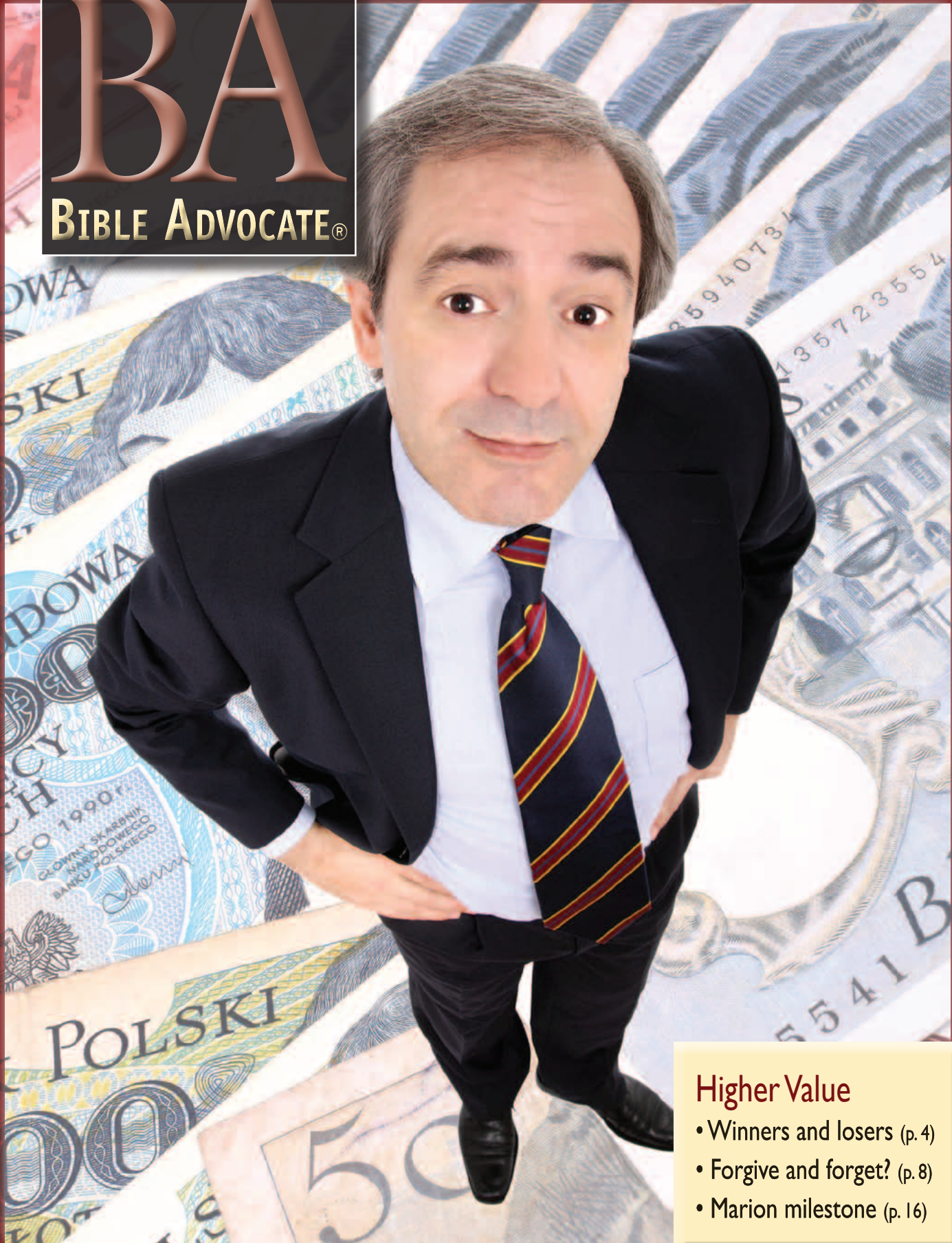


BA

BIBLE ADVOCATE®



Higher Value

- Winners and losers (p. 4)
- Forgive and forget? (p. 8)
- Marion milestone (p. 16)



4



8



13



22

ARTICLES

- 4 **House of Healing, House of Loss** — by Kim Papaioannou, Ph.D.
- 6 **Greedy or Generous?** — by Jael Hamilton
- 8 **'Midst Roses and Concrete** — by Shirley A. Reynolds
- 13 **Why Doctrine is Important** — by Jeff Endecott
- 15 **Life After SVA** — by Alex Rincker
- 17 **150 More Years?** — by Calvin Burrell
- 20 **An Honest Look at Church** — BA Interview with Roger Clay
- 22 **Dreams Renewed** — by Lonna Enox

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 **First Word** — Opportunities Now
- 7 **Questions & Answers**
- 12 **In the Word**
- 16 **Local Snapshot: Marion, Iowa**
- 18 **My Journey** — by Ernie Klassek
- 24 **Mail Bag**
- 30 **International Tour** — Zone 4: India
- 31 **Last Word** — Halftime

26 COG7 IN ACTION

LifeSpring, Publications, West Coast conference, and more



Miss the last issue on civil authority and church revitalization? View it and the current issue, plus download the last eight BA's, at www.cog7.org/BA.

Coming in the November-December BA: Thanksgiving, prophetic topics, Israel and Islam

In the September and October issues of *Now What?*: lessons from a newborn, a widow's special grief (<http://nowwhat.cog7.org>)

Subscriptions and Orders

Bible Advocate Press
P.O. Box 33677
Denver, CO 80233-0677
phone: 303/452-7973
fax: 303/452-0657
e-mail: bibleadvocate@cog7.org
orders: bap.orders@cog7.org



When you see this symbol, visit www.cog7.org/BA for additional material.



A publication of the
Church of God (Seventh Day)
 This magazine is published to advocate the Bible, represent the Church, and glorify the God of grace and truth.

Volume 144 • Number 5

© Copyright 2010 by the Church of God (Seventh Day)

All material in this issue is subject to U.S. and international copyright laws and may not be reproduced without prior written approval. Permission may be obtained by writing the editor.

The BIBLE ADVOCATE (ISSN 0746-0104) is published bimonthly by Bible Advocate Press, 330 W. 152nd Ave., Broomfield, CO 80023. Periodicals postage is paid at Broomfield, CO, and at additional offices. Subscription is free to any who ask. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Bible Advocate Press, Box 33677, Denver, CO 80233-0677.

Bible Advocate Press

Calvin Burrell: Editor

Sherri Langton: Associate Editor

Keith Michalak: Director of Publications, graphics

Sylvia Corral, Raul González: Translation, proofing

LeRoy and Hope Dais, Linda Michalak: Correspondence, proofing, clerical

Michael Mancha: *HeartSpeak* designer-coordinator

Notice: Send all address changes and other correspondence to the address above.

