

ADVENTIST Review

November 8, 2001

World Edition



Bert B. Beach:

Adventist Statesman

Irina Hounded Heaven

When I Was a Child

LETTERS

Thank You, *Adventist Review*

We share with you in your loss, the feeling of violation, and the yearning for people to be alive. I stood in tearful surprise as I witnessed the face of evil attacking your shores, and I felt as if I had just lost loved ones. Yet I was not afraid, nor feeling alone. My church family has helped me, a young Adventist, realize that God is our personal Savior. This I will never forget. I pray your nation turns to the only One who can bring us the peace we dream about, no matter what each person's background.

I thank the *Adventist Review* for the inspiring articles of people making Christianity real and being Christ-focused. Knowing Jesus is here among the victims, the families, the rescuers, the nations, and each person who needs healing right now comforted my journey home from work on Tuesday, September 11. For those looking for the simple truth, I wish them to know that God came to give us life, and not death; He came to give us the love of everlasting life. God promised this, and He will keep His promise to you!

—Lowell Baricanosa
LONDON, ENGLAND

Total Trust

I got the impression that Stephen Chavez, in "Total Trust" (Sept. 13), was equating the gift of salvation to immortality. It is much more.

The gift of God (John 4:10) is Jesus

and His life imparted to the believer through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In receiving by faith "the judgment . . . by one to condemnation," people receive "the free gift . . . of many offences unto justification" (Rom. 5:16). Then "they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness" will "reign in life by . . . Jesus Christ" (verse 17)—not merely judicially, but, much more, experientially also.

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the visible, audible, palpable manifestation of the life of God through Christ in the true believer. The divine life uniting with the human life is seen in a Christlike character and divine-human power blessing the Christian, the body of Christ (His church), and the world. Also the varied gifts of the Holy Spirit are manifested as Divinity supernaturally develops and refines the natural gifts. It produces the fruit of the Spirit, in which it is seen that faith engenders more faith, love more love, joy more joy, and temperance more temperance (Gal. 5:22, 23). This fruit carries within it the seed that falls into the ground and dies, then lives ever more gloriously anew as the cycle of life is repeated endlessly in the human within whom Divinity has come to dwell. The Incarnation is reenacted forever and ever. This is eternal life.

—Ray Hetland
PONOKA, ALBERTA, CANADA

The Adventist Adventure

I recently received your special issue

for new members—"The Adventist Adventure." How welcome! It is a "must read" for all Adventists who read English. How thoughtful of the editors to have included "Learning the Language"! We so often forget that we have our own language. I can still recall someone stifling a giggle because I hadn't understood the expression "MV" (which is now, of course, "AY"), although this happened 35 years ago. French Adventists refer to this language as "*le patois de Canaan*." I've never asked why.

—Norman Thompson
MANDEVILLE, JAMAICA

What a wonderful idea. This special issue will be such a blessing to our babes in Christ. Especially "Learning the Language."

When I joined the church I sat with my little boys in cradle roll, then in kindergarten. I learned Bible stories right along with them. As they advanced, I stayed on as kindergarten leader, later helping as Pathfinder counselor. Then I was asked to be lay activities leader. I explained that I didn't know what a lay activity leader did and was assured that I would do just fine. I had heard the term *layperson*, but I thought this must be a saintly person in the church—probably someone who gave Bible studies or helped the pastor. The person from the nominating committee patiently explained that it was the same as missionary leader. *Well*, I thought, *maybe I could send stuff to the missionaries. I could do that.*

Fortunately for the local church my

husband was transferred to another area. There I found out what lay activities means.

—**Jackie Johns**
MODESTO, CALIFORNIA

I was so pleased to see the special issue of the *Adventist Review* in my mail today. I appreciate this effort to create an overview of the church for new members.

However, by the time I got to page 28, “Learning the Language,” I was very disappointed to see that one of the best organizations in the church was eliminated from the glossary of terms—that would be ASI—Adventist-Laymen’s Services and Industries.

Since ASI is dedicated to supporting the Seventh-day Adventist Church in a variety of projects, I found it amazing that it wasn’t identified as the energetic, enthusiastic, mission-minded group of laypeople living their motto of “Sharing Christ in the Marketplace.”

The newly baptized (and even the longstanding) members need to be reminded that there are many businessmen and businesswomen in the church who are mentoring and supporting lay evangelism. If the *Adventist Review* isn’t aware, please visit our Web site, www.tagnet.org/asi, to brush up on what the laity is doing.

I hope you will make a note to include ASI in your next special issue.

—**Sharon Robberson**
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, ASI

The Adventist Review appreciates ASI and the significant contribution it makes to the ministry of the Adventist Church around the world. But for lack of space ASI—and lots of other Adventist ministries and departments—was not mentioned.—The Editors.

A People Adorned

I would like to thank you for including this article (“A People Adorned,” by Keavin Hayden, Sept. 20) in the

Adventist Review Online, and I suppose that this was to assist in generating a healthy discussion about the topic of jewelry. However, the article appeared to be out of context in light of research by the Biblical Research Institute and also in the book entitled *Jewelry in the Bible*. It would be wise for Hayden to react to that book instead of seeking to do some exposition on texts without any depth in his study as it appears in the online article. The quotes are totally taken out of context and can mislead individuals.

—**Steve Thomas, pastor**
UNITED KINGDOM

Doing Justly

Chris Blake, in his “Doing Justly (Part One on Micah 6:8)” (July 19), seemed to be quite excited that the “living-wage movement is now sweeping the country.” He implies that such a government-mandate wage would show justice to the poor. While Mr. Blake is an accomplished writer—and undoubtedly an excellent English professor—he is apparently not well schooled in basic economics. Perhaps he should take Economics 101. As part of the course, he might learn of a recent study by two Stanford University researchers, MaCurdy and McIntyre.

In their study assessing the effects on the workers of increasing the minimum wage, they found that 75 percent of minimum-wage earners actually encountered a lower standard of living, because of the higher prices that result from the wage increase. Often the best of intentions result in making the situation worse. Perhaps the goal of “doing justly” by the poor would be better met by encouraging young people to take education seriously and not drop out of school.

—**Richard Wright**
HUNTINGTON PARK, CALIFORNIA

ADVENTIST Review

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Out of the Ashes
While the United States and the world reeled from the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., Adventists, young and old, stepped up to make a difference.

ADVENTIST Review

"Behold, I come quickly . . ."

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All in Our Heads?

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

Is God a creation of the human brain? Are religion and spiritual experiences all in our heads?

A number of neuroscientists answer yes on both counts. They are part of a worldwide effort to understand the biological basis of spirituality in a new field of study dubbed “neurotheology.”

According to a cover feature in the May 7, 2001, issue of *Newsweek*, “Religion and the Brain,” researchers are studying the effects of Buddhist meditation, Christian prayer, and other spiritual experiences on the brain. Using powerful brain imaging technology, they have correlated a sense of being one with the universe with decreased activity in the parietal lobe, divine feelings of love and compassion with changes in the frontal lobe, and a profound awareness that religion has changed a person’s life with activation of the temporal lobe.

And in Canada, reports the June 17, 2001, *Washington Post*, Michael Persinger fits people with magnetized helmets that produce “spiritual” experiences. According to Persinger, even secular people have “a mystical experience, the feeling that there is a sentient being or entity standing behind or near” them (in “Tracing the Synapses of Our Spirituality,” pp. A1, A9).

Many of the scientists engaged in this research are noncommittal as to the implications for God and religion. Some are themselves religious people. But for others like Persinger, a professor of neuroscience at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, the research leaves no doubt: “Religion is a property of the brain, only the brain and has little to do with what’s out there.”

I expect we will hear more about this research and its implications. I anticipate that atheists and others will seize upon it in attempts to discredit all religion. Young people in schools and universities who express faith in Jesus may become objects of the scorn and derision of professors and fellow students.

So let’s take a clear, calm look at what is being claimed by those who belittle God and religion.

Are the purported results surprising? Not at all. The brain is the organ for *all* our experiences. If we are able to know God, it will be only through the brain. That certain parts of the brain may be associated with particular spiritual experiences is just

what might be expected.

But it’s a far cry from understanding the brain as the organ through which God communicates with us to viewing the brain as creating the notion of God. Daniel Batson, a University of Kansas psychologist, quoted in the *Post* report, put the point well: “To say the brain produces religion is like saying a piano produces music.”

Thus the *Newsweek* article is amazingly shortsighted as it concludes: “But it is likely that they [scientists] will never resolve the greatest question of all—namely, whether our brain wiring creates God, or whether God created our brain wiring. Which you believe is, in the end, a matter of faith.”

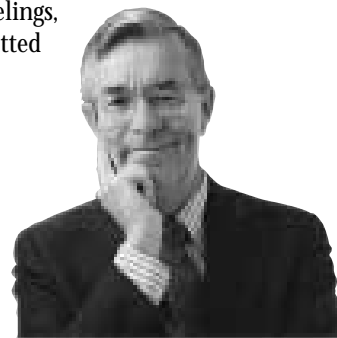
Come on, *Newsweek*. This incredibly intricate organ, this super computer we call the brain—did it just happen? To suggest that it did flies in the face of reason, of all that we can see and test in our experience. Our very brain cries

out that it’s the work of a Superbrain, a Supermind. The alternative view can’t be just a matter of “faith”!

A third objection: the view of religion and spirituality held by many of the “neurotheologians” is shallow and unsatisfactory. It collapses religions into one homogeneous mass; it levels distinctions between Eastern mystics and Christian saints; it suggests that spiritual experiences are simply a brain function that anyone—believer or unbeliever, secular or religious—can access under the right conditions.

