

# EDITORIALS

## Since 1969

BY ALEXANDER CARPENTER

On day one in the office, I took time to reread the first *Spectrum* editorial by the scholar-physician Molleurus Couperus. He wrote in the winter of 1969 that,

few if any periods in human history can equal ours in the magnitude of change to which we are subjected or in the degree of tension and chaos that are interwoven. These disjunctions and alterations are evident in the political, economic, and ideological struggles that tear at the very roots of man's existence. Science, technology, philosophy, and religion, all, are involved in our feverish striving for change.

Sound familiar? The players differ; the issues have shifted, but the radical tension remains. The institutions modern humanity planted as a hedge against the subjective hordes of chaos now, too, often appear to be withering in the lukewarm winds of popular opinion and mission drift.

Fifty-three years later, *Spectrum* remains. Why has it survived? The short answer is Bonnie Dwyer, my friend and mentor for two decades. I dedicate this issue to her. When I first read the journal in the library at Andrews University, I knew it represented "my people." Not everyone gets it and not everyone needs it. But many of us do. For growing that vision through generous support, I am eternally grateful to you all, dear readers.

Over two hundred issues of the journal exist since Dr. Couperus wrote. And who would have imagined that last year the *Spectrum* website would receive 1.9 million pageviews by hundreds of thousands of readers around the world? How *does* it hold on through the turmoil?

Couperus bookends that first editorial with the following:

Discussion of the important issues of our time ought to be frank, sincere, tolerant, and charitable. As much as we are able, we hope to look without prejudice at all sides of a subject, to evaluate the merits of diverse views, to be critical only if we can do so constructively, and to stimulate discursive interchange among readers. In all this, our purpose is to promote growth and development.

Is that purpose the secret? I do know that those values are the seed of *Spectrum*, implanted at the start. Its genesis supports change, the adaptive flexibility that's needed for growth and development. Whatever people think of *Spectrum*, it's not a hedge, stuck in the mud, to be pruned and protective. *Spectrum* evolves through living beings who seek abundant life through spiritual growth. But this active faith moves beyond the personal. *Spectrum's* collective witness publicly represents the natural power of variation and liberation. We move from where we were planted, finding again and again the hard truth that intellectual honesty does uproot. But we dig deep to rise again beyond the horizon.

Perhaps that's why *Spectrum* persists. It's more like a murmuration, a group of living beings holding together for a higher purpose. Together, we fly above the *hortus conclusus*. The leap of faith that *Spectrum* took in 1969 turned out to be gravity defying. History and the scientific method matter. Principles are prologue. Now we orbit Adventism and beyond, independent, open, critically engaged, and charitable to all.



ALEXANDER CARPENTER is executive editor of *Spectrum*.