Publications Agreement No. 40042428

Scripture quotations

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the *New King James Version*. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations noted *New International Version* or NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, *New International Version*®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

The Bible Advocate Online appears at www.cog7.org/BA.

Cover photo: @ Rui Matos—Dreamstime.com

Opportunities Now

Beyond this editor's desk, I'm blessed to serve CoG7 as an officer of our North American Ministerial Council (NAMC) in the U.S. and Canada and of our International Ministerial Congress (IMC) in nearly forty countries. The next IMC meeting is scheduled for 2012 in the United Kingdom, near Manchester.



Our next NAMC meeting is just ahead (October 18-23) at Glen Eyrie, a conference and retreat center owned by The Navigators just outside Colorado Springs, Colorado. There we'll honor and hope to energize pastors, ministers, and guests, as well as receive eight hours of instruction on church revitalization from a specialist who serves the largest Protestant church body in America.

Further, we'll study or review and consider action on several doctrinal and political issues of interest to our church. Here's a partial list:

- The manuscripts for a "book of doctrines" to support CoG7's twelve official statements of faith. If approved, these manuscripts could be in book form sometime in 2011.
- The shortage of pastors and leaders in CoG7 and how LifeSpring School of Ministry is working to alleviate the crisis.
- The report of a committee appointed to explore and expound on the new covenant.
- The wisdom of a biennial meeting of General Conference membership, versus a potential triennial convention.
- The Feast Days of Leviticus 23, to discern proper attitudes toward a few affiliated congregations that observe, at some level, these annual Hebrew festivals. (Interested readers may review related BA articles at www.cog7.org/BA.)

When all of us are well informed about these and similar matters, the Church benefits. Pray for your pastors, your Church leaders, and for LifeSpring's efforts (see p. 26), won't you? Since October is Pastor Appreciation Month, why not support your pastor's attendance at Ministerial Council in Colorado this month? Start by asking him if he's registered. If it's still before October 18 on your 2010 calendar, it's not too late for him to attend. For details, call 303-452-7973.

This second decade of the third millennium of the gospel era is an ominous yet auspicious time for those who follow Christ. We still have the choice of giving our best, through the church, to the One who gave His all for us. If not now, when? If not you, who?

— Calvin Burrell



House of

the time will now be given over to me. I preach from Matthew's Gospel about the Lord's accepting love. Again people are in tears.

After the sermon there's a study on the life of Christ. Just as I think we're finished, the leader announces that the time will again be given over to me. This time I am completely unprepared. I offer a silent prayer and announce we will have a question-and-answer session. After some questions, I launch into a prolonged study-sermon on a topic of prophecy that seems to interest this congregation.

We sing, pray, close the meeting and fellowship. It is now evening, and one of the members travels with me to my guest room, more than an hour away.

"Will you be going home?" I inquire as we reach our destination. "No, I will go back to the church," comes the reply. Suddenly it dawns on me: Church is not something they do out of habit once a week; it is a haven. Living in difficult circumstances, church is where they are loved, accepted, and feel they belong to the beautiful family of God. They come tired, sometimes broken, and leave spiritually renewed.

Looking back on my day, I feel tired — after three sermons. Yet I also feel spiritually invigorated. I have felt the presence of God in the love, kindness, and deep spiritual experience of these brothers and sisters I've met for the first time.

A book is not the only thing you can't tell by its cover. **by Kim Papaioannou, Ph.D.**

Not long ago, work took me to Hong Kong for three weeks. As a theology professor, I was invited to teach a Gospels class to a group of Chinese pastors. Two experiences in that city bring into sharp focus the deeper realities of the great battle between good and evil all around us.

Haven

My last Sabbath there, I am invited to preach in a local Filipino church. Hong Kong is affluent, so I anticipate a lovely building with functional facilities. The reality is different. We enter an unassuming apartment block where the meeting hall is hardly bigger than my living room. About seventy

persons, mostly women, sit close together. Sabbath study hour has just begun.

I am welcomed with warm smiles and handshakes. The lesson is ably taught by a lay leader. The congregants have studied well; the discussion is lively and personal. Several have tears in their eyes. Many have left families behind and work in difficult circumstances to send money home. Looking around, I am nearly moved to tears myself. After the service we have lunch together. I'm now free to go back to my guest room, but several ask me to stay for the afternoon. A rest sounds inviting, but I cannot get myself to leave.

The time is 1:57 p.m., and the afternoon program will soon begin. Suddenly I realize that I may be asked to preach again. Just in time, I try to reformulate one of my recent sermons. At 2:00 the leader stands and, after prayer and song, announces that

Healing, House of Loss

Hook and bite

The next morning I will be visiting Macau with a local pastor. Macau is known for beautiful Portuguese colonial architecture and for its many casinos.

We take the fast boat for the one-hour crossing. As we disembark, we are inundated with leaflets and vouchers for the casinos. They want our money, and they want it badly. Around the corner buses offer free rides to the city. We oblige and are dropped off near a casino.

We decide to enter to see close up what one looks like. We have already been given two vouchers worth U.S. \$30. Shortly after we enter the premises, a kind lady informs me that I've been randomly chosen to receive a gift. She gives us two envelopes containing another U.S. \$150 worth of vouchers. Unfortunately for them, they will not make any money off us.

We visit another hotel-casino where we also have vouchers that can be used for meals. We have a lovely vegetarian meal in their up-market Japanese restaurant. We even get the chance to visit with the chef and share some gospel with him.

Everything in the hotel shines in opulence: the floor, the decorations, the walls, the sheer abundance of space. A group of singers wanders the corridors serenading the guests with lovely Asian-Latino music. Six beautiful ladies stand dressed in traditional costumes and agree to

our request to be photographed with them. Standing in front of them, we hear a deep male voice behind us and are shocked to realize the beautiful "ladies" are actually men. Their dresses and make-up cover their gender so well that only from up close can we tell they are men.

Moving away, I notice a large golden calf surrounded with gifts and brilliant light. My mind goes immediately to the Bible's golden calf. Everything seems to fit: the dazzling lights, the decadence, the people who throng to enjoy the spectacles. This calf is not here in memory of Exodus; the Chinese New Year is just around the corner and it will be the year of the ox. Yet the parallel with Exodus 32 is too strong to discount.

The people who play at the casino seem to enjoy it. Alcoholic and soft drinks are offered free. Despite laughs and excitement, some persons experience deep, painful financial loss. Some have just wasted a life's worth of savings; others soon will.