The mistake lies in identifying religion with particular experiences. But religion is much more; indeed, its essence—certainly for biblical religion—lies elsewhere. For the believer in Jesus Christ, the heart of it all isn’t mystical experiences or particular feelings, but *faith*—which is quiet, committed trust. Knowing God means that Jesus is Savior, Lord, and Friend, whether we feel He is close or whether He seems far away, whether we sense our prayers are answered or whether the heavens above us seem like brass.

*How far the
new field of
“neurotheology”
really takes us*



Really!

Billows of smoke and dust were still rising from this past summer's terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon when a number of Adventists began dusting off their prophetic time charts and rushing to predict that we're really, really, really living in the time of the end—really.

Predicting the future is an inexact science, but that hasn't stopped a number of people from imagining a host of scenarios in which the closing events of history, as predicted by generations of Adventists, will finally come to pass. The implication is that now is the time to be *really* serious about our relationship with Christ.

Well, pardon me, but many of us have been serious about our relationship with Jesus for quite some time now. We've made a science of following the apostle Paul's counsel and claiming his promise stated in Colossians 3:2-4: "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (NIV).

I deeply resent the notion that by and large the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is made up of a bunch of slugs who have to be frightened into a deeper commitment with Christ because this is—really—the time of the end. In fact, as a movement we've been committed to keeping the Adventist message authentic and contemporary for more than 150 years. Throughout that time God's message has been taken to almost every country on earth, and Adventist lay members and leaders, hospitals, clinics, schools, and churches have done a world of good.

If this past summer's terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., served any purpose, they reminded us that there's much more to do before we can claim to have fulfilled Christ's gospel commission. This is no time to retreat to the "safety" of some Adventist commune. It's a time to throw ourselves into the work of touching people where they live, meeting their needs, and inviting them to have a relationship with a God who's coming to cleanse this planet of sin's stains once and for all.

If, during the past 150 years, there's one sin we as a church have to repent of more than any other, it's that we've spent too

much time talking to ourselves about ourselves. We've somehow accepted the notion that God cares more about whether we are ready for Jesus' return than He cares about the millions of people who have never heard the name of Christ, nor seen a tangible demonstration of His love, mercy, truth, and justice.

Too many among us have cultivated a "crisis mentality," in which we lurch from crisis to crisis, making incredible claims, all in the mistaken belief that if logic and reason don't persuade people to accept Jesus, they can be scared into having a viable relationship with Him.

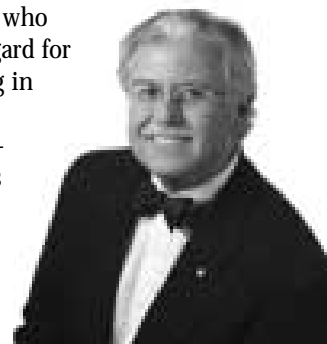
If the nearness of Jesus' coming frightens us, or causes panic and desperate soul searching, could it be that we have yet to understand the assurance and stability of knowing Jesus as our Savior and the satisfaction of being collaborators with Him?

Frankly, the idea of the judgment and Jesus' second coming used to frighten me. But then I learned that Jesus came to save us, not to condemn us (John 3:17); that He offers to take away the filthy garments of our own righteousness and clothe us with the white robes of His perfect righteousness (Zech. 3:1-7); and that His ultimate goal (which will not be denied) is for us to spend eternity in His presence (John 14:3; Rev. 21:3).

If I knew for a fact that Jesus was coming before the end of the year, there's very little I would do differently. My conversations would take on new urgency (like those of the people trapped in the World Trade Center who called their loved ones to tell them they loved them), but I'd still do my job, I'd still serve my community, I'd still rejoice in my relationship with Jesus. I wouldn't panic, because being ready is what I am.

Someone needs to tell those who apparently have such a high regard for prophecy that we've been living in the time of the end for a long time now. If we want a relationship with God that will carry us through tough times, the time to cultivate that relationship with Him is, and always has been, now. Really.

*Jesus came
to save us, not to
condemn us.*



Bert B. Beach: ADVENTIST STATESMAN

Sometimes a group does not recognize they have a treasure in their midst.

BY ROY ADAMS

IT WAS SWELTERING hot in Canberra, Australia, that February afternoon back in 1991. And the normally security-conscious officials of the World Council of Churches (WCC) let down their guard, directing that the side doors be opened to let some fresh air into a stuffy auditorium crammed with delegates from around the world.

However necessary, it was a development tailor-made for a couple of disgruntled Adventists who'd been stalking the assembly ever since it opened. As if the portals had been thrown ajar just for them, they quietly marched into the auditorium without warning. In front of thousands of stunned delegates gathered in plenary session, and in the name of Seventh-day Adventists, they unfurled a huge banner denouncing the Catholic Church and accusing the WCC of pandering to Rome.

It was a coup—you've got to give it to them. They even came armed with helium balloons that, as they left the room, hoisted the banner to a spectacular perch high up at the ceiling, its silent message continuing to stare down the astonished assembly. For more than a half hour the entire proceedings came to a dead halt as mortified council leaders scrambled to bring things back to normal.

In the back of the auditorium was a five-foot-six-inch Adventist gentleman getting ready to stand tall for his



PHOTO BY LUDI LEITO

Bert Beach is at home fielding questions.

church. A veteran WCC observer, he didn't take long to realize that the reckless twosome had single-handedly plunged the Adventist Church into deep embarrassment and brought its name into serious disrepute. After a quick confab with South Pacific Division public affairs and religious liberty director Ray Coombe and me (Ray and I were both attending the council as reporters and had watched the incident unfold from the balcony), he secured permission to address the delegates, a rare privilege for someone in his special-observer category.

His articulation of the Adventist Church's position and how we viewed the rude interruption of the council's legitimate business truly did us proud. And as the international delegation broke out into sustained applause when he finished, in my mind I said: *There goes an Adventist statesman.*

Who was this unusual character who, on the spur of the moment and in the wake of public embarrassment, could rise to such heights of compelling eloquence in behalf of his church? Who was this man who, notwithstanding the heavy tension of that sultry Canberra afternoon, could bring relaxed laughter to a crowd so recently provoked?

His name is Bert B. Beach. Up until his retirement* in July 1995 he served as public affairs and religious liberty

(PARL) director of the General Conference (GC) of Seventh-day Adventists, probably known by more religious leaders outside his church than any other Adventist alive today. I sat down with him at our offices in Silver Spring, Maryland, to probe into his mystique. I wanted to learn some-

Adventist aunt in Oregon, attending Laurelwood Academy in that state and, later, Walla Walla College in the state of Washington. It was at Walla Walla that his parents met.

The first of three children and the

towering figure in the area of religious liberty. It was perhaps from him that Bert received his first spark of interest in public affairs and religious liberty, an area that would later come to dominate his life. While living in Paris in 1951, he enrolled in the University of Paris (at the Sorbonne), where he studied under the noted French historian Rene Renouvin, graduating magna cum laude in 1958 with a Ph.D. in history.

Growing up in Europe, Bert missed out on many things in his home country, the United States. The plus side, however, is that he now has fluency in no less than five languages: English, French, German, Italian, and Swiss-German, the last being the

everyday language spoken in Switzerland. One Sabbath last April I had the privilege of traveling with him and others to La Lignière, the place on the shores of Lake Geneva where he was born. Current General Conference PARL director John Graz delivered the sermon in French, with Bert translating. Then as we walked to another building for lunch, here was Bert

cracking jokes with some longtime friends, Gianfranco Rossi and his wife, in fluent Italian. I was impressed. I'm sure that over the years he's often looked back with thankfulness to his parents for accepting the call to Europe before he was born. I wanted him to talk about them.

RA: How old were you when you first came to the United States?

BB: I put my feet on American soil for the first time when I was 8 years old. In those days when they sent out missionaries to Europe, it was for a 10-year term. So my parents left in 1926 and didn't go home for their first furlough until 1936.

RA: You dedicated your first book,

One moment Beach can be as serious as a judge trying a murder case; the next, he's got you in stitches. Natural to him, it's also a strategy. "Many times you're dealing with people you don't know," he says. "If you can put them at ease with something that's not too heavy to start with, it kind of oils the machinery."

only boy of

the family, Bert began his education as a first grader in Paris, France, in a building still standing (but which today is part of the French Ministry of Education).

In 1936 he moved with his parents to Bern, Switzerland, his father having been called to be secretary of the then Southern European Division, headquartered in that city. Here his entire education (elementary to secondary) switched to German. The outbreak of World War II put a heavy restriction on movement. And it was not until 1946 that Bert was able to travel to the United States for study at Pacific Union College in California. Then it was on to Stanford University, from where (before he was done) he answered a call back to the Southern European Division.

Located in Paris upon his return, he joined the evangelistic team of Jean Nussbaum, a French evangelist and a

thing about his personal journey, to hear what makes him tick.

RA: Tell me about your childhood and early life. Where were you born; where did you grow up?

BB: I was born on Seventh-day Adventist soil, so to speak—at the Gland [Lake Geneva] Sanitarium in Switzerland, on the shores of Lake Geneva, in 1928. At that time Gland (or La Lignière, as it was—and still is—called) was the headquarters of the Latin Union (no longer in existence), which grouped together the Latin countries of Europe and also included Switzerland (and I think Belgium also). That Latin Union became the nucleus, you might say, of the future Southern European Division, which is now the Euro-Africa Division, more or less.

As Beach went on to explain, his parents were in Europe as Adventist missionaries. His father, Walter R. Beach, was born in North Dakota near the Canadian border, but grew up in Mountain Home, Idaho, just 50 miles south of Boise. His mother, Gladys Corley, a Texan born near Waco, went early to live with her



Vatican II: Bridging the Abyss, to your father; and you have these beautiful words, "To my father, a bright light in the home, a brilliant star in the church, a flame of inspiration and light." How close were you to your father?

BB: Very close. He was my role model. I've had other role models, of course, but my father was by far my most important human model. And in some ways I followed a little bit in his steps.

