ally of Satan in the world's final days.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church publishes the book and distributes it nationally door-to-door.

"That the seventh head (of the beast) represents Antichrist, or the papacy, there can be little doubt," the book asserts.

The book's conclusions have no biblical basis, said Catholic clergy and lay officials and a Protestant Bible scholar.

William Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights in New York, said he often sees anti-Catholic literature but was surprised to see it coming from a major denomination.

"For this to come from the Seventh-day Adventists and not from a

argument before.

"It's like saying to children, 'I hate your father and I hate your mother but I don't hate you.'"

The book says those who follow papal teachings are Satan's allies.

"Those who acknowledge the supremacy of the beast by yielding obedience to the law of God as changed and enforced by the papacy . . . worship the best. . . Such will take the side of Satan in his rebellion against God's authority," the book says.

Linking the pope to the Antichrist springs from the days of the Reformation 500 years ago when new Protestant churches were battling Roman Catholics, Towner said.

"In the Reformation, Protestants threw the word Antichrist around a lot," he said. "But that has not been done in mainline Protestant circles for centuries."

Anti-Catholic language these days usually comes from small sectarian groups affiliated with right-wing political causes such as the Ku Klux Klan, Towner said.

The book comes at a time when

relations between evangelical Christians and Catholics have been improving.

In 1994, Southern Baptists, the country's largest Protestant denomination, and the Catholic Church endorsed a dialogue between the two denominations.

The Christian Coalition also has been trying to build ties to socially conservative Catholics.

"There have been a number of attempts to build political coalitions between Catholics and conservative Protestants," said William Dinges, professor of religious studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington.

"Conservative Catholics who would move to the right on cultural issues might be offended by this."

Donohue said he doubts the book will influence anyone, but it concerns him nonetheless.

"This kind of anti-Catholicism cannot be discounted," he said. "It's affecting the Joe Sixpacks of this world, and these people are not unimportant and it has to be taken seriously."

istrate Marcel Notzon. He will appear in court next week for a bond hearing.

Authorities declined to comment on how Mr. Ntakirutimana had come to their attention. Manuel E. Mora, supervisory senior resident agent of the Laredo FBI office confirmed that Mr. Ntakirutimana had been under surveillance for about four months.

But the FBI did not receive authorization to arrest him until Thursday, Mr. Mora said.

Mr. Mora said Mr. Ntakirutimana had been living in Laredo with his son, Eliel Ntakirutimana, a Laredo anesthesiologist. The elder man worked part-time in a natural-food store in Laredo owned by his son.

Calls to Dr. Ntakirutimana's home and office Friday went unanswered.

Mr. Ntakirutimana, a former pastor of a Seventh-day Adventist Church in western Rwanda's Kibuye district, is charged in two separate indictments by the United Nations' war-crimes tribunal in connection with the 1994 state-sponsored massacre of more than 500,000 Rwandans, Mr. DeGabrielle said.

The tribunal says Mr. Ntakirutimana, a Hutu, had hundreds of members of the Tutsi tribe gather in a Kibuye hospital for safety when the massacres began in April 1994.

As the men, women and children crowded into the medical buildings and hospital chapel, according to the indictments, Mr. Ntakirutimana arrived with a truckload of armed men and told them to start killing. Those who tried to escape were slashed with machetes or beaten to death.

"This is a shocking crime," Mr. DeGabrielle said. "This is quite a different case than we normally get."

Mr. Ntakirutimana becomes the latest person to be arrested in connection with the 1994 massacre. So far, the tribunal has indicted 21 people, most of whom have not been captured.

FBI Arrests Adventist Indicted by Tribunal for Rwanda Genocide

by David McLemore

This story, by a staff writer of The Dallas Morning News, appeared September 28, 1996. Versions were circulated on the AP and Reuters news services. Readers will recognize Elsaphane (Elizaphan) Ntakirutimana as the former Rwandan conference president mentioned in "Sabbath Slaughter: SDAs and Rwanda" (Spectrum, Vol. 25, No. 4).

—The Editors

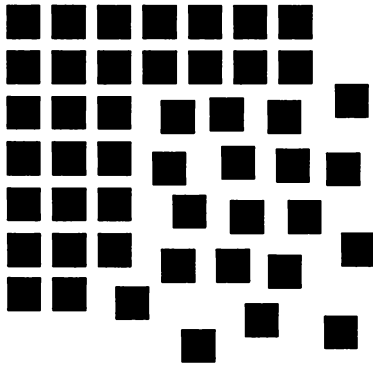
A former pastor charged with participating in the genocidal slaughter of thousands of men, women and children in Rwanda in 1994 remained in the Webb County

jail Friday.