I notice metal detectors at the

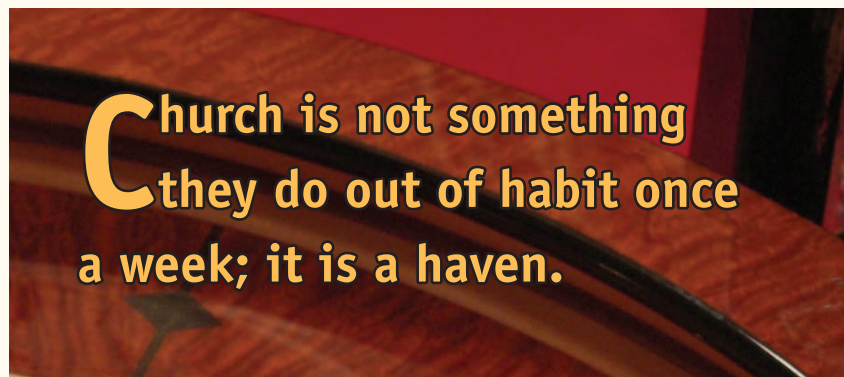
main entrance. Why would they be needed? People don't gamble with cash, so it is unlikely someone would attempt a robbery. Then it dawns on me that the establishment owners worry that someone in the desperation of great financial loss may attempt to hurt him/herself. That would not be good for business. Hence, the metal detectors.

And so the irony of it all hits me. All these trappings — the vouchers, the free meals and drinks, the beautiful music, the decadence — are but a hook and bite to lure victims. The whole arrangement is not to entertain but to grab from people as much as they are foolish enough to part with.

Contrast

Just one day before, on the Sabbath, in the humble environment of a small hall in an unassuming apartment building, I sensed the presence of God. People went in wounded and left healed. Now in the opulence

continued on page 24





Greedy or Generous?

There is a cure for our plague of “affluenza.” by **Jael Hamilton**

A person whose friendship I value often thinks first of herself and talks about what people should give her, instead of her giving to others. She becomes envious toward those who have more than she and even gets mad at God for not giving her what they have.

Some people’s strong desire for more money or possessions leads them to steal. To them, the Bible says, “He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need” (Ephesians 4:28).

Here God tells us to stop a bad behavior — stealing — by replacing it with a good one — working. Both of these require the use of our hands.

The greed that results in theft comes from the lie that we will be satisfied if we could just have more money, more stuff. If believed and acted upon, this lie can trigger a devastating roll of events that leads to a cycle of sin and addiction. If we must replace bad with good, then we must replace lies with truth. The truth, spoken by Christ, is that “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

In replacing our greedy behavior with honest labor, God gives us a *purpose* for our work: to

share with those in need. This is generosity.

On a scale of 1-3, where do we stand? Are we 1) greedy, trying to take for ourselves what we didn’t even work for; 2) complacent and self-satisfied, working mostly to buy more for ourselves; or 3) generous in our giving, especially to others in need?

Please read these words of Paul slowly, comparing your own lifestyle with them:

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming

age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

In thinking of my friend as greedy, I began to feel guilty myself. Am I the Pharisee thanking God that I am not like her, the sinner? I never saw myself as greedy, but maybe I’m selfish in other ways. The answer for both her and me is that we earn honestly, give generously, and learn to be content with what’s left over (vv. 6-10). In this, we will find true blessing! **BA**

Mother of three from Houston, TX, **Jael Hamilton** and her husband Scott are active members working with Southwestern District student ministries and as co-founders of the non-profit LOVEshared (www.loveshared.org). Scripture quotations were taken from the *New International Version*.

Wise Words About Cash

(from Proverbs)

- Open hands surpass clenched fists (11:24, 25; 13:7; 22:9).
- Help the needy, help yourself (14:21; 19:17; 21:13; 22:22; 29:7).
- Friendly soup outranks callous steak (15:17; 28:6).
- Beware the perils of piggishness and itchy palms (15:27; 20:21; 23:4, 5; 28:10).
- Paying God first pays off at the last (3:9, 10; 10:22; 11:4).

— BA

Q Please reiterate our position on the Sabbath. If, due to the economy, a member who is a deacon takes a job requiring him to work late on Friday, but he still attends Sabbath day services, does God's mercy allow him to continue as deacon? How would you handle this?

Editor's note: Not official policy, here is a respected pastor's answer to a not uncommon problem in CoG7. Reader response is invited.

A We're no longer under old covenant law but under the new covenant of God's grace (Rom. 6:15; Heb. 8:13). We're under no obligation to keep the ceremonies of the ancient sanctuary and of the priesthood of Aaron; our sanctuary is in heaven, where Jesus is our high priest. The penal code has been cancelled, so we're no longer under a curse.

Does this mean we are without law? Not at all. Paul says, "I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law . . ." (1 Cor. 9:21, NIV). What is Christ's law? It is love. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15, 21). The New Testament does not have a specific list as Moses did. Christ's commands are His entire word (v. 23).

Where is the Sabbath in Christ's word? In Mark 2:27, 28, where Jesus' response to the Pharisees

- corrected their bad habit of condemning people, teaching that the Sabbath must not eliminate compassion
- placed man above Sabbath and taught that Sabbath is for our good
- confirmed that Christ is Lord of the Sabbath.

Jesus did not do away with the holiness given to the Sabbath from creation but corrected the traditions added by the Pharisees. The Sabbath continues to be the glorious day of the Lord. That's unchangeable (Matt. 5:18).

The Old Testament covenant was exclusively for

the Hebrew people who had one land, one religion, one theocratic government, etc. For Israel, the Sabbath was a binding law, a special covenant and a sign from the Lord to them (Ex. 31:12-18).


Our Father knew that His church would be from all nations, with different systems and laws. For example, the Roman Empire in Paul's time allowed slavery. How would a slave keep Sabbath? Paul wrote, "Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you — although if you can gain your freedom, do so" (1 Cor. 7:21, NIV). Before gaining freedom, slaves are told to obey their masters (Eph. 6:5-8). These slaves loved God and obeyed Him as best they could. When their masters required them to work on Sabbath, they would work "with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord" (Col. 3:22, NIV).

Every believer must strive, out of love, to dedicate the glorious Sabbath to the Lord. When forced to work, he does not violate the law of love. He continues to love his Lord and His day, regretting that he cannot keep it as he wished. That's completely different from one who mocks the commandment by working on Sabbath, even though he could keep it, and smugly says we are under grace.

One who cannot attend Sabbath services obviously cannot hold an important church office, since he's not aware of what goes on there. The deacon who is required to work in the dark hours of Sabbath to provide for his household is not wrong. He may continue to serve because he attends worship during the day when church activities take place and he knows what's happening.