RA: In what ways are you like your dad? And how are you unlike him?

BB: Well, it's hard to say. I think other people can judge better. But about a year ago I had a strange experience. My father was a rather short man—I'm short, but he was shorter still. Nevertheless, we have the same build. I was in the parking lot of the GC on my way home, and it was getting toward evening. The sun was behind me, and my shadow came up on the ground in front of me. I looked at that shadow, and I recognized my father walking in the shadow! And it really did something to me. It almost seemed as if my father was there walking in that shadow—the steps were the same; it was exactly the way he walked. And I said to myself, "Are we that close?"

RA: That's incredible! That's precious. You dedicated your second book, *Ecumenism: Boon or Bane?* to your mother, with a few evocative lines from John Greenleaf Whittier. What kind of person was she?

BB: She was as wonderful and as good a mother as anybody could ever hope to have. She was fully dedicated to the church, and a woman of prayer. Every time there was some problem she would immediately call us together to pray about it. And she had the big responsibility of bringing up three kids in foreign countries, where sometimes



Here in **Bethlehem's Manger Square**, Christmas 1999, Beach is in the front row during ceremonies to welcome the millennium. At his side is Elaine (née Palange) of Brussels, his wife of 47 years. They have two grown children, both faithful Adventists.



In **appreciation** for his contribution to freedom and interchurch understanding, Beach, in 1998, received from the current president of Poland the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Polish Republic. Polish Union president Wladyslaw Polok and former Polish Union secretary Z. Lyko (extreme right and left, respectively) shared the occasion. The woman pictured is assistant to the Polish president.



Beach's encounter with the **Roman Pontiff** came as a member of the Christian World Communions, and following a special luncheon at the Vatican. The meetings were held as part of ceremonies to honor the martyrs of the twentieth century.

she didn't even know the language.

For decades Beach has served the church as a participant or observer in a variety of ecumenical and interchurch/ interfaith councils. And I wanted to know what events stood out in his mind.

The big event of his life, he said, was his attendance at the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II). "I was probably, if anything, a very typical Adventist worker, primarily interested in my own church. I knew next to nothing about Catholics. Then suddenly I'm approached by F. D. Nichol and his fellow editors at the *Adventist Review*: 'Would you go down to the Second Vatican Council to observe, and then write a few articles for the *Review*?' (Beach at the time was education director of the Northern Europe-West Africa Division, headquartered in England.)

The long-term effect of that

assignment would be to gradually shift his focus from education (the direction of his career up to that point) to the area of religious liberty and interchurch relations.

Not only was Beach able to take in the work of the council, but through a series of fortuitous circumstances he also managed to establish contact with prominent Catholic leaders as well as leaders of the WCC (including the founding general secretary Visser 't Hooft and Lukas Vischer, the key WCC observer at Vatican II). Over the years, starting with that meeting in Rome, Vischer became a good friend and was instrumental later on in setting up the first semiofficial conversation between the WCC and a group of Adventists, "in which, over a period of some four years," Beach says, "we discussed theological issues, including the reasons we Adventists did not feel we could be a part of the organized ecumenical movement as epitomized by the WCC."

To travel with Beach to any inter-

faith function is to see a man thoroughly at home with these religious leaders, having mastered the art of dialoguing with them, negotiating with them, humoring them. For me it's a joy—and an inspiration—to watch.

"This visit [to Vatican II]," Beach told me, "opened to me a whole new world. Before that, I'd have to confess I was really quite ignorant. I didn't even know what ecumenism was really all about." In light of this, I wanted to know what he'd say to and about other Adventists.

RA: Many Adventists are just where you were before that experience in Rome, but are speaking out, nevertheless. What do you say to that?

BB: I think we should try to look at things where they are, *not the way we wish they were, or the way we expect them to become.* You cannot see the WCC today as what we think it will become as prophecy develops toward the end of time. I don't think we should "burden ourselves," as Ellen G. White says, "with these cares and troubles of tomorrow" already today.

Now, the purpose of the WCC since its establishment in 1948 has been to work for Christian unity. And, taken at face value, we have to admit that that is not a bad thing. I mean, unity is part of our Lord's great prayer in John 17: "That they may be one as we are one." We may have problems, of course, with the type of unity the WCC stands for. We feel that maybe their approach to the Bible is too liberal, too political; that not enough emphasis is placed on evangelism, conversion, and personal experience with Christ. (In my book *Pattern for Progress* I talk about why we're not members of the WCC and why we're not planning to become members.) But we should all seek to be accurate in our comments and observations.

RA: Many Adventists are afraid that somehow their faith might become diluted, compromised, contaminated by frequent interactions with people of other faiths. What's your counsel?

BB: I've found that my knowledge of Adventist theology and beliefs has greatly increased and improved as a

result of my contacts with non-Adventists. I find that when you're discussing theological issues with those not of your own faith, you have to be able to stand up and give reasons for your beliefs. In the contacts I've had over the years, I've never been asked or encouraged by any leader in the ecumenical movement to abandon my Adventist convictions. In fact, they say, "Well, you certainly stand up for your beliefs!"

Over the years Beach has practiced what he preaches, cultivating the habit of accuracy in his assessment of other religious communions. And, as might be expected, he has a burden in this area. "We should be very careful what we say about the teachings of other churches," he says, "just as we'd like others to be accurate in what they say about us."

We should be especially careful when we speak about the Catholic Church, Beach says. We should deal with Catholic theology and teaching as they have emerged from the Second Vatican Council and from other contemporary church documents. We shouldn't just use quotations from the nineteenth century or even go way back to the days of the Council of Trent. We ought to make sure that what we say they're teaching is really so.

RA: Your personality seems just the ideal one for meeting and mingling in interchurch, interfaith contexts. But it seems that not every Adventist can do that.

BB: That's probably true. All of us have our gifts. We don't need to have all our ministers concentrating on the Catholic Church or the Lutherans or the Presbyterians or whomever. But a few of us can do that. Others may concentrate on other aspects of the message and do a good work. I see myself as a bridge builder.

RA: I understand you've had opportunities to meet the present pontiff. What were the occasions?

BB: Church leaders who visit Rome like to be able to say they met the

pope, and that's what happened when the Christian World Communions (CWC) met for meetings in that city back in 1997. It was then, as a member of that organization, that I had opportunity to meet the current pope.

Another time there was a celebration honoring the martyrs of the twentieth century, and I felt it would be an appropriate thing to be involved in that, even though I was not there representing the Adventist Church.

RA: So you were not representing the Adventist Church, as such?

BB: That's correct. Even so, I saw one of these occasions as a kind of witness. There were about 20 of us from the CWC greeting the pope in front of some 20,000 Catholics present. Each one would come up and greet the pontiff with a kiss on his ring. But when my turn came, I just shook his hand as I would that of any other human being. To me, that was a little bit of a witness.

RA: You once presented a medallion to the pope. What was that about?

BB: It happened something like 24 years ago, I think, during the term of Pope Paul VI. Once again, it was in the context of a meeting of the CWC, and I was among a group of some 13 persons meeting with the pontiff. Knowing that he had a tendency to present medals to visitors, somewhat as a memento (or record) of the occasion, I felt, *Well, I'd like to give him something.* So I gave him a book about the Adventist Church, with a listing of Adventist beliefs. Then I also gave him a medallion of the GC, the same one as we gave to political and other leaders during that time.

RA: What was on it?

BB: On one side it said, "Behold, he cometh . . . and every eye shall see him." So it announced the Adventist message. On the other side you had the Ten Commandments, an open Bible, and the cross. Nine of the commandments were represented only by Roman numerals, but with numeral IV were the words: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." So the medal presented both the Sabbath and the Advent. I thought this would give a little message

from us as to where we stand.

RA: So here you were, actually giving a witness to the highest official in the Roman Catholic Church, and you caught flack from some Adventists for it.

BB: Yes, I got flack. Some people felt that this was kind of paying homage to the pope.

RA: What particular accomplishments during your term as PARL director of the GC bring the greatest satisfaction?

BB: I wouldn't want to claim that anything were "my" accomplishments. I think it's always a group effort, with my departmental colleagues and the GC administration working together, even though the director must play, of course, a certain leadership role. There are several things I think we could mention. One was to get the Declaration on Religious Liberty voted by the United Nations in 1981, a year after I came to the department.

RA: So the Adventist Church had something to do with that?

BB: Yes, through Gianfranco Rossi (now retired), then religious liberty director of the Euro-Africa Division. Working through our Religious Liberty Association, he was very effective at the U.N., not only in helping get the declaration through but also in having included in it a clause upholding the right of every person to observe days of rest in accordance with the teachings of their religion.

RA: So that's one thing that brings satisfaction.

BB: Another thing was the fact that the GC was willing to undertake an organized approach to interchurch/interfaith relations, creating the Council on Interchurch Relations. We now have a committee that looks after issues of relations with other churches, an important development. We were also able to improve relations with Communist governments of Eastern Europe. We didn't quite realize that things were opening up so much, until everything was ready to fall. But to be able to work in the Soviet Union was significant. And I was especially instrumental in Poland, even receiving, in 1998, a knighthood from

the Polish president.

RA: In this whole area of religious liberty, so subject to unfounded speculation and hysteria, you've proved yourself a symbol of credibility and balance. Unfortunately, there are others in the field who are given to hysterical statements and reactions.

BB: What we have to say should be the truth and not what we think it should be or expect it to become. You have to say it the way it is today. Today the Catholic Church officially says that every human being has the right to follow their conscience and to practice their religion. I mean, that's quite clear. And the proof of the pudding is that in Catholic countries like Poland, Italy, and Spain (now, you couldn't be more Catholic than that), they have actually passed laws recognizing the rights of the Adventist Church, rights Adventists don't have even in some Protestant countries.