Federal authorities are holding Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, 73, on a warrant from the U.N. International Crimes Tribunal, charging him with crimes against humanity resulting from the brutal Rwandan civil war, according to Assistant U.S. Attorney Don DeGabrielle of Laredo.

Mr. Ntakirutimana was arrested about 2:25 p.m. Thursday by FBI agents and Texas Department of Public Safety troopers near Cotulla, about 70 miles north of Laredo. He was jailed without bond.

Friday, Mr. Ntakirutimana was formally charged before U.S. Mag-



Richard W. Coffen. *When God Sheds Tears: A Christian Look at the Mystery of Suffering*. Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald, 1994. \$8.99 hardcover. 127 pages.

Although few if any Seventh-day Adventists would baldly assert that evil is good, there are subtle ways in which we may, nevertheless, succumb to such doublethink. Richard W. Coffen, associate book editor of the Review and Herald Publishing Association, is determined to warn us against this kind of self-contradiction. In *When God Sheds Tears*, Coffen examines several “common rationales” for evil and concludes that any reason given for the existence of evil is tantamount to a defense of evil as a useful aspect of the universe. And this, he says, is the devil’s doctrine.

Adventists may be particularly attentive when Coffen challenges the “Great Controversy” rationale, warning against the acceptance of

Lucerne French Snipes, a graduate of Pacific Union College, received an M.A. in English from Andrews University and an MATESL from St. Michaels College in Vermont.

Fully Explaining Evil Is Doing The Devil’s Work

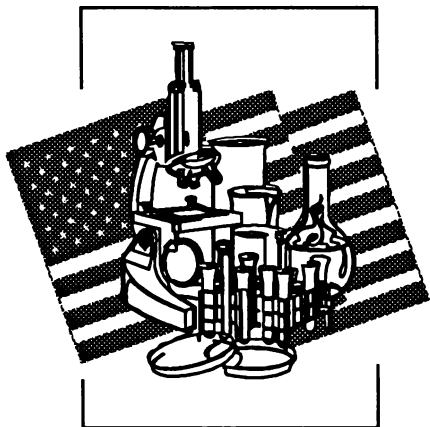
by Lucerne French Snipes

suffering “because it seems to support a good cause—the vindication of God’s character” (p. 92). Readers will recognize this as Adam’s temptation in *Paradise Lost*—to think of his sin as a boon (*felix culpa*) because it made possible our glorious redemption through Christ. Surely Coffen is right to insist that a good God would not use the universe as a stage on which to display the divine glory, but would instead love and grieve for a world blighted by evil—entering into its pain to the point of death on a cross. So Coffen grounds his argument not only on the principle of non-contradiction, but also on his faith in the unequivocal goodness of God. Although he is responding to a challenge from Ellen White—“Show that it is not God who causes pain and suffering”—his case for the goodness of God depends mostly on his appraisal of the behavior and character of Jesus. For Coffen, God’s self-revelation in Jesus enables us to transcend First Testament speculations that God causes evil.

The truth about evil, Coffen insists, is that evil is meaningless, absurd, life blighting, and that a universe that cannot distinguish

between good and evil is even more absurd. While cautioning us not to identify contingency and finitude automatically with evil, nor to equate safety and immutability with good, he offers some advice to those of us who wish to “avoid doing the work of Satan when we attempt to defend God in the face of disaster, disease, and death” (p. 112): For us, evil must always remain an outrage; we must empathize with those in pain; and we must be critical of our theodicies, because they so easily backfire, so easily become the devil’s doctrine

Although *When God Sheds Tears* is short and written for a Seventh-day Adventist lay audience, its many references to philosophers and theologians signal the reader that Coffen is consciously and seriously joining a long-running conversation about the problem of pain. I was disappointed that he did not acknowledge Rick Rice’s *When Bad Things Happen to God’s People*, but at a time when many are re-examining the Adventist message, it is good to be reminded to avoid doublethink and to proclaim the loving goodness of God. Coffen’s is a message for the whole world.



Project Whitecoat: I Won't "Criticize Our Involvement"

Reading the articles on Project Whitecoat (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 3) has brought back memories of a time in the 1960s when I underwent Basic Combat Training at Ft. Sam Houston, and personally experienced denominational involvement in the research program.