I've focused on the brother who truly loves God and is serious about obeying Him. We won't even bother dealing with the scoffer or cynic; it's not worth it.

— Minister José Antonio Vega
Lanham, MD



‘Midst Roses and Concrete

@ Popa Sorin—Dreamstime.com

A gripping account of finding forgiveness for the deepest hurts.
by **Shirley A. Reynolds**

On a concrete bench in a mausoleum courtyard, I tried to muster courage. Shaking my fist at the foliage, I said, “I’m not leaving until I’ve emptied my heart of this anger toward my mother.”

Oh Mama, I thought. Why did you use a rosebush vine as a switch? Why did you make a little girl sit for hours on a dark basement landing? Why didn’t you love me?

Hands pressed against my head, my body shook. I’d had enough! *Why does the past keep wiggling its way into my thoughts?* I wondered. I looked up at my parents’ names set in stone. “Oh Daddy,” I cried. “I wish I could have told you what was happening. I didn’t want to hurt anyone!” Then my mind traveled back. . . .

Dirty dress

“I’m gonna be five today,” I said, putting on my party dress and favorite pair of shoes. As I presented myself to Mama, she yanked bobby pins out of my hair and stretched out my long curls. “You can play outside, but don’t get dirty!” she ordered.

Leaning against the porch railing, I daydreamed about the presents I’d receive at the party that afternoon, about the red scooter I’d

seen in the Sears catalog. It was all I really wanted for my birthday.

Suddenly I looked up to see Mama looking down at me. She noticed the dirt on my dress and my long curls blown to straight strands by the wind. I'd tried hard to do what Mama wanted and once again, I'd failed.

"I told you not to get dirty!" she yelled. "And don't say a word to your father, or you will be punished!"

"I won't, Mama!" If I said anything else, she'd accuse me of talking back.

I knew what to expect. She broke off a thorn-covered rose-bush vine, grasped my arm, and dragged me toward the basement door. Stumbling along, I felt the sting of thorns against the back of my legs. My chin quivered as the basement door slammed shut. In darkness, I made my way to the landing, a few steps down.

"Mommy, please open the door! I didn't mean to get my dress dirty!" I called. The welts on my legs were swelling into stinging bumps. I sat with my knees pulled up to my chest, rocking back and forth, singing "Jesus loves me, this I know. . . ." Did Jesus really love me?

I wish Daddy were home! I thought. *He loves me. But I can't tell him what happened. Mama would say I'd lied.* I wanted to go to my room, but I had to wait.

I watched through a basement window as the sun disappeared. My stomach growled and my head ached. Then I heard Mama's voice: "Come upstairs and change clothes!"

I longed to tell my father

about the switching and the basement landing, but I feared worse trouble. Right now, I longed for his hug, his story telling, his hand on my forehead at bedtime.

Birthday surprise

When he arrived home, my father called, "Where's my baby?" I hugged him tight and wondered if he saw my red eyes, but he never did.

As my friends arrived, Mama acted as if nothing had happened. After I opened other presents, she brought out the red scooter and said, "I'm giving it to your cousin; she doesn't have anything to play with at her house. But you can go outside and ride it for a while."

I looked at my father in shock, but he put his hands up as if to say, "I don't know anything about this!" I rode the scooter up and down our front sidewalk, then watched as my cousin took it home.

Something happened to me that day. I wanted to grow up, be an adult, and live in my own house. I loved my father, but I couldn't tell him my secrets. I'd

watch him come home from work, hug me, sit in his chair and read his Bible, then read me stories. When he tucked me into bed, he'd kiss me good night, pray for me, and turn out the light.

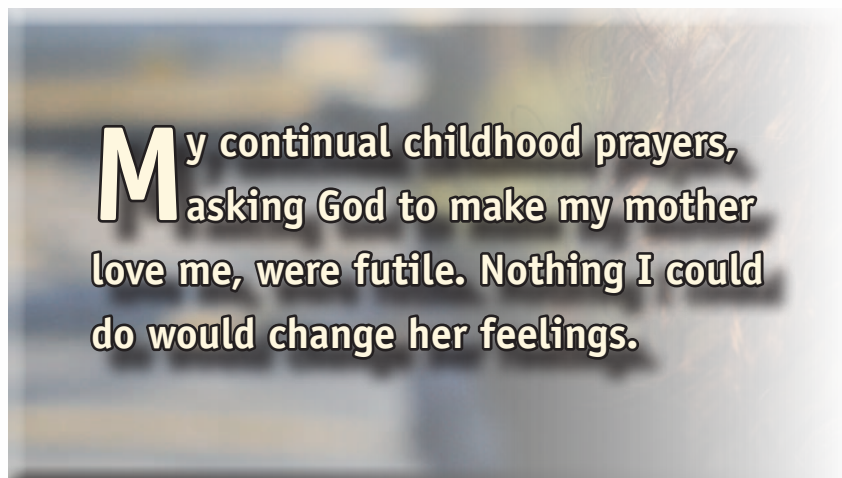
Stunning news

Switchings continued up to my twelfth birthday. The day I came home from school with the measles, things changed. Confined to the couch for five days, I watched our new television and listened to my mother as she ironed. "Oh, by the way, it's time you knew you are adopted," she said. "It was your father's idea to have a child, not mine."

Her words stunned me. My father, the perfect picture of Jesus to me, had loved me all this time for both parents. My continual childhood prayers, asking God to make my mother love me, were futile. Nothing I could do would change her feelings.

She continued. "My mother died giving birth to me, and I made a solemn vow to never become pregnant. But your father's firm insistence won."

After this, I retreated into my



5th Annual National Forgiveness Day

Saturday, October 30, 2010

Purpose: to create awareness and understanding of the power of love and the joy of forgiveness in producing good health, happiness, and stress-free living for individuals and their home, work, and worship environments.

Volunteers plan to distribute more than 5 million copies of "Power of Love; Joy Of Forgiveness" wellness plan to as many people as possible through e-mails, e-newsletters, e-zines, and hard copy magazines, as well as through newsletters, inserts, posters, and newspapers.

People are asked to practice forgiveness throughout the year and to observe Forgiveness Week (October 24-31) and National Forgiveness Day (October 30) by asking for forgiveness, forgiving others, forgiving themselves, asking that bitterness be removed and joy be restored, and seeking help, when necessary, to achieve these.

How to Volunteer

1. Visit the Positive People Partners and the Center of Unconditional Love at www.unconditionallovelive.com.
2. Sign up as a friend; indicate the desire to be a volunteer and to distribute copies of the plan in as many ways as possible.
3. Read and implement the Wellness Works plan for your life (see p. 11); encourage others to do the same.