RA: Significant, indeed! Does this imply that the predictions we have in the book of Revelation and in *The Great Controversy* about last-day religious intolerance are to be relegated to the very distant future?

BB: Let me say this. The fulfillment of Bible prophecy in the world can happen very quickly. Just think, for example, of the fall of totalitarian Communism. Some of these happened in just a matter of months without a shot being fired. In short order, these regimes came tumbling down. I was in Berlin in June 1989. I'm talking to the secretary of state for religious affairs in the German Democratic Republic [East Germany] and in strong German language he tells me categorically (in June!): "Here in the German Democratic Republic we will not follow the Polish road." Three months later the Berlin Wall was down, and the whole German Democratic Republic went out of existence.

I say this in order to show that things can just shift rapidly in today's world. In a way of speaking, we have right now two superpowers in the world: the U.S. as the political superpower and the Roman Catholic Church as a kind of religious super-

power. And isn't that part of the prophetic picture that we anticipate in the future? So in various ways, yes, prophecy is being fulfilled.

What we have to do is watch and be ready, and not constantly interpret every little thing by newspaper headlines, getting everybody scared to death. Because then, when it really happens, I'm afraid a lot of people will say, "Well, we've heard this so many times over the last 50 years, and it never happened that way at all." So it's like the shepherd boy crying "Wolf, wolf"; and then when the wolf does strike, nobody pays attention.

What Bert Beach has done over the decades (and still is doing) has not been easy. If anyone thinks otherwise, let them try it. In countless cases—through his presence in a multitude of social, political, and religious settings—he has almost single-handedly succeeded in presenting a better face of the Adventist Church to those outside our own communion. We truly have a treasure in our midst.

And if Bert has been active outside the church, he's also been totally involved within it. He told me that for the past 40 years, without break, he's been a member of the GC Committee, and has probably attended more GC sessions than any other living Adventist—13 so far.

But when he spoke about attending his first session—at the Sligo church in Takoma Park, Maryland, as a page—it blew my mind that as late as 1946 such a venue was still an option. How far we've come since then under the blessing of the Lord! With Beach, let's pray that soon such sessions will be eternally over, and we can go home.

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

* Beach is still active in PARL on a part-time basis.

Roy Adams is an associate editor of the Adventist Review.



Soul Talk

BY ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ

Please discuss the meaning of the word “soul” in the Bible. What does it designate?

The Hebrew term *nephesh* in the Old Testament and the Greek *psuche* in the New Testament are sometimes translated “soul,” but they both mean “life, person.” The different uses of those two words help us to obtain a better understanding of the biblical view of human nature. The confusion we face concerning the nature of the “soul” is because of the introduction of the Greek idea of the immortality of the “soul” into Christian doctrine.

1. *The Hebrew meaning of nephesh:* In the Old Testament the term *nephesh* is used in a concrete way to refer to the throat as it relates to breathing and eating (gullet). In Isaiah 5:14* the word *nephesh* is translated “appetite,” but it really means “throat” (see also Ps. 107:9, where “the thirsty” is literally “the dried-out throat” (*nephesh*)). The throat is also the instrument of breathing (Jer. 15:9). The use of the word for the throat indicates that *nephesh* expresses the idea of life and desire, in this case for food and water. The other uses of “soul” appear to be derived from this more concrete one.

2. *The person as a being of desires:* The need of the “soul” for food, water, and breath extends to include desires and emotions in general. In the Bible the “soul” designates the whole person as characterized by desires, wishes, even cravings. This emphasizes that humans are emotional beings. Proverbs states: “The laborer’s appetite [*nephesh*, desires, needs] works for him” (Prov. 16:26), that is to say, motivates him to work. The psalmist prays, “Do not turn me over to the desire [literally, “Do not give me up to the *nephesh* (desire, greed)] of my foes” (Ps. 27:12). Jesus said, “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow,” that is to say, as an emotional being I am possessed by sorrow (Mark 14:34).

3. *The person as a living being:* The need for air or breath allows for “soul” to be used in the sense of life. We find such phrases as “I took my life [*nephesh*] in my hands,” meaning I risked my life (Judges 12:3; cf. Phil. 2:30); enemies “seek my life,” or attempt to kill me (Ps. 35:4; cf. Matt. 2:20); “Your life [*psuche*] will be demanded from you” (Luke 12:20). “Soul” does not designate a part of human nature indepen-

dent of the body, but the totality of the person as a living being (Gen. 2:7). In fact, “soul” is another way of saying “person” or “human being.” The Lord said, “The soul [*nephesh*, person] who sins is the one who will die” (Eze. 8:4). The church must contend “as one man [*psuchē*, person] for the faith” (Phil. 1:27). The “soul,” as a human being, is fundamentally a self, an individual who can in fact die.

“Soul” in the Old Testament refers not only to a living person (Gen. 2:7), but also to a dead person (Num. 5:2; Lev. 21:11).

4. *Grammatical use of “soul”:*

Since “soul” is used to refer to the person as a self, the term came to be used as a pronoun to designate a person. Abram asked Sarai to say that she was his sister in order that “my life [literally, “my soul,”] will be spared” (Gen. 12:13). The Hebrew way of saying “Let me live” (1 Kings

20:32) is “Let my soul live.” The phrase “that my soul may bless you before I die” (Gen. 27:4, NKJV) simply means “that I may bless you.”

The word “soul” is not the best translation of the original Hebrew and Greek terms. In the Bible the “soul” is not immortal and cannot exist independent of the physical body. From the point of view of biblical anthropology (the study of human nature), the term “soul” expresses two main ideas. First, humans are by nature creatures of desires and longings. Second, humans are living beings who eagerly seek to live but are unable to acquire or preserve life by themselves. “Soul” refers to the whole person in need of God, who is the only one who can preserve a human being or extinguish the self forever (Matt. 10:28). Therefore, *nephesh/psuchē* refers to the totality of the person as a center of life, emotions, feelings, and longings that can be fully realized only in union with God.

*Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts are from the New International Version.

Angel Manuel Rodriguez is director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.



*The word “soul”
expresses two
main ideas.*

When I Was a Child

Spiritual maturity should be the goal for all of us.



ILLUSTRATION BY RALPH BUTLER

BY LINDA DE LEON

The following article was first presented as a devotional during morning worship at the General Conference office.—Editors.

MY TEXT TODAY IS 1 CORINTHIANS 13:11, and I like *The Clear Word* paraphrase of it: “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, because I understood and thought as a child. But when I grew up, I put my childish ways of thinking behind me.”

As a child I had high and lofty aspirations for my future career. None of that stereotypical homemaker/secretary/nurse/teacher stuff that women gravitated to was for me. When I was somewhere around the advanced maturity of 5 or 7 years of age, my answer to the proverbial question “What are you going to be when you grow up?” was to indicate that my goal

and greatest ambition in life were to become an ice-cream taster. What more glorious way could there possibly be to earn a living? Just think of spending all day, every day, eating ice cream. And, mind you, that was before anyone ever heard about Ben & Jerry’s¹ with all their wonderful mixtures, and Baskin-Robbins’ 31 flavors² were unknown in my part of the world in those days. We were pretty much limited to vanilla, chocolate, strawberry, Popsicles, Nutty Buddies, and Eskimo Pies.

When I was a child it never occurred to me that you might eventually get sick and tired of eating ice cream. Or even worse, that it might not be good for your health. And as a skinny stick of a kid, whoever thought of gaining weight! I thought only of the temporary joy of cool creamy ice cream sliding down my throat. My childish mind was

fixed on the short-term joys in life. I was thinking of the pleasure that was to be had for just a short moment in time. Why? Because “when I was a child, . . . I understood and thought as a child.”

The apostle Paul doesn't say what ages limit childhood. So we have to assume he is talking about the first period of our lives. Those years before we can clearly articulate our needs, wants, and desires. Childhood—that time when our present knowledge is limited by our environment. A time before we begin to understand adult concepts. My desire to be an ice-cream taster was seriously flawed. When I was a child I thought ice-cream tasters sat around and ate ice cream all day. It was as an adult I learned that professional product tasters take small bites or sips and then rinse their mouths out. They don't have the opportunity to savor great amounts of the food or drink they're testing.

I'd Never Want to Work There

A few years later on a rare family vacation we stopped in Washington, D.C. My mother's goal was to visit the General Conference headquarters. Remember 6840 Eastern Avenue in Takoma Park? I'm fairly certain Mom's idea was not on the top of my father's list of things to do in Washington, and my sister Charlene and I certainly didn't share her enthusiasm to any great extent. Visit an office? After all, to most 9- and 12-year-olds, an office is an office—even the Smithsonian had to be more interesting!

But Mom won, and that visit to the General Conference headquarters at the age of 9 taught me something important. The lesson I took home was that I never wanted to work at the General Conference! All the women I saw working that day had the same disability. Interestingly enough, the men in the office didn't seem to be affected. Later in life I was frequently reminded of the question I asked my mother that day: “Mom, do you have to be deaf to work here?” You see, to my childish

eyes all the secretaries were deaf and wore hearing aids. Most of you are very young and probably never saw secretaries sitting behind desks with ear-phones connected to transcribers on which they listened endlessly to their bosses dictate with some letter, report, or other task to be done. To my childish mind that earpiece meant you were deaf. And I was certainly not willing to become deaf just to work at the General Conference.

“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, . . . I understood as a child.”

My understanding was incomplete.

I was certainly not willing to become deaf just to work at the General Conference.

I had no working knowledge of secretarial work. I was unfamiliar with the concept of Dictaphones and transcribers. My childhood environment had not prepared me for what I was seeing. And so my childish decision was based on incomplete knowledge.

A Deeper Understanding

As a child I learned that God turned water into wine, a fish into a taxi, a sea into a dry path, and five loaves and two fishes into a banquet for thousands. As an adult I want to understand more fully how He can turn me into a person who can glorify Him.