The Seventh-day Adventist chaplain assigned there was one of three who confirmed my belief in the value and propriety of having Adventist clergy in uniform. I saw these men as rescuers of the faithful who served in a very hostile environment. I can say that all of the Adventist chaplains I knew during this period did this job very well.

In our initial orientation, the chaplain requested that we complete a questionnaire in regard to our relationship to the Adventist Church, its beliefs, and practices. We were told that admission to Whitecoat was restricted to Seventh-day Adventists, and to those recommended by the chaplain. In the Army, one fills out many questionnaires. So, I filled mine out, and stated that I did not wish to participate in Whitecoat.

However, the chaplain called me in for a personal interview in spite of my statement. He said that I was

likely to change my mind once I learned what an easy life I would lead at Ft. Detrick. Therefore, he wanted to know whether he could recommend me once I learned what life would likely be like in an assignment such as Europe. I told him not to consider me. But I learned that there was a perception of Whitecoat as an easy job that exceeded that of service to one's country. In Whitecoat, I could participate, if I chose, in one or two research projects a year. These might take a few weeks. The rest of the time I would likely have an easy 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. office job.

With denominational orthodoxy being a criteria for selection, some expected dynamics arose in our group of Adventist trainees. Someone reported to the chaplain that one of the applicants was smoking—he was. However, in a personal interview he convinced the chaplain that he was not, and he was recommended for Whitecoat. Another was dating a local stripper, but the chaplain never found out about him. A lacto-ovo vegetarian soldier was personally interviewed because he was supposed to believe that eating pork

Pro and con on Project Whitecoat and creationism; defenses of both ordination of women to gospel ministry and Uncle Arthur.

was not a sin on the level of the Ten Commandments—this was a true statement of his belief. He did not pass muster. To this day I question our artificial standards for evaluating people. Of the three that I have mentioned, two are active Adventists, and have held leadership positions within the church. The third: I don't know anything about him.

The chaplain's interview with me, and my observations, cemented the idea in my mind that Whitecoat was a cooperative project, with major involvement of the General Conference, in humanitarian, lifesaving research. With my present knowledge of military affairs, I realize more now than then that the issues were complex rather than simple. But I am unwilling to criticize our

involvement in the project. I once took a class from an Adventist scientist who had previously worked in nuclear weapons research. I also, as an Adventist pastor, once had in my congregation a person who came directly from an assignment as a CIA station chief in a country in Southeast Asia. But these Adventists had served as individuals, without denominational involvement. I do say now that issues such as those raised by Whitecoat are worthy of examination.

As I speculate on the future, I wonder if there are other relationships we have with governmental agencies that we may want to examine.

Gregory Matthews
Brighton, Colorado

For 12 Years I Served Proudly As Chaplain to Whitecoats

I was interested to read the article concerning Project Whitecoat (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 3). I commend the author on her extensive research, but I was disappointed in the negative slant given to a unique and honorable chapter of American Adventist military service.

I served as civilian chaplain in the Washington, D.C. area from November 1961 to May of 1974. A significant part of my responsibility was ministering to the needs of Adventist soldiers in Operation Whitecoat. This gave me the opportunity to become acquainted with many of the soldiers, their officers, and their commanders. I was able to observe the program closely for 12 years.

The author quotes from an article I wrote for the journal *For God and Country*. The National Service Organization saw fit to publish the article in pamphlet form for wider circulation. My intent was to describe, as best I could, my observa-

tion of what it was like to be assigned to the Whitecoat unit. I was not endeavoring to sell the idea or to "gloss over" negative aspects of the program.

I myself had served as a 1-A-O draftee before and after the end of World War II. I could not help but contrast my experience in the Army with what I observed in the Whitecoat assignment. Adventist soldiers in Whitecoat were well treated, valued, and respected by the command. This is not always true in other areas of military service, where commanders may not understand the obligations of Sabbathkeeping and convictions against bearing arms.

The article seems to suggest that our church leaders were dupes, and the Army people who approached the denomination were deceitful. In my opinion, the Army representatives were honorable men who approached the denomination in an open, forthright man-

ner with a recruiting idea that offered benefits for the research project, as well as for the soldiers who saw fit to volunteer.