Pledge of Forgiveness

I pledge to forgive others, forgive myself, and ask for forgiveness each day. I pledge to not let the sun go down on my anger, to ask that bitterness be removed and joy restored.

bedroom after school and spent my time there. Avoiding my mother seemed easier than being the object of her anger.

Final rejection

Before I graduated from high school, my mother grew ill.

Diabetes, heart problems, and Alzheimer's ravaged her body and mind. During that time, I attended church with Dad, who did everything he could to bring normalcy to our family. Then Mom took pneumonia and was hospitalized, with a poor prognosis.

Standing by her bed, I held her hands. "Mama, I know I've been a burden to you," I said. "I wanted to love you, and I wanted you to love me! I've met a special man, and we are going to be married after I graduate."

She turned her head to the side. "Get out of my room. I don't know you!" Mama died two days later.

Dad chose to live alone in their three-story home. A short time after I was married, he married his childhood sweetheart. Together, they took care of the rosebush Mom used to punish me.

Desire and decision

After we'd been married four years, our baby girl was born. When I first looked at my daughter, all the memories of my childhood flooded over me. I knew I had to rid myself of the anger I had carried into adulthood. Unforgiveness felt like icy fingers holding me in a vice.

Oh God, if I'm going to teach forgiveness to my daughter, then I'm going to have to let go, I thought. All I knew to do was go to the cemetery.

Then my father had a severe stroke and died. It happened fast, and I believed my whole world had crumbled.

It was time to let the anger go, time to let God take ultimate control.

I made the journey.

Seeking release

Thirty years later, I stared at the gray fortress. The memory of the basement landing was fresh in my mind as I smelled the sweet aroma of yellow roses en-

circling the mausoleum. The quiet cemetery solitude wrapped its arms around me. A gust of wind sent shivers up my spine, and everything inside me seemed to say, *Run as fast you can!*

Saying I was sorry now seemed futile, but I needed freedom and healing.

Tears fell in rivulets down my face. "Lord, I came here today to ask You to take away the anger burning inside me toward my mother. I believe now that she loved me in the only way she knew. But Lord, I have to ask Your forgiveness for these angry feelings I've harbored for so many years. They are eating me up. I want to leave here knowing that my heart is clear. I cannot carry the load any longer!"

Speaking as if my mother stood beside me, I said, "Oh Mama, I am so sorry. I have spent years trying to understand why we couldn't tell each other 'I love you!' I need to say it now. I do love you, Mom!"

Free at last

When I opened my eyes, the whole world seemed brighter. I turned around and leaned against the cold concrete. I knew God had removed a huge burden and brought healing in its place.

Wiping my tears away with my coat sleeve, I walked away. Was I crying for a lost relationship? No, I was crying because my life had been healed!

I noticed the birds chirping and the wind kicking up the leaves before me. In the distance, a wind chime tinkled. There was relief in my mind and lightness in my steps.

Wellness Works!

B-Healthy * B-Well-thy * B-Wise

Power of Love; Joy of Forgiveness

No More Stress, Just Happiness

Health/Wellness Plan For Your Life! Start Today! Don't Delay!

- A. Anticipate each new day as a joyful one.
- B. Speak the truth with love all day long.
- C. Ask questions. Listen with understanding. Think in silence.
- D. Refuse permission for anger, fear, sadness, or hurt to take your joy.
- E. Resolve conflicts by thinking, *Have I done something to cause this? What lessons can I learn from it?*
- F. Restore and build relationships by asking what you can do to make each one better.
- G. Say these WELLNESS WORDS often: Please forgive them. Help me forgive them. Please forgive me. Help me forgive myself. Please remove my bitterness. Please restore my joy. I'm wrong. I'm sorry. Thank you. You're welcome. Please. What is your opinion?
- H. Know that distress is caused by having to be right, by finding fault, by trying to control and manipulate, and by being selfish.
- I. Stop doing things that cause negative stress. Give up bad habits. Stop addictions. Humbly say that you want to stop. Ask that the desire for unhealthy things be taken away.
- J. Practice the seven super powers that you have power to control: attitude, honesty, communication, love, encouragement, forgiveness, and humility.
- K. Know that the power of love and the joy of forgiveness exist inside every believer. You were made for relationships; love one another.

This Wellness Works plan is presented in conjunction with National Forgiveness Day. For free help with stress, visit www.unconditionallovelive.com.

— Robert Moyers

As I looked back on the cobblestone pathway, the mausoleum did not seem as ominous as before. The bright yellow roses seemed to bow in acknowledgment; their fragrance was beautiful! I shut the door on the basement landing, once and for all.

Before I climbed back into my

car, I said, "I love you, Mom," and meant every word.

Jesus loves me, this I know. **BA**

Shirley A. Reynolds writes from Idaho City, ID.



Church Folks and Their Pastors by Calvin Burrell

This timeless counsel has been collected from the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus)

1. Advice to pastors, from the veteran Paul:

- Put spiritual exercise first; take care of your body also (1 Tim. 4:7, 8; 5:23).
- Be a good example (1 Tim. 4:12).
- Read much, counsel often, teach well (v. 13).
- Don't skip spiritual gifts; stimulate them (v. 14; 2 Tim. 1:6, 14).
- Give yourself wholly to ministry; grow in it (1 Tim. 4:15).
- Handle elders and widows with special care (1 Tim. 5).
- Be unprejudiced and impartial, not impulsive (vv. 21, 22).
- Flee foolish debates over minor matters; pursue major righteousness via faith and love (1 Tim. 3:5; 6:11, 12; 2 Tim. 1:13; Tit. 1:10-14).
- Be strong in the grace of Jesus (2 Tim. 2:1).
- To multiply disciples, teach faithful men (2:2).
- Complete your ministry by enduring through troubles (1:8; 2:3, 8-13; 4:5).
- When carnal temptings appear, cut and run; when spiritual fruit is near, invite it in (2:22).
- As a teacher, be gentle and patient, not proud and quarrelsome (2:24-26).
- Preach God's inspired Word; teach sound doctrine (3:14 – 4:4; Tit. 1:9; 2:1, 15).
- Set churches in order with elders (bishops) and deacons (Tit. 1:5-9; 2 Tim. 3:1-13).