Now, no longer a child, I seek to understand concepts that reach beyond childish understanding. I seek to understand that life's mistakes can also be God's blessings, and I must learn to

take advantage of them.

I know and understand that physical strength comes from daily walks and exercise, but true strength comes from daily talks with God. I seek greater understanding in those daily talks, an understanding that helps me to walk firmly and confidently, knowing that God will catch me when I fall in my spiritual walk.

I desire a deeper understanding of how a Man who spent His life teaching others to live peacefully and to be kind one to another could be hung on a cross, and what the sacrifice of His life means for me.

Just before his death Sir Isaac Newton said: “I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I . . . have been . . . like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself . . . finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell . . . whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.”³

What truths have you found in that great ocean? I invite you to set aside the childhood pebbles and shells and seek an adult understanding of those everlasting truths that are waiting your discovery.

Father in heaven, we ask You this morning to give us greater understanding of the sacrifice Your Son made for us. Help us to use the talents You have so generously given us to discover, in the great ocean of truth, Your wisdom and Your will for our lives. And now as we go to our offices and take up our tasks, enable each of us to reflect Your character during this day. In Jesus' name, amen.

¹Ben & Jerry's is a well-known ice-cream manufacturing company located in the United States.

²Baskin-Robbins ice cream is marketed internationally.

³David Brewster, *The Life of Sir Isaac Newton* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1842), pp. 300, 301.

Linda de Leon is an assistant treasurer of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland.



Adventist Membership Reaches 12 Million

General Conference secretary cites major growth.

BY JONATHAN GALLAGHER, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY DEPARTMENT

When General Conference secretary Matthew Bediako gave his secretary's report to more than 100 members of the General Conference Executive Committee who had gathered for the Annual Council on September 25-27, he brought good news.

As of June 30, 2001, the total world membership of the Seventh-day



BEDIAKO: Soaring growth with sagging retention

Adventist Church reached 12,035,811. This represents one Adventist for every 510 of this world's current population, an ever-decreasing ratio (last year the figure was 1 for every 535). Membership growth is running at a little

more than 6 percent per year. Bediako stated that while it took 140 years (from 1844 to 1984) to reach 4.2 million members, in just five years (from 1996 to the beginning of this year) more than 4.4 million had joined the church.

While such growth gives cause for celebration, "membership retention gives cause for concern," he said. "In 1999 for every 100 members who joined the church, 17 of them were reportedly dropped or missing. In 2000 the figure increased to 20, and for the past four quarters the figure rose to 21.5. The rather high loss suggests the need for careful administrative analysis and response. I believe our soul-winning plans should include good preparation,

follow-up, and a place of worship."

He also commented that the Inter-American Division had the highest membership with 2,166,457 (18 percent of global membership), while Eastern Africa Division followed closely with 2,115,805 (17.6 percent).

To show many of the causes for church growth, Bediako also gave some highlights of the church's ongoing programs:

Global Mission: The 10/40 window in Europe and Asia and the postmodern West remain the primary challenges for the GC Office of Global Mission. The successful church-planting program SEEDS is now working closely with Global Mission and specializes in starting new churches in the secular West. The new Total Employment program is beginning to grow in North America, with plans to begin in other divisions.

This program encourages graduates from colleges and universities to seek employment where there is no church, in order to help establish new congregations. Starting new churches in unentered areas remains Global Mission's reason for being. Global Mission has set a goal for establishing 25,000 new congregations by the year 2005.

Adventist Volunteer Center: Since the center was established, there has been a steady increase in volunteers. In 1998, 1033 volunteers were sent out; in 2000, the number was 1526.

"It is most encouraging to see that a number of divisions are convinced of the value of mobilizing the laity for service and are appointing personnel

to promote volunteerism in the field," Bediako said. "Our goal is to encourage churches to sponsor some of their youth to go out as volunteers."

ACTS 2000: One of the church's most ambitious evangelistic efforts was planned nearly three years ago by Its Written speaker Mark Finley. ACTS 2000, a massive global evangelistic series, involved 10 satellite meetings around the world in two and a half years. ACTS 2000 brought 1.5 million participants together and resulted in 150,000 baptisms.

"Finley and his team are grateful to the more than 150,000 laypeople who joined with pastors to provide spiritual preparation, follow-up, and nurture to the nearly 2 million interested people who attended these meetings," Bediako said.

Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries (ASI): Bediako also acknowledged the members of ASI who provided DVD evangelistic tools and of Maranatha Volunteers International who built new churches in many parts of the world.



PHOTO BY CARLOS MEDLEY

POINT OF ORDER: GC vice president and GC committee chair Calvin Rock recognizes a committee member.

Church Finances

In his treasurer's report Robert Rawson noted that it's high time for budgeting priorities and the allocation



PHOTO BY CARLOS MEDLEY

RAWSON: Handling dollars and sense

of resources to be driven by the church's mission. He noted that mission is the central focus of the GC's strategic planning process. Rawson also expressed thankfulness for the church's unprecedented growth in membership and offerings. "It is with heartfelt gratitude to God and His faithful people that I report to you that the Lord has again richly blessed the church in this past year. We are able to report a surplus available for the supplemental budget of \$7.5 million from the year 2000's operations. From 1997 through 2000 the total released in the form of supplemental budgets has been \$37,702,700." These extra appropriations, above the regular budgets, are dispersed to GC divisions and institutions when the GC's working capital exceeds policy requirement.

He noted, however, that the GC and the church's 12 world divisions were phasing in the tithe-sharing plan, voted at the 2000 Spring Meeting. Under this new plan each division, at the end of a five-year phase-in period, contributes an equal amount to the cost of operating the General Conference office. In 2001 overseas divisions increased their remittances to the GC from 1 percent to 1.2 percent of tithe, while North America reduced tithe remittance from 10.72 to 10 percent. Rawson acknowledged that the phase-in caused some painful adjustments.

Highlighting another serious concern, Rawson told committee members that there are numerous requests from church entities for exceptions to the denomination's salary scale. "The number, extent, and nature of these exceptions have grown to the point that exceptions to the church remuneration

scale are becoming the norm rather than the exception. This trend is serious, and the world church must consider an appropriate response," he said.

A report from the Remuneration Study Commission, which is reviewing the church's remuneration philosophy, will be presented at the 2002 Spring Meeting.

Following the treasurer's report, committee members voted the 2002 world budget of \$114,084,600. This represents an increase of 1.8 percent over the 2000 budget of \$112,019,012. Officials also say the cost of GC in-house operations for 2001 will fall well within the 2001 expense cap.

Hope in Crisis

Introduced by GC president Jan Paulsen, the Hope in Crisis plan was voted by the committee. Hope in Crisis is "a worldwide program aimed specifically at times and areas of great calamity. Hope in Crisis invites people in the midst of tragedy to reconnect with eternal values as revealed in the Bible," says the proposal document.

North American Division president Don Schneider spoke regarding the terrorist attacks on New York. "Things have changed. Lives have changed. People have changed," he observed. "Now, what are we going to do about it? I have called our union and conference presidents. I told them I was asking for 'a lot of money and your best personnel.' Conferences and other organizations are adopting sections of Manhattan. We are giving hope in this time of crisis."

He also spoke about the intention to conduct 100 evangelistic meetings. "Sharing Jesus and what we have will make a difference in New York, for the name of Jesus is looked on differently than it was a few weeks ago." The pamphlet "Attack on America," by Mark Finley, was distributed, illustrating one approach for reaching the people of New York.

GC vice president Ted Wilson responded, "I am excited about this initiative. New York is a symbol of how we can work in the rest of the

world. I'm glad we're giving such a strong emphasis for the urban centers of this world."

Mission Agencies Conference

The committee approved a proposal from GC vice president Lowell Cooper for a cross-cultural mission agencies conference. He said that "many organizations and groups are doing much mission work around the world. This is a fine opportunity to place the evangelistic activity of various agencies within the wider framework of the world church."

The goals of the conference that will bring together supporting ministries and organizations engaged in cross-cultural mission activities are: to embrace the strategic issues and goals of the Adventist Church, provide a forum to express and create mission strategies, and coordinate resources to achieve common goals and objectives.

Global Mission director Mike Ryan commented that "in the cultures and religions of the 10/40 window we want to share our message of hope for this time. The challenge is almost overwhelming. This plan invites those representing significant resources to catch and cast a common vision for action and facilitate the world mission of the church."

Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director John Graz spoke in support of the proposal. He said, "The conference should be not just about religion but also about the issues of politics, constitutional issues, and our relationship to governments in these areas. We need to understand the laws relating to religion, and to relate to the other religions."

Cooper agreed that mission needs to be sensitive to local issues, taking into account legislation and government relations. The conference will be scheduled for immediately after Spring Meeting 2002.

Get the complete coverage of the 2001 Annual Council, along with additional background documents, on the Adventist Review Web site at www.adventistreview.org.

Southern Union Celebrates 100 Years

BY SHEILA ELWIN, SOUTHERN UNION WEBMASTER

Despite the numbing blow inflicted by 19 hijackers and the complications of closed airports nationwide, approximately 6,000 people gathered at the Southern Union Conference's centennial celebration just three days after the tragedy of September 11. They came together in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 14 and 15 to remember a rich heritage of history and, at the same time, to grieve over the nation's loss.

After the attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., Southern Union administrators were faced with the decision of either canceling the services or moving forward. When Mark Finley, Saturday night's keynote speaker, called to say that he was grounded in Denver, but that he had rented a car for the 22-hour drive to Atlanta, union president Malcolm Gordon determined that the televised celebration would proceed, but with a change of focus.

Those attending heard sermons to grip the soul, witnessed pageant and

fanfare, and poured from their pockets donations for the victims of terrorism. A total of \$20,000 was collected for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency's response in New York City.