Our church leaders were not dupes. In my judgment, they made a wise and prudent response. They were not being asked to approve or disapprove the concept of biological warfare. After careful consideration, they determined that volunteering to participate in the proposed studies was not inconsistent with Christian principle in spite of the risk.

I am glad President Nixon took a stand on renouncing the use of biological warfare. But that does not eliminate the problem of encountering this horrible threat in the hands of an aggressor. I believe the medical department of the Army was acting properly in anticipating the potential threats of such a weapon, and taking measures to better prepare for dealing with the matter. In fact, they might be guilty of being delinquent in their duty if they had failed to do so.

I was concerned with the credence granted to the critics of the Whitecoat project in the article. It helps gain perspective when you note the references cited were all dated 1969. This, we remember, was in the heat of the Vietnam protest movement when the mood was to lash out at all authority, and government in particular. The television shows were presented with an eye to controversy in order to grab attention and improve ratings. I was surprised that the *National Examiner* article was cited. How much weight do you give to the sensational tabloids?

I am grateful to live in a country that allows for the free expression of ideas. Sometimes sacrifice is required to preserve such freedoms. I felt it was important for me not to apply for a 4-D deferment, but to fulfill my citizen's duty of military service before completing

my ministerial training. The 1-A-O classification has made it possible for many Adventist soldiers to serve both God and country in good conscience.

I respect the right of the author to express her opinions in the conclusion of the article, and the right of *Spectrum* to print them. I, for one, do not agree with her conclusions. Out of my own experience as an Adventist draftee, and as a civilian chaplain ministering to Adventists in the military, I believe the church has followed a wise, honorable, and caring course. The history of ministry by our church to our men in military service has

been exceptional.

There are many Adventist veterans who would join me in saying the reputation of our church in dealing with military issues remains untarnished. Those faced with decisions affecting many of our young people have wisely followed a moderate course, avoiding extremes.

In this day of shifting ideas of what is politically correct, it is good to look back and see a path laid out by our church leaders, which has stood the test of time.

Tom Green
Littleton, Colorado

experimentation. We had further concerns that offensive biological warfare could be covertly involved (our advanced training included chemical, radiological, and biological warfare training). The response of supporters was that defensive military actions may have just as important strategic value as offensive actions, and it may be impossible to clearly differentiate between defensive and offensive use of basic research. But this was exactly the point of our reservations: How did we *know* how the research was going to be used?

I was among those who decided not to volunteer for the project, and I have never regretted my decision. I do not fault those who volunteered. I think they did what they conscientiously felt they should do at the time. Nor can I fault the government for taking steps to try to counter what they genuinely felt was a real threat to our national defense. I do feel, however, that both the government and the church failed to provide full and honest disclosure. The relationship between the government and the church was perhaps too cozy. I fear the church—as the naive partner—lost some of her virtue in this clandestine affair.

Arlin Baldwin
Coarsegold, California

We Declined to Volunteer Our Bodies for Experimentation

My original orders show that I was inducted into the Army as a Seventh-day Adventist "Conscientious Cooperator" (1-A-O) in Detroit and arrived at Brooke Army Medical Center, Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, on December 10, 1954. The picture of Company A, 3rd Battalion, dated February 28, 1955, shows 225 men, but only a portion of these were Adventists. According to the timetables in your articles, this unit came to Ft. Sam Houston in the first year of the special training there, and was one of the first units to be offered the Whitecoat option.

I recall that the Adventists were called out of the unit to a meeting where top brass from both the Army and the church from Washington, D.C. met with us to explain the project. The meeting was behind closed doors, and we were sworn to secrecy. The project was presented as a noncombatant, defensive, volunteer humanitarian medical research project. The church representatives held out powerful incentives to enter the program based on religious and patriotic motives, and also appealed

to more base motives in describing the easy, safe, desirable duty in the Washington, D.C. area, with all its extra perks. While the armistice had been signed in Korea on July 27, 1953, we were still at the height of the Cold War. Safe, stateside duty had a powerful appeal. We were given time to consider the proposal, and we discussed it among ourselves at length.

Many were gung ho, but some of us had serious reservations about the ethics of volunteering our body temples as guinea pigs for military

If Creation Took More Than a Week, Adventism Is Gone



If the long-age theory of the beginnings of our planet is true, the basis of Adventism and Christianity itself is gone and our hopes are in vain. To accept this concept raises questions about three fundamental principles foundational to faith: (1) the reliability of Scripture; (2) the belief in the word of a benign, all-knowing God; and (3) the veracity of Christ himself.