2. Paul instructed pastors to tell churches:

- Avoid fables, pseudo-science, and friction over frivolous details and laws; rather, welcome sound teaching (1 Tim. 1:4; 4:1-7; 6:3-5, 20, 21; 2 Tim. 2:14-18, 23; 4:3, 4; Tit. 3:9-11).
- Pray and give thanks for all people; be gentle to all, and be subject to those in authority (1 Tim. 2:1, 2; Tit. 3:1, 2). Serve your bosses honestly, faithfully, winsomely (Tit. 2:9, 10).
- Men, pray always without anger or fear. Older men, live in the mature dignity and solid integrity of holy faith. Younger men, practice solid biblical thought, blameless speech, and helpful action (1 Tim. 2:8; Tit. 2:2, 6-8).
- Women, dress modestly, do good, and study harmoniously with men. Older women, be fully God-controlled and teach younger women to love and serve, primarily at home (1 Tim. 2:9-12; Tit. 2:3-5).
- God's grace and mercy, seen in the self-giving of our Savior Jesus and the quickening of the Holy Spirit, bring us to be saved, redeemed from lawless living, and set apart for well-doing (Titus 2:11-14; 3:4-7; 1 Tim. 1:14-16).
- Believers in God must make a habit of good works (Tit. 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14), including giving. Contentment and generosity are true virtues (1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19).
- At the close of these perilous times, the Lord Jesus Christ will come to raise the dead, judge all people, and distribute crowns of righteousness to those who have loved Him (2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:1-8; Tit. 2:13).



Why Doctrine is Important

Is your spiritual diet meat or mostly cotton candy? by Jeff Endecott

@ Moniphot—Dreamstime.com

Doctrine has fallen on hard times. Witness these quotes that represent the spirit of the current age:

“Doctrine divides, love unites.”

“Not rules, just relationship.”

“Give me Jesus, not exegesis.”

A disdain for most things doctrinal can be seen in much of the contemporary church. A prevailing attitude exists that would have us see doctrines as enslaving. If only we could get past antiquated doctrine, then the church would be free to spread the simple message of Jesus and His love.

The only problem with this assessment is that without doctrine, we are left to wonder who Jesus is and what kind of love He hopes to spread.

Therapeutic model

One reason for disillusionment with doctrine has to do with a prevalent church model, and another speaks to the very

definition of truth.

First, a prevalent church model is the therapeutic model. It sees the church of Jesus Christ not as “the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15) but as a dispenser of therapy.

In this model, pastors are called not to “preach the Word” (2 Timothy 4:2) but to pacify. Proclamation of eternal truth is sacrificed on the altar of pragmatism, i.e., “what works for the most people.” The question in this model is not “What has God said?” but rather “What’s in it for me?”

In this therapeutic model, what is transcendent, objective, and propositional is exchanged for what is temporal, subjective, and psychological. Feeling good, rather than believing and behaving correctly, becomes the goal. Knowledge and veneration of self are substituted for knowledge and worship of the one true God.

It is sometimes difficult to see the practical benefits of doctrinal statements concerning baptism, the new covenant, the Godhead, and the relationship between the divine and human natures of Jesus, to name only a few. Because of this, the modern mindset has little appetite for doctrinal statements. The pastor who attempts to regularly feed his congregation concerning these may soon find himself looking for employment elsewhere, or he may see his congregants migrate to other churches that are more relational and less theological, more practical and less theoretical.

Definition of truth

A second manifestation of the spirit of the age is relying on a definition of truth, or knowledge, as only what can be observed and measured scientifically. Church doctrines that purport to be statements of universal truth are suspect, since they are claims

of faith and not subject to sensory perception. This common belief may be stated, "We cannot know anything with certainty that cannot be measured or tested by the scientific method."

This argument is untenable, of course, since it fails its own test. The statement "We cannot know anything with certainty that cannot be tested scientifically" cannot itself be measured or tested scientifically, yet it claims to be a statement of absolute truth. Nevertheless, this mindset has created a credibility gap for the Christian church because faith is seen as being outside of demonstrable reason.

On an episode of the television show *Numb3rs*, an actor playing the part of a physics professor opined that "Real faith cannot transcend knowledge; it must learn to adapt to it." The professor was espousing a worldview that places faith outside the realm of true knowledge, since it is impossible to test the claims of faith according to scientific norms. His proposal is that where faith and knowledge intersect, faith must give way. Faith must either surrender or be crushed before the inexorable might of scientific knowledge. The pastor must bow before the professor.

Foremost among the many problems with the professor's statement is its assumption that "real faith" is divorced from rational knowledge. For the Christian, faith is based upon specific historical facts, without which it ceases to be Christian faith. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-7, for example, Paul offers a summary of the primary gospel facts he took across the Roman Empire in the first century AD:

- Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (v. 3).
- Christ was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (v. 4).
- Christ appeared to Cephas (Peter), to the Twelve (apostles), to more than 500 people at one time, then to James (the brother of Jesus) and all the apostles — the 70 of Luke 10:1-12 and others outside the Twelve (1 Corinthians 15:5-7).

The God of the Bible has acted in history, not outside it. He acted most decisively in the death and resurrection of a historical person: Jesus the Christ. Thus the Christian's faith that sins are erased at the cross is based on historical facts. This first century doctrine of Paul to the church of Corinth must be the message of the church for all ages, including our own.

Right perspective

One way to think of doctrine is as a kind of skeleton, or framework. Doctrine gives shape to all that we are and do.

Our human skeleton is internal, covered by muscle, ligament, flesh, and skin. In greeting others with a holy kiss or heavenly handshake, our skeleton is an unseen but necessary part of the greeting. Without it, we could not function.

The lobster, on the other hand, has an external skeleton that's not very appealing for greeting. Try to kiss one or shake its hand, and it's hard, cold, and shocking.

Our doctrine too can be presented in a cold, hard, and shocking manner, the opposite of Christian love. Doctrine should always come covered with grace, mercy, and forgiveness. These also are doctrines in and of themselves.

Without doctrine there is no substance, no stability, and therefore no ability to even communicate the love we're called to share. As a church, let us resolve to delight in doctrine, to not get caught in the spirit of the age, and to share with love the great doctrinal truths of Scripture that God has blessed us with. **BA**

The doctrine of sins erased at the cross must be the message of the church for all ages, including our own.

Jeff Endecott serves as pastor in Farmville, NC, and as superintendent of the Southeastern District. Scripture quotations are from the *New International Version*.



Life After SVA

Valedictorian speech given to
Spring Vale Academy 2010 grads.

by **Alex Rincker**
Claremore, OK

I would like to begin by thanking our parents for your love and support. I know it's been difficult for all of you, with us being separated by hundreds of miles. I would also like to thank all our staff members who dedicated so much of their time and energy so that we could grow academically and spiritually.