PHOTO BY SHEILA ELWIN

HONOREES: Many who contributed many years of service to the union were honored at the worship service, including some of the past union presidents (going back as far as the late 1950s): LeRoy J. Leiske, Alfred C. McClure, Don R. Rees, and Harold H. Schmidt.

The appeal for donations also went to viewing audiences around the world through live broadcasting on Three Angels Broadcasting Network and Adventist Global Communication Network.

Breath of Life speaker/director Walter Pearson's compelling message Friday night included a spontaneous call for rededication. Many came forward, pledging renewed commitment

to God's leading. "After what we had just witnessed on Tuesday [September 11], people were searching for a way to respond, and Elder Pearson's call was exactly what we needed," noted Elder

Ward Sumpter, union secretary.

Don Schneider, North American Division president, reminded all on Sabbath morning that God grieves at the despair, pain, and bewilderment of His children; and that in everything that happens in our lives, "God is there."

Finley, speaker/director of the *It Is Written* television ministry, entitled his sermon "Triumph in Tragedy." It was later used to produce the new

"Attack on America!" outreach brochure by *It Is Written*.

Other features included 23 booths representing publishing, education, ministry, service, and more. The blessings of music and witness saturated the weekend through artists such as Jennifer LaMountain, Charles Haugabrooks, Jaime Jorge, the Oakwood College Aeolians, Southern Adventist University's Symphony Orchestra, and more than 20 other soloists and ensembles.

The event celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the North American Division's first established union. Organized April 9, 1901, the Southern Union then had a membership of fewer than 2,000, less than 75 churches and companies, and fewer than 20 schools. Today its membership is approximately 200,000, with 1,010 churches and companies, 216 elementary and secondary schools, and three colleges and universities.



PHOTO BY RON QUICK

PACKED HOUSE: Approximately 6,000 people attended the centennial celebration held September 14 and 15.

Global Mission Prayer Ministry

DOROTHY WATTS, ASSOCIATE SECRETARY OF THE SOUTHERN ASIA DIVISION

Please pray for the new believers in India.

My life's ambition was to eat two live king cobras to show my great magic powers," says Mandapati Srinivas. "Now my ambition is to tell everyone about the power of Jesus Christ."

Srinivas loved the feeling of power when he swallowed a snake. People far and wide stood in awe of his mastery over the snakes. Then in November 2000 two strangers came to his home village of Enumalla in southern Andhra Pradesh, India, and gathered a crowd. Srinivas wondered if they too were magicians. He discovered they were two Adventist pastors—Nelson Prasad and Nageswar Rao. They had come to tell about the great power of



Srinivas (left), a snake-swallowing magician, has found greater power in following Jesus.

Jesus Christ.

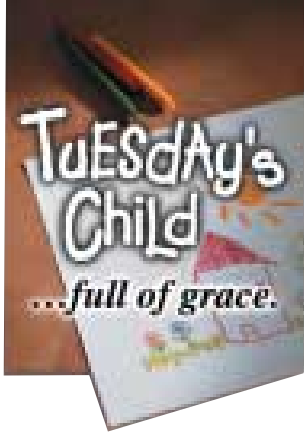
He listened to the stories each day and was amazed. He learned about Jesus, who had more power than he did. He felt attracted to this Man who could heal the blind, make the lame walk, turn water into wine, and raise the dead to life. After many Bible studies Srinivas accepted Jesus as his Savior.

After learning the biblical symbolism of a snake, he turned his back on magic and pledged to follow only Jesus. Now he shares with everyone how the power of Jesus can change lives.

A few months earlier the village of Enumalla had no Adventists. Today there are 250 people preparing for Jesus' return. They pray that they will be able to build a church in their village.

Similar stories are being repeated throughout India. In recent years Global Mission pioneers have brought thousands of people to Jesus in areas where we have had no Adventist believers. Please remember the new believers and the pioneers in your prayers.

For information on joining the Global Mission prayer ministry team, visit www.global-mission.org or call 1-800-648-5824.



Derek and the Nose Ring

Crash! Bang! Boom!

The walls of the old barn shivered as if someone were pounding them with a giant hammer.

Crash! Bang! Boom! Smash!

The sound of wood splintering made Derek stop in his tracks and tug hard on his father's hand. "Dad," he said in a shaky voice, "I don't really need to see whatever's in the barn."

"Oh, we'll be all right," said Dad with an easy smile. "Believe it or not, we're not in any danger here."

"But then what's making those awful sounds?" Derek asked, biting on his lower lip. "It sounds like the whole barn is about to come down."

"Really, Derek, you'll be safe," Dad grinned. "It makes a lot of sound, but it's not going to hurt you."

Derek followed Dad across the barn floor, kicking up straw dust and wood chips as he went. Whatever Dad wanted to show him in this old barn just didn't seem worth the risk.

Dad opened a wooden door and peered in toward a cattle stall on the opposite wall. "There," he said, smiling and gently pushing Derek across the room. "Just take a look at that."

Carefully Derek peered around the corner. There, outlined against the light from a single bulb, was a gigantic animal—massive head, huge legs, and feet that went—

Crash! The wall beside Derek sounded as if it were going to fall apart. Derek scrambled back to Dad and clutched Dad's hand so hard that Dad finally had to pry his fingers loose.

"Here, we'll look together," said Dad, and together they looked around the corner. A massive Guernsey bull, obviously unhappy, was tethered to an iron ring in the wall. Every minute or so he would let the world know just how unhappy he was by kicking the wall with his left foot.

"Take a look at what keeps him here," Dad said slowly, lifting

Derek up on his shoulders to where he could get a good look into the stall without coming near the angry animal. The braided rope from the ring in the barn wall was only three feet long, and it ended in another ring—this one in the giant bull's nose!

"Every time he moves his head very much, that big ring in his nose gets pulled, and it hurts him," Dad said as Derek's mouth dropped open. "As much as he'd like to break free and tear up the pasture, he's not going anywhere as long as that ring is in his nose."

Derek thought about the big nose ring in the giant bull all the rest of that afternoon. What a terrible thing to have to live with! After supper, as the family sat down for evening worship, Derek slipped into his usual spot beside Dad on the couch.

"I think I know why you wanted me to see that big bull this afternoon," he said slowly. "You've been telling me how bad habits can end up controlling us, just like that ring in the nose controls the bull. I'd never want my temper to get the best of me that way."

"Well, good enough," said Dad with another grin. "Now, why don't you tell Jesus what you just told me?"

Family Time

On Tuesday (or whichever day you choose), invite your family to worship God with you.

👉 Read Proverbs 15:17, 18 from several different versions of the Bible. Your family may have the King James Version, the New International Version, the New Revised Standard Version, or several others. Listen to what the writer says about how anger can hurt us and others. Can you think of persons in the Bible who were controlled by their anger?

👉 Ask one of the adults at your family worship to tell you a story about a time when they saw something that made them angry but didn't let it make them "lose their cool." How did they do it?

👉 Sing a song about the kind of attitudes Jesus wants us to have. Try No. 579 in The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, " 'Tis Love That Makes Us Happy."

Since the collapse of Communism, Russians have had other problems to deal with.

IRINA DYACHKOVA HOUNDED HEAVEN

BY MARY THERESA WEBB

ALL HER LIFE IRINA DYACHKOVA, like thousands of her fellow Russians, had sought God. For more than 40 years Communist ideology had attempted to do away with religious beliefs. As Communism began to collapse in the late 1980s, Christianity came out of exile to fill the void.

Many Russians flocked to newly opened Russian Orthodox churches to be baptized. Meanwhile, Western Christians flooded Russia with Bibles, and evangelists held crusades and preached to crowds of spiritually hungry potential converts. Irina was one of those baptized in a Russian Orthodox church who secured a Bible to read.

Although the Bible didn't make much sense at first, Irina read it because of its popularity among the Russian people in the early 1990s.

Civilization's Dark Side

Meanwhile, Russia had become a country with a serious



alcohol problem (see Boris Segal, *Drunken Society* [Hippocrene Books, 1990]). According to recent statistics (*London Times*, Aug. 13, 1999), 40 percent of oppressed and despondent Russian men and 17 percent of Russian women are addicted to alcohol. The newly reconstituted Russian

government did not know how to solve the rising problem of so many drunken people, nor did they have the resources to do so. Other drug addictions followed alcohol addiction, especially that of heroin. Statistics for teenage drug addiction also rose.

In the 1980s Americans in recovery from their own alcoholism came to Russia to begin planting the spiritually based 12-step self-help support groups. By 1991 a few of these seedlings began to take root in Moscow. Meanwhile, Minnesota-model treatment centers, such as the Caron Foundation and Father Martin's Ashley, sent counselors to Russia to start similar treatment centers. This recovery movement coincided with the resurgence of Christianity.

Alcoholism's Human Face

Many women, such as Irina, had married alcoholics. Irina divorced her first alcoholic husband and married another one six years later. Challenged as to how she would be able to provide for a son by her first husband, Irina decided to abort two other pregnancies. Under Communism abortion had become an acceptable means of birth control, and Irina had no desire to bring another child into the chaos and confusion of a drunken home. Instead, Irina worked her way through school and supported her family teaching English at Moscow State University.

In 1990 Irina's second husband started into recovery for his alcoholism at a Caron Foundation-sponsored "Vysdorovlenie" treatment center in Hospital 17.

"When I entered that room with him and read the 12 steps in English on the wall," said Irina, "I knew that God had heard my silent prayers." Yet,

in spite of her husband's recovery and their attempts to heal their broken relationship, in 1992 this marriage also ended in divorce.

One of the American counselors in charge of the treatment program, Jeb Bird, suggested Irina might want to investigate becoming a family therapist. Through the generosity of the International Institute for Alcoholism Education and Training, Irina went to the United States for training in family therapy at Father Martin's Ashley. After her training she joined the staff at the Russian/American Recovery Treatment Center as their family therapist.

