



Sabbath with *Spectrum*

Addressing Issues of Current Concern

DEAR EDITOR,

A couple Sabbaths ago, I stayed home from church because I had a sick dog. Scout had thrown up a half dozen times throughout the night, so I wondered if I should take him into the emergency veterinary clinic. I decided that I'd see if he continued to throw up or exhibited new symptoms on Sabbath morning that might require medical attention.

And then I remembered that the new issue of *Spectrum* had just arrived, with its intriguing yellow, green, and blue map on the cover, including the God compass floating between the "Sea of Preparation" and "The Straits of Circumstance." I always flip through the latest issue of *Spectrum* when it arrives, looking at all the art, poetry, titles, and call-outs—just as I immediately look at all the cartoons in the *New Yorker* when it shows up. Perfect. I would brew a fresh pot of rooibos tea, put on the *Harmony* album by The Priests, and dive into the fresh pages.

What a remarkable Sabbath of reading! I began at the back with Brenton Reading's review of *Naked Spirituality*. I had just finished Brian McLaren's *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road?* so I wanted to learn about another of his books. Brenton's very personal responses to the book touched me.

Don Williams's wonderfully organized piece on "A New Mission School Model" has so much to carefully consider, for everyone from our school administrators and parents of school-age children to conference leaders and those who contribute tithes and offerings.

Ruben's energetic tour of faith communities and Petr's discussion of the role of research in mission left me feeling as if I'd just put in some serious mileage from my wingback chair by the front window.

Then, working my way from back to front, I came to the center section of articles on suffering and spirituality.

Any of these pieces would enlighten, intrigue, or inspire me whenever encountered. Yet, because I have recently been confronted by the vast and varied landscape of suffering inhabited by many dear friends or family members, this set of writings addressed many issues of current concern to me.

And so, in a rather tender state of mind, I paged forward to "Mugging at Midnight." This dramatic story is powerful in the images and tensions it conjures and the recorded dialogue. "We won't call the cops. But there's one thing you're going to have to watch out for. We turned you over to God tonight....He's better than cops." I read this piece twice. And I read it at the Easter service at our church.

About the time I would have been coming home from church potluck, I was reading Charles Scriven's editorial, "A New Kind of Adventism." It seemed the perfect summation, a resounding amen, pronouncing a blessing and benediction on all the other pieces in the issue.

Thank you all for a memorable issue that bears re-reading and sharing.

JULI MILLER | *Sun Valley, Idaho*



P.S. Scout (*above*) recovered with no medical intervention.