To my fellow classmates, today marks the end of our high school years. As we have put forth thirteen years of determined hard work to reach this point, we should enjoy this moment. As we enter the unknown to us, I would like to talk about three things that will be important at all points in life: forgiveness, happiness, and success.

Throughout our time together, we have made amazing lifelong friendships. But through the rough times along the way, it is possible that some friendships have been broken. To restore them, we look to Matthew 18. There one of Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me?" (v. 21, NIV).

In response to this question Jesus said, "Not seven times, but seventy-seven times" (v. 22, NIV).

Life is way too short to with-

hold forgiveness from one who has wronged us. If we do choose to withhold forgiveness, it comes at the price of bitterness. To save ourselves from lots of hurt and pain, we should just listen to what Christ taught: "Forgive because you have been forgiven" (see Mark 11:25).

During the past few years, we the Class of 2010 have had our share of disagreements, but we have learned to overcome these through forgiveness.

It has been great to share our lives over the last few years. One moment that stands out in my mind is when we were at the Jefferson Memorial in D.C. These words from the Declaration of Independence are engraved on the memorial wall: "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" as our "unalienable Rights."

I don't know exactly what "pursuit" Thomas Jefferson was talking about, but I am certain about the pursuit that leads to lasting happiness, and that is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I urge you to never neglect this pursuit. I urge you to wake up each morning for the rest of your lives with the dedication of staying true to this pursuit. I hope you remember what James said in his epistle: "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (4:8). One thing that has been made clear to me



at SVA is that God will always take you back no matter what, as long as you surrender yourself to Him. He will always be there with His arms open wide.

From Spring Vale, we will all go our separate directions to begin our adult lives. I can envision our futures now: some doctors, lawyers, servicemen, parents, aunts and uncles, hoping for success. When it comes to success, it seems that everyone thinks it is getting the most money or attaining the highest position. I disagree. I believe that success doesn't come by works but by the joy and the happiness in the work.

Success in God's eyes, I believe, is staying within His will. Therefore the best way to be successful in life is to surrender ourselves to God's will. As we do this and grow in our lives, I hope we can share the importance of God's will with others around us.

Our future is right in front of us, and it will be bright, joyful, and successful if we stay in God's will (Jeremiah 29:11). **BA**

Marion, Iowa, After 150 Years



Pastor Jim Kuryluk



Church choir in Marion



Marion church has used only three buildings in 150 years. The first two, shown here, still stand. The third (not shown) is at 1691 Airport Rd. You are welcome any Sabbath.

Some 170 people were present in Marion, Iowa, on Sabbath, June 26, to celebrate that congregation's 150th anniversary. They heard former pastor Jeff Endecott's sermon, historian Robert Coulter's lecture on the early days in Marion, Conference president Whaid Rose's sermon on "Doing History Right," and former pastor Jim Kuryluk's moving reminiscence on his 17-year tenure there.


The oldest active CoG7 congregation, Marion church dates to 1860 when a group of Sabbathkeeping Adventists called themselves the Church of Jesus Christ and adopted a covenant that pledged "the Bible and the Bible alone" as its rule for faith and discipline. Less than two

years later, a major threat was mounted to that covenant. Half its membership chose loyalty to extra-biblical visions, and departed. The Marion church held to its Bible-only principle, thus setting an example for others who would face the same test.

This east-central Iowa church has often served the cause of the kingdom beyond local interests. Today two district superintendents, two G. C. Ministries directors, two Spring Vale Academy staff, and a G. C. office staff member all hail from here. Pastor Tim Endecott and his family extend Marion-style graciousness to the entire Central District (Tim is also superintendent) through their homestyle approach to ministry, connecting well across

cultures and age groups.

If in God's providence the world should stand for another century and a half, what will ensure that effective ministry is maintained in Marion — or in any CoG7 congregation, for that matter — when all of us have lain long in the dust? At the end of the day, that may be the crucial question. Think about it, then read the item on the opposite page.

The historical summary of the Marion church, presented by Elder Robert Coulter, may be read at www.cog7.org/BA. 



150 More Years?

2 vital features = 1 ever-living church. by Calvin Burrell

The deep desire and earnest effort of the Lord's people is to kindle a caring fellowship that attracts others to come and follow Jesus with them. It takes more than a lot of hope and a little love to grow a church for a century plus. Two spiritual elements, when combined, can form an enduring body of Christians — much like body and spirit united form a living soul: They are grace and truth.

God's Word contains many propositions we recognize as true. With accuracy, it tells the way things are — about ourselves, others, and God.

The teachings of Jesus and His apostles are a part of this truth core, as are the principles of Psalms, Proverbs, the Prophets, the moral laws from Sinai, and other scriptures.

Not every Bible word has the same value as any other, nor are some texts as well understood as others. Still, every word of the Bible adds value, and all its words taken together form the church's basis in truth. To help people build their lives and families on a firm foundation, the church must be loyal to the essential teaching

of God's Word written. This is truth!

Truth is more than just *what* Christians believe propositionally; it also embraces *Who* we believe personally. The Bible is God's Word — truth in written form — and Jesus Christ is also God's Word — truth in living form. Combine these and we have the entire "body" of revealed Christian truth that gives essence to our faith, to our salvation, and to the church.

A second element essential to a living faith is grace. In the same way that the spirit (breath) animates (gives life to) a human body, so does grace animate the body called "church of God, the pillar and ground of truth."

The message forever at the heart of God's Word is a gospel of grace. In dozens of ways, Scripture points us to One who weeps with our sins and sorrows, empowers our joys and laughs with us in them, and removes guilt so we'll never face the wrath of final judgment. This is grace.

Grace is the unmerited favor of the Lord; it is **God's Riches At Christ's Expense**. Grace is the

good that our heavenly Father and Son do for us, through the Spirit, that we do not deserve and could never do for ourselves.

Grace is the gift we receive for eternity because of the old rugged cross and the empty tomb. It is Jesus Christ and His promise to forgive us our sins — our failures to live up to all the truth we know — yesterday, today, and forever.

Grace is the Spirit, the attitude, the mindset and manner with which we practice and share a biblical worldview, our truth.

As body and spirit are necessary elements for a whole living person, just so grace and truth are essential for a whole, live church. Just as the ever-living head of the church, her Lord and Savior, is full of grace and truth, so will those who trust and imitate Him find a constant demand for those two vital elements.

For any congregation to survive and thrive another 150 years, it is enough for Jesus' disciples to become like their master: filled evermore with His grace and truth. **BA**

Tale of a

by Ernie Klassek

When God wants to call you, no one can stop Him (John 6:44). Yet someone may try to hurt or destroy you early in life, as Herod tried to kill Jesus after He was born (Matthew 2:14).