However, Irina still carried bitterness toward her ex-husband. She

saying, "Don't seek people; seek Me."

Willingly Irina began her daily walk with Him. She attended Mark Finley's evangelistic series at the Kremlin. Finley's subject, how knowing Jesus brings healing and health to the sick, intrigued her. Night after night she searched for meaning in her own suffering. On Sabbaths she attended Seventh-day Adventist services and joined in a Bible study of the book of Job. She kept searching, and finally opened the door to allow Christ to enter her soul.

Irina no longer needed to hound heaven to find God. On July 17, 1993, she responded to her role in their new covenant relationship by being baptized in the Seventh-day Adventist church in Moscow. The church she joined offered congregational life, teaching on how to live a healthy lifestyle, Bible studies, and evangelistic outreach. All these enriched and nurtured Irina's newfound faith.

Called to Serve

Working on a team with other counselors at the Russian/American Recovery Treatment Center helped Irina find healing from her shame-based past. Through a multidisciplinary approach to treating alcoholism, Irina overcame her initial reticence to find new interpersonal relationships. Constant practice with group therapy interpersonal interactions built trust in her own perceptions of herself and others. Undergirded by her faith, Irina's self-confidence grew along with her professional abilities.

During the next five years Irina became known as an official Russian expert and lecturer on codependence and alcoholic family issues at seminars and on radio broadcasts. At one of these seminars her in-depth

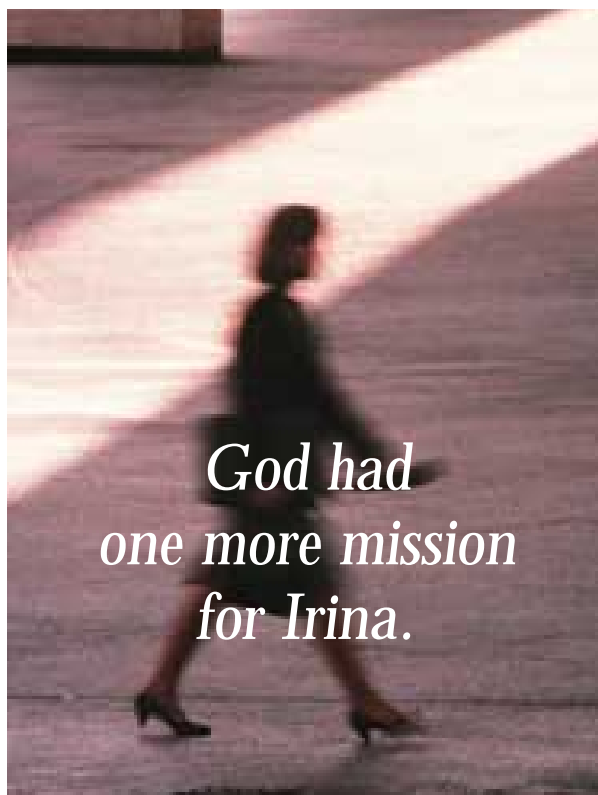


PHOTO © PHOTODISC

prayed that God would release her from this bondage. In February 1993 she sensed the presence of Christ. As He embraced her with His kind and gentle presence, she heard His voice

knowledge of the Scriptures caught the attention of a Presbyterian missionary, Pam Brunson, founder of the church-based OPORA (Russian, "support") training program.

The cross-cultural, interdenominational OPORA was initiated in 1997 to train and mobilize Russian churches to provide recovery resources and set up support groups for suffering alcoholics, drug addicts, and their families in the name of Jesus Christ. By the spring of 2000 this Christian outreach program had trained 1,000 Russians from many denominations in 28 Russian towns and cities.

The Russian Department of Education heard about the success of OPORA. Still strapped for funds and struggling to find ways to stem the rising tide of substance abuse, they begged the OPORA staff for assistance in setting up a prevention program in schools.

Irina, now 53 years old (the age when most Russian women are eligible to become pensioners), wanted to start winding down her busy career. "I still have grieving to do over my past life," she said. "Especially I need forgiveness and healing from my two abortions."

Stresses from coping with an alcoholic husband, raising a son, and taking care of an 89-year-old mother had left Irina physically and emotionally weary. However, God had one more mission for Irina to do for Him.

Strength for the Task

In May 1999, in response to the Russian government's plea, OPORA selected Irina to initiate a school prevention pilot program. In June 1999 she came again to the United States for specialized American prevention training at the Rutgers' Summer School of Alcoholism.

Now, back in Moscow, Irina not only continues her role as a family specialist for the OPORA training team but also oversees the work of an OPORA prevention team. American prevention specialists met last year to prepare a school prevention curriculum

that will be adapted and modified by the Russian OPORA team. This team will then select and train 100 teachers to pilot the K-8 curriculum in two Moscow school districts. The OPORA school curriculum will include Christian family values and setting up support groups for students and their parents.

Irina Dyachkova, the daughter of a Russian Orthodox father and a Jewish mother, will then be able to rest in

peace. Then the Master will say to His servant, "Well done, good and faithful servant! . . . Come and share your master's happiness" (Matt. 25:23, NIV).

Mary Theresa Webb is director of GOAL Ministries (Global Outreach for Addiction Leadership). She lives in Princeton, New Jersey.



Live, From Argentina to Mexico, This Is AWR

GEOFF PATTERSON

Is there anything worse than getting information you need, only a day later than you needed it? This happened to me recently. I failed to check my messages and ended up wasting a day on a trip I didn't need to take.

Timeliness matters to Adventist World Radio (AWR). For this reason AWR has pioneered ways of getting programs from studios to transmitters as quickly as possible. One example is the sending of program files via the Internet, a practice now common in each of AWR's regions.

But the newest and most exciting development in instantaneous program transfer is taking place in AWR's Americas region.

Currently AWR supports 24-hour-per-day distribution of Spanish-language programs via satellite to local Adventist radio stations from Argentina to Mexico. Any station within reach of the satellite signal is free to use as much of the program material as they need in order to supplement whatever they are doing at the local level. The program distribution is coordinated from AWR's Americas region office just outside of San José, Costa Rica, where a dedicated staff of producers, operators, and engineers create and compile the programming.

Until last July these programs were then sent by messenger on CD-ROM to the church's satellite transceiver in Novo Friburgo, Brazil. This meant that often three or four weeks would pass between when a program was produced and when it aired.

But this was not good enough for AWR Americas region director Victor Shepherd. He led his team in the installation of a satellite uplink between Costa Rica and Brazil. Now, at any moment, any signal received at the Costa Rica site can immediately be beamed to Brazil, then to all of South and Central America, even much of North America.

The implications of this are astounding. AWR now possesses the technology and access at any moment to speak live to people from Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, Bolivia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Mexico—even Miami, New York, and Washington, D.C., all simultaneously. Live international pastoral care in the language of the people—what a mar-

velous gift to the people of the Americas.

The AWR team in Costa Rica has wasted no time in taking advantage of this remarkable development. As soon as

the system was online a new health program was launched, a live international call-in show. The program airs over the network of Adventist stations throughout South and Central America, and listeners are given a number they can call to participate. It is possible for a man in Buenos Aires and a woman in Mexico City to have their questions on health answered in the same one-hour program. The response has been fantastic.

The advantage of this system became even more obvious during

September's terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. AWR's Costa Rica studio was able to provide continuous updates to the network of Adventist stations in Central and South America live, as the events unfolded. This gave credibility to our network, because we were able to speak to the issues of the day instantaneously, not three weeks later.

Revelation 18 speaks of the day when a mighty angel comes to the earth, illuminating it with his greatness. And the text explains that, with a loud voice, this angel speaks to the peoples of the earth so that all will hear. Surely a measure of this text is being fulfilled even now through the network of Adventist stations blanketing Central and South America. By God's grace AWR is able to speak today's message today, live, all over a portion of our world where God's work is exploding.

God has put the tools in our hands. The world will be told that Jesus is coming. Please continue to pray for AWR and for the network of Adventist radio stations throughout Central and South America. In these lands where the harvest has already been great, the Lord is preparing to reap even more.

Geoff Patterson is chief communication officer for Adventist World Radio.

*Timeliness
matters to
Adventist World
Radio.*

Bubbles of Privacy and Pockets of Time

I was having a meeting with a CEO in his plush office one afternoon when I felt a pressure on my ears that was extremely uncomfortable. When I made inquiries, the CEO explained that the air-conditioning had been shut down as a cost-cutting measure. That comfortable hum of the air-conditioning was sorely missed.

We are so accustomed to having noise in the environment all the time, be it music from the radio, someone talking on the television, the comfortable drone of a car engine as we drive along, or the gentle hum of the air-conditioning.

Having lived in areas of the world where the human ear is constantly impacted with a barrage of noise, I had difficulty adjusting to my first night at Hong Kong Adventist College, a school set in the countryside away from the din of the city. Sleep just evaded me as my ears felt the pressure of the campus's dead silence. In Hong Kong a steady stream of traffic produces so much noise that teachers are forced to use microphones even in the small classrooms crowded with 30 to 40 students.

People moving, loud talking, the cacophony of trains, buses, cars . . . in such situations teenagers often create their own private worlds by plugging their ears with Walkmans or mobile phones that shut out the sounds around them. We are so accustomed to noise that pure silence seems to be so deafening. It takes getting used to.

In the hubbub of life, especially for those of us who live and work in the cities, is there hope for a strong devotional life? Do we have to move out to the countryside where peace and quiet are possible? Or perhaps get up in the wee hours of the morning to catch the few moments when all sounds are hushed as the world sleeps on? If so, will those of us who are night owls miss out on having this spiritual connection?