The Bible claims that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," and that ". . . holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21, KJV). Jesus declared that "scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). Did he know what he was talking about? And he included all the books of the Bible (Old Testament). "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. . . . And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25, 27). He placed his stamp of approval upon *all* Scripture, which would include the Genesis account of a seven-day creation week and the Flood. He is quoted as saying, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall the coming of the son of man be." They "knew not until the flood came, and took them all away" (Matthew 24:37, 39).

Can we depend upon his word? Was the Son of God in error? If he did not know what he was talking about here, what else from his word can we rely upon?

But the supreme blasphemy is to infer that God is a liar. He declared in trumpet tones from Mt. Sinai, in the presence of all the assembled millions of Israel, the words of the Ten Commandments, and then, with his own finger, the record states, he inscribed them on tables of stone. *This is the only revelation from the supreme deity that we earthlings know about that he actually wrote.* Are the Ten Commandments authentic or not? Inscribed in everlasting stone are the immortal words, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and

rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:11). Is this verse a statement of fact or not? If the "Ten Words" are a lie, the entire structure of Judeo/Christian morality falls, and my faith and hope goes down in ruins.

Maybe God Created Fossils

I have a question for the scholars to ponder. Why limit God? Did those fossils, bones, and skeletons ever really live? No one has ever seen them alive, and no one can prove for sure that they ever were! Perhaps God created fossils, bones, and skeletons and set their "atomic clocks" at the same time he created the gold, silver, bauxite, coal, oil, natural gas, iron ore, oxygen, carbon dioxide, and all the rest of the many millions of pieces that

"For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:3, 4).

Dunbar W. Smith
Calimesa, California

make up this puzzle called Earth. All created for our good, some to provide the natural resources we need to exist and enjoy our short life on earth, but some also to confound the wise if they reject his word.

I put my trust in God's Word. He said he created it all and I believe him.

Richard Denney
Lancaster, Texas

Let's Wait for Geologists to Change Their Minds

I saw an article in *Spectrum* entitled "The Many Faces of Adventist Creationism: 1980-1995" (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 3). As I have followed geological development, I have found that the

Letters to the editor are welcome, and will be considered for publication unless otherwise specified. Direct correspondence to Spectrum, P.O. Box 5330, Takoma Park, Maryland 20913 (U.S.A.). The editors reserve the right to condense letters prior to publication.

Earth's age has been estimated to be millions of years and that scientists are never united in their opinion, and never will be. (When I was a teenager, I was taught that the Earth was around 70,000 years old.) Why believe them, since they change the age of the Earth all of the time?

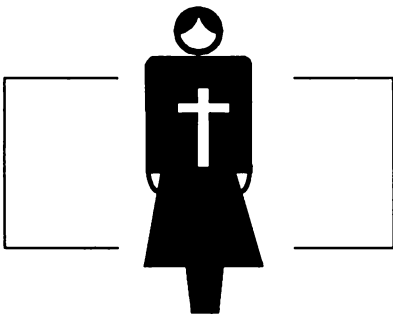
As a medical doctor, I have seen medicine develop rapidly throughout the 55 years I have practiced. As a student, I was taught that fat and meat of all kinds was vital to health, while today the scientists' best nutritional advice is getting very near to Adventist convictions.

You never know when the day will come that geological science will give up its inner dispute and turn to Genesis 1.

J. D. Henriksen
Rossville, Georgia



Is It Time to Use Money to Get The World Church's Attention?



Having a special interest in the issue of ordination of women, the book review by Keith Burton (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 3), with his obvious prejudice against "historical criticism," immediately caught our attention.

Every biblical student (scholar as well as non-scholar) does historical criticism. The problem with historical criticism is not that we do it, but that we disagree about how we ought to do it. Because the term has become tied to a certain school of thought (generally that of the more liberal scholars), it has become pejorative when used by conservatives. Unfortunately, Mr. Burton spends the first half of his review, not disagreeing with the writers' conclusions based on textual grounds, but rather putting them down on stylistic grounds. It is not until the latter half that he begins to argue based on content rather than form. It left us wondering if Mr. Burton did not have a good answer to the positions he criticizes, so resorted to this weak critique of the "historical-critical method."