Research about learning styles tells us that some people actually make use of noise in the environment to act as a shield from other distractions. Music is often used, which is why many students study with the radio blaring. Parents may find it hard to understand how learning can take place with all that din; nevertheless, it does. The noise creates a bubble

of privacy for the individual, and in that bubble he or she is in a state of learning readiness.

Therefore, folks who live even in the most noisy environment can still enjoy those moments of "stillness," in which God bids them to listen to what He has to say. Within those bubbles the soul can wait for and enjoy the presence of the Lord. These souls stand ready to be educated by the King of the universe.

Another aspect of learning styles explores the time of day people function at their best. Jesus was an early-morning person. The Bible tells us that He sought the quietness and freshness of dawn, while it was still dark, and "went off to a solitary place, where he prayed" (Mark 1:35).*

While many propose that the morning is the best time to come before the Father in preparation for the day ahead, I think the night is equally effective for those who are night owls. According to research into learning styles, different individuals have varying "peak" periods during which they function at their best. Perhaps those peak times are the best times when we can interface with our heavenly Father and get our spiritual lenses back in focus. The time of day or night does not matter. What is significant is the ability to slow down, to be still enough to hear God's voice speaking to us—a stretch of time when we can "wait patiently for him" (Ps. 37:7).

The same Jesus who rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" (Mark 4:39), is calling us to seek out those bubbles of privacy and pockets of time when we can be still and listen to His voice amid the tumult of the raging storms.

* Bible texts quoted are from the New International Version.

We are so accustomed to noise that pure silence takes getting used to.

Sally Lam-Phoon is director of education and women's ministries for the Southeast Asia Union Mission in Singapore.





They Still Go

The following persons have left their home countries for regular missionary service in another part of the world. Please remember them in your prayers.

Regular Missionary Service

Mario Alfredo Collins, returned to serve as editor-in-chief, Inter-American Division publishing ministry, Montemorelos University, Montemorelos, Mexico.

Susan Carol Dixon, serving as professor, Biology Department chair, Mission College, Thailand, and **Bruce Kenneth Dixon**, of College Place, Washington.

Claudio Mariano and **Elba Maria Martin**, to serve as president and office secretary, respectively, Adventist University and Seminary of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh, of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Lester Perry Merklin, Jr., to serve as assistant professor of missions, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, Philippines, and **Lynn Merklin**, of Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Roy Kenneth Kline, Jr., to serve as administrator, Scheer Memorial Hospital, Banepa, Nepal, **Fylvia Kline**, and two children, of Columbia, Maryland.

Carl Herman Koester, to serve as secretary-treasurer, South Sudan Field, Uganda, and **Beverly Koester**, of Silver Spring, Maryland.

Mark Clifford Schwisow, to serve as associate director of ADRA Cambodia, of Kirkland, Washington.

Jeffrey Allen and **Rebecca Lynn Scoggins**, to serve as field secretary, global mission, and associate director, Communication Department, Euro-Asia Russian Federation, respectively, of Laurel, Maryland.

Mario and **Lucy Veloso**, to serve as vice president for institutions and education and assistant treasurer for finance, respectively, Euro-Asia Division, Russia, of Adelphi, Maryland.

William Lamar Phillips III, to serve as global mission coordinator, Middle East Union, Cyprus, of Costa Rica.



McKEE, Helen Louisa Swain—age 95; d. May 28, 2001. She was the widow of the late A. D. McKee, who served as a minister for 30

years in the Southern Union. She is survived by one son, Robert E.; three daughters, Martha Davis, Frances Highsmith, and Charlotte Taylor; 18 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

MELLOR, Ellen Ruth—b. Sept. 4, 1917, Bunker Hill, Ill.; d. June 30, 2001, Redding, Calif. She served in the ministry with her husband, the late Charles Mellor. She is survived by one son, Ronald; and one daughter, Sharon Dunbar.

NORMAN, Paul—b. Apr. 16, 1956, Cleethorpes, England; d. June 25, 2001, Zephyrhills, Fla. He served as president of Adventist hospitals in Tennessee, Colorado, Illinois, and Florida. He is survived by his wife, Donna; one daughter, Hillary; one stepdaughter, Hilary Leigh Tilson; parents, Allen and Monica Norman; and one brother, Richard.

OSBORN, Marion Lorraine—b. Feb. 14, 1912, Brooklyn, N.Y.; d. Aug. 8, 2001, Thousand Palms, Calif. She served as a secretary at La Sierra College and later as a Bible instructor for the La Sierra church. She also served in ministry with her husband, John Osborn, former Southeastern California Conference president. She is survived by one son, John, Jr.; one daughter, Lorraine Day; seven grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

PATTERSON, Claris Baker—b. Jan. 10, 1909, Cottage Grove, Oreg.; d. Aug. 11, 2001, Port Charlotte, Fla. First serving as a music teacher at Walla Walla College from 1932 to 1935, she served with her husband in the Northwest in various capacities until they retired in 1990. She is survived by her husband, Glenn; one son, Gary; one daughter, Jean Robertson; six grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

RATCLIFFE, Rodger G.—b. Dec. 21, 1944, Auckland, New Zealand; d. May 5, 2001, San Diego, Calif. He served as a pastor in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and California. He pastored the Paradise Valley church in San Diego and was a pastor-evangelist for the conference. He is survived by his wife, Pamela; one son, Michael Paul; one daughter, Jennifer Lynn Swenson; and two brothers, Errol Roy Albert Ratcliffe and Ashley Michael Paul Ratcliffe.

RICE, Nelia—b. Sept. 15, 1913, Rangoon, Burma; d. July 8, 2001, Wyong, New South Wales, Australia. She served as a teacher in southern Asia, the United States, and Australia. She was an education administrator in Southern Asia. She retired from teaching at Avondale College in 1977 but continued to be active in education for many more years. She is survived by her husband, Ron; one son, Desmond; and one daughter, Marlene. Her son Terrence predeceased her.

ROSENQUIST, Robert, Sr.—b. Jan. 17, 1921, Madison, Wis.; d. June 29, 2001, Loma Linda, Calif. A physician, he served in the U.S. Army and held an academic appointment at the Loma Linda University School of Medicine until his retirement in 1986. He was chief of endocrine and metabolism at the Jerry Pettis Memorial Veterans Hospital in Loma Linda. He served as a missionary doctor in the Philippines, Afghanistan, Taiwan, Guam, Penang, and at Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in China. He is survived by his wife, Betty; one son, Robert C., Jr.; three daughters, Dianne Peace, Nancy Wernick, and Janie Cochrane; four granddaughters; and one great-granddaughter.

Never Fall Again

OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS I'VE become a bit soft, climatically speaking. You see, I've become accustomed to the blissful weather of the Queensland chunk of this big island, Australia. I've come to enjoy the heat and sun of the summer, and the cooler, yet no less sunny, days of winter. I'm of the opinion that it's much nicer to be out swimming in December than shoveling snow from the sidewalk, or worse yet, four-wheel-sliding on (actually off) the highway.

Despite my dislike of snow and the cold of a Canadian winter, I have always been silently moved with the striking display of color during that season of transition when winter begins to remind the summer that her time is almost over. Fall.

I hadn't thought much about fall here in Australia. Not until attendance at a recent conference facilitated a trip to northern Europe in the final days of September. The Winter Palace, the summer home of Peter the Great, the Neva River—all were impressive sites indeed, but it was fall itself that struck me most.

In the silent yard of Holy Trinity Cathedral, giant yellow-red oak leaves the size of my hand drifted down from somewhere up in the canopy, tumbling past my shoulders and coming to rest at my feet on a 1778 gravestone. And there, in the silence of that place, I began to really see fall for what it means. Despite the vibrant colors of those acrobatic leaves—and all the ones that had fallen before it—I couldn't help knowing that their appearance on the ground before me meant that hard, restrictive times were ahead. Trees had begun to constrict the flow of life-supporting nutrients. Trunks were holding back what they would usually share with the farthest reaches of their branches. Despite the beautiful display of color, death was all around. Each fallen leaf was a representation of a world gone wrong.

The recognition that death is a part of the life we've become accustomed to occurs to many of us for the first time when, as children, we witness the death of a favorite little pet. But that reality strikes at the core of our personal being when death moves beyond the life of trees and pets to claim

one of our own. One of humanity's children. The apostle Paul states the problem this way: "So death, this huge abyss separating us from God, dominated the landscape. . . . Even those who didn't sin precisely as Adam did . . . still had to experience this termination of life, this separation from God" (Rom. 5:14, Message). A mother slowly dying of cancer, a friend suddenly lost in a car accident, a father buried in the World Trade Center tragedy, a brother or sister lost at

sea. Each life lost, like the leaves of fall, is a representation of a world gone wrong, a planet touched by death, a legacy of the Fall.

But there is a side to fall that is just as bright and vivid, just as brilliant and intense, as the stunning hues splashed across the wooded hills in autumn. For with each fall comes the knowledge, the promise, of a time not far away when old dead limbs

will awaken and bud. When the scene of death will be replaced with a vision of vigorous new life.

We too have the knowledge, the promise, of a day that is coming soon. In that day every evidence of the Fall, save five deep scars, will be wiped away forever. "On signal from that trumpet from heaven, the dead will be up and out of their graves, beyond the reach of death, never to die again. . . . We'll all be changed. . . . Then the saying will come true: 'Death swallowed by triumphant Life! Who got the last word, oh, Death? Oh, Death, who's afraid of you now?'" (1 Cor. 15:52-55, Message).

In that first day of eternal spring, new limbs will dance, new eyes will see, new tongues will release their adoration, and no power in all creation will ever stop them again. United at last with the Sun of righteousness, every breath will be taken, every heart will beat, with the eternal assurance that they will never fall again.

*Each fallen leaf
was a representation
of a world
gone wrong.*

Stephen Dunbar is a Canadian Ph.D. student completing his studies in tropical marine biology at Central Queensland University, Australia.