Ever since the decision of the General Conference Session at Utrecht to refuse North America's request to ordain women to gospel ministry, we have been giving thought to how to respond to our church. As citizens of the United

States, we are forced to acknowledge that our government has a higher standard of ethics in regard to treatment of women than our church does. How do we, in good conscience, invite people to join our church when we have to acknowledge that our church does not even live up to the community standards in ethical treatment of women?

Unfortunately for North America, this issue has become the focus of the world's recognition that they can now control the church by the power of their vote. In their eagerness to take over from North America, they show little concern for the problems they may create for us. Had we, when we controlled the power in the church, shown so little concern for the needs and problems faced in different fields of the world, the church would not now be as large as it is. This creates an unprecedented dilemma for us. Do we suffer the consequences of being the voting minority, or do we act to ameliorate these consequences through channels available to us outside the voting arena?

Being raised in this church, I was taught to believe that individual ethical behavior takes precedence for the individual when put in conflict with the community (church, government, or society). Hence we (the church) praise Martin Luther for stating boldly, "Here I stand, I can do no other, so help me God." We (the members of the church) are much more reluctant to praise the individual in conflict with the Adventist Church, because we have taken a very Catholic view of the church—i.e., the church in session is the voice of God to the people. So what do we do when,

like Joseph Wolfe, we are told that 400 popes say this is the correct way? Do we respond as he did, "400 popes are wrong"?

I find myself with another dilemma. I have believed the use of money to control the outcome to be an abuse of power. Yet, in this setting, that may be the only way to get the attention of the world church that we are serious about this issue. Voting with our dollars can have serious consequences on the world church and the mission of the church as a whole.

One of the ways we have been responding to this issue is to put our money where our mouth is. A number of years ago we set up a fund at Walla Walla College—the "Women in Ministry Fund." Because we are not rich, it started out small. Over the years it has grown. The fund was set up as a loan fund with no interest accruing until the student was finished with school and was working. As of June 30, 1996, there was \$4,659.38 in the fund available, and two loans outstanding in the amount of \$9,954.91 for a total value of \$14,614.29. As you can see, by setting it up this way it grows and eventually could become self-supporting. We thought we would share this with you (not to toot our own horn—we would rather continue our pattern of anonymity), but as a springboard of ideas for others. Anyone who wants to can contribute to the fund at Walla Walla College, or can set up their own fund at one of our other Adventist colleges.

We believe it is time to get creative about getting the Adventist Church to move on, and are interested in any and all ideas other members may have. This issue has become a burning one for us, and we would greatly appreciate others' insight.

Dave and Sandi Reynolds
Canby, Oregon

The New Testament Does Not Bar Women From Being Pastors

I am glad that Keith Burton agrees that women may be ordained, but puzzled by his position that “the real issue is not ordination, but officiation” (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 3). He would allow an ordained female evangelist to raise up a church, but not pastor it. She could be the leading evangelist, but not first pastor. What is the ordination for, if not for “officiation”? I wonder whether God is that concerned about our titles and job descriptions.

Burton calls me to task for not paying attention to the Greek words *diakonoi* (servants or ministers), *presbuteroi* (elders), and *episkopoi* (overseers or bishops). He has put his finger on the tension, which I acknowledged, between the fact that all God’s people are equal members of the priesthood of Christ, and the fact that some are called to be leaders. I was dealing with ordination, of course, so it was not incumbent on me to discuss these words, which refer to offices.

Burton would do well, however, to look further at the word *pastor* (from Greek *poimen*, which means shepherd), which appears with this meaning only in Ephesians 4:11 in the New Testament. There it appears along with apostles, prophets, evangelists,

and teachers as the gifts that God has sent to build up his saints for works of service until we all come into the unity of the faith. It was

Malcolm Maxwell on Berecz And Uncle Arthur



As you might expect, the article by John M. Berecz, “Uncle Arthur’s God or Probability?” (*Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 3), caught my attention. Dr. Berecz deals with an important issue and raises some good questions. I did, however, find the collection of stories from *Uncle Arthur’s Bedtime Stories* used to introduce the topic rather curious, inasmuch as four of them make no mention of God or his intervention.

In “Peter and the Pumpkin Seed,” God specifically did not do what

not first an office, but a spiritual gift. It says nothing pro or con about women pastors. The real question is not whom we should appoint to various offices, but whom God has called and gifted.

Ralph Neall
Lincoln, Nebraska

Peter asked in his prayer. “The Boy Who Ran Away From Home” tells the biblical parable of the prodigal son. This leaves only “Saved From an Earthquake” and “Walter and the Wolves” as illustrations of God intervening in the natural order. The other stories teach lessons such as sharing, obedience, generosity, and cheerfulness. (By the way, “Little Miss Grumblestone” should be “Little Miss Grumbletone.”)

As to Dr. Berecz’s main point, it seems characteristically impossible to conclude with certainty that a given event is to be explained as an act of God, the result of the forces of evil, or perhaps natural causes. While I am inclined to agree with the author’s position that “most of the time God does not intervene,” I am prepared to be surprised at the extent of God’s interest and involvement in my life and experiences.

D. Malcolm Maxwell
Pacific Union College

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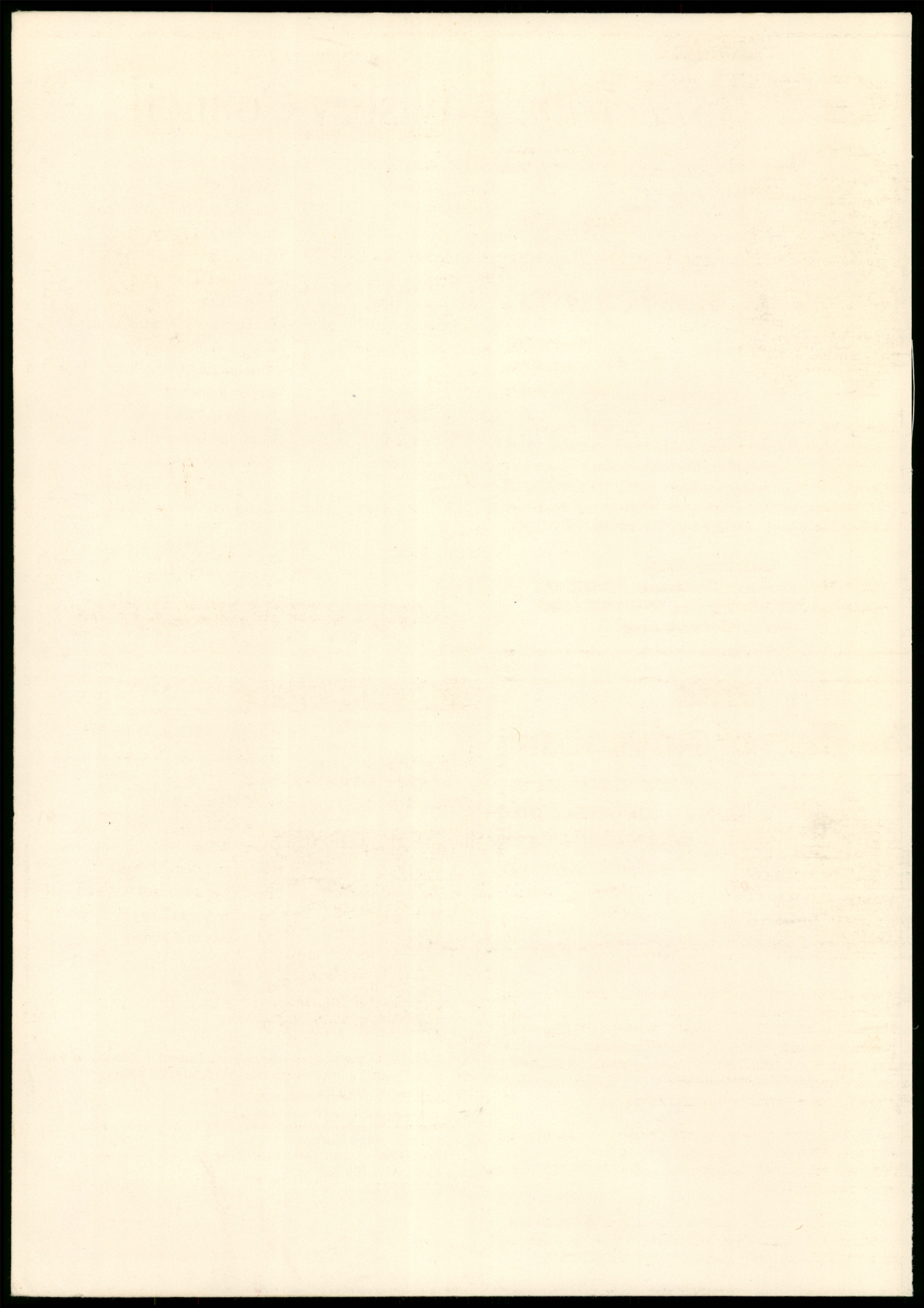
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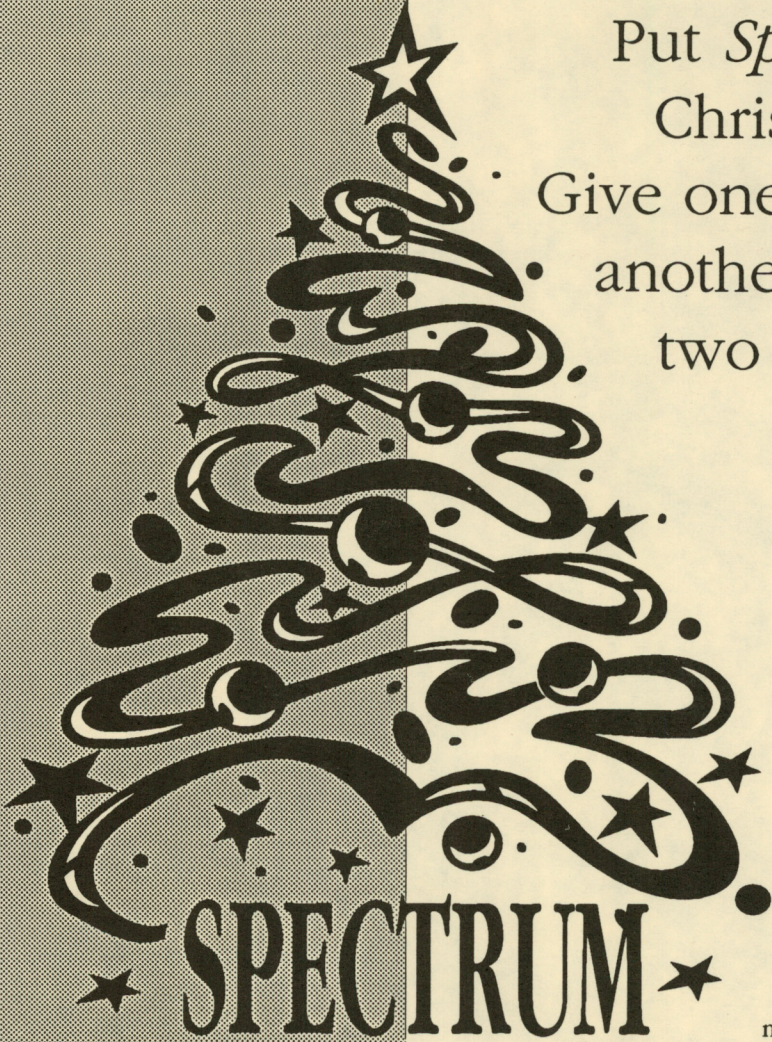
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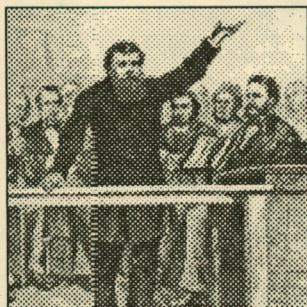
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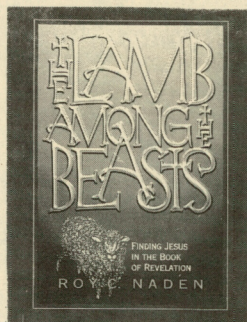
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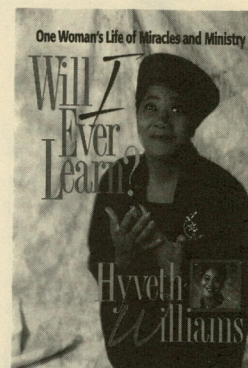
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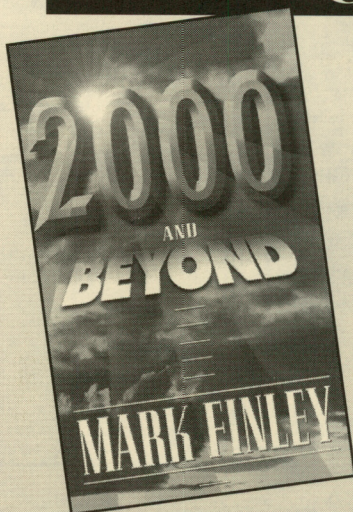


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