It happened in Oeblarn, a village in the Enns River Valley in Styria, the province in the heart of Austria, when I was about three months old. Working in the bar at the Bahnhof Hotel where I was born, my mother heard my faint crying from the room upstairs where she had put me in my cot. She went up, and the crying seemed to come from behind the closed door. As she always said when she told the story, "Thankfully I pushed the door very gently, because you were lying hard up against it."

Who had taken me from the cot and dropped me by the door? The window was open, and when my mother looked out, there was a ladder leaning against the wall. Someone must have wanted to take me but was interrupted and fled.

My parents would manage the hotel during the summer months and work in the hospitality industry on the French Riviera in the winter. When they found their child was due in December 1931, they decided to stay in Austria.

I was a toddler when we left the peaceful village nestled between two mountain ranges, and that's when the sojourning be-

gan. The Depression years kept my parents on the move, looking for jobs. They rarely talked about those days, and I have no recollection of them. But not long before my mother died in 1987, she added up how many times we moved from the year of my birth until we settled in Tasmania in the late 1950's; it came to 63. I am sure God finally led us to that little island state south of the Australian mainland; it was a haven of peace. Within three years of arrival, we owned our own house.

My parents had always wanted to emigrate. They corresponded with a Baptist minister and his wife and four daughters; my mother had been a governess for them during the 1920's. This family went to Brazil when Hitler came to power, and urged my parents to follow. The Third Reich soon shut all doors to the outside world.

We lived in Berlin in 1939 when the Second World War started, and then the air raids. One day the landlady said to my mother, "You'll have to find another flat." We were paying our rent with no problems, yet the landlady insisted we move.

The day after we moved, the bombs dropped all night. After school I ran back to our former flat a couple of streets away, and all that was left was a burned-out facade. For one reason or another, we moved again, and then again, and the same thing happened. We seemed to be just

My Journey

Sojourner

one step ahead of death every time.

My parents decided to get out of Berlin and move to a little city in northern Bavaria called Bamberg. Air raids were rare, but only for a while.

When my brother was born in 1944, the bombings became more frequent, and everybody spent more time in air raid shelters. A lady in a nearby street, who had a baby at the same time as my mother, urged her to come to “the safest place in town” every morning. The bombers would fly over the city at predictable intervals after ten o’clock. But no matter how much the lady insisted, my mother steadfastly refused to follow her to a large cellar carved deep into the rock under a brewery.

One morning, a stray bomb struck the only entrance to that cellar, guarded by a big steel door. None of the 150 souls behind it survived.

I was a foolhardy twelve-year-old at that time. One day I took my baby brother to the only room that still had a window not smashed by blasts and flying debris. There I stood, my brother in my arms, watching to see which bombs would explode and which would not when a brick hurtled through the window. Shards and splinters of glass flew all around us, yet we were unhurt.

By the time the Americans reached Bamberg in April 1945, we had become used to living in our air raid shelter; the cacoph-

ony of their artillery became just another noise. My little brother contracted diphtheria. Since we had no food for days, he died of malnutrition.

The thought of God came to my mind. Why had He protected us from harm? Why was my brother dead and I alive? Little did I know that God would answer my questions in years to come and in a faraway land.

I had heard and read about God; my grandmother prayed to Him. Though I was not allowed religious instruction in primary school, I had borrowed the catechisms of the Catholic boys and the Bible storybooks from the Lutherans. I knew God’s book was the Bible and that Johannes Gutenberg had printed it first in Latin, but there was never a Bible in our household. The first time I held a Bible (King James) in my hand was in 1959 at a naturalization ceremony for “new Australians” in northwest Tasmania. I was 28.

To get as far as Tasmania had involved many more moves, first back in Austria, then on to Australia. God used that little black King James Bible to assemble all the seeds He had sown in my heart since childhood: from the Sabbath and the knowledge of clean meats gleaned from our Jewish neighbors in Berlin before the war, to the kindness of an American Christian who kept the same Sabbath as the Jews after the war. The earliest followers of Christ were much like them, and



accounts of revivals of the New Testament church have always fascinated me.

God tells us that He “will have all men to be saved” (1 Timothy 2:4). My little brother too? Yes, I trust, because he had done neither good nor evil (Romans 9:11), and Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).

In 1956 I became pen friends with Domna, and we soon considered ourselves engaged. She came from a family of Greek refugees who had been expelled from Turkey in 1922. When she arrived in Tasmania in 1958 and we met for the first time, we were married at a registry office within fifteen minutes.

God blessed us with five children, sixteen grandchildren, and, so far, four great-grandchildren — all equally wonderful. After 51 years of happy marriage, my dear wife died. I miss her terribly.

I no longer move from place to place, but I am still a sojourner. This world is not my home. Like all of Jesus’ disciples, I am not of the world (John 17:14). And like Abraham, I look forward to the city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:10).

Scripture quotations were taken from the King James Version.

An Honest Look at

A while ago, you served as consultant to CoG7, and we used your home church facilities (Denver's First Nazarene) for convention worship services in 2005, so we've had connections. What are your roles and interests in ministry?

We have had a positively enjoyable relationship with CoG7 and with those who lead and serve the Church.

I've been in ministry for over 49 years, beginning as the Oregon state youth director for Nazarene churches. Moving with Dr. Donald Wellman to Denver in 1968, I developed musical ministries that recorded albums, did concerts, and appeared on *A Reason to Sing* television show, airing locally and nationally. For the next 25 years, I served as executive pastor, television producer, and concert promoter (Saturday Nights in Denver) for Denver First Church of the Nazarene. Preaching, teaching, writing, and singing are all part of the ministry I enjoy. Since retiring, I've traveled on Africa missions and on trips to Italy, Greece, and Turkey tracing Paul's journeys.

As a church administrator, you've seen pastors come and go. What gifts and skills best prepare a man for success and pastoral longevity?

I've served with seven godly senior pastors whose tenure ranged from five to twenty-five

years. Each had his own leadership style, but they all had one striking quality: They were men of grace. In my opinion, success and longevity as a pastor come from being a godly man of grace and principle.

Dr. Donald Wellman was perhaps the most completely equipped, gifted, and prepared leader of the six pastors I worked with. He was an innovative visionary, a strong pulpiteer, leader of leaders, problem solver, people person, family man, and personal friend. The Word of God was the driving force that sculpted his life.

Your large home church recently went through a serious decline in attendance. What steps would you recommend to any pastor who finds his church stagnant and struggling to maintain effective ministry?

Serious decline in the church is not a pleasant experience — sort of like going to the dentist every day. With it comes a loss of people, of income, and of positive momentum. Usually it begins with a quenching of the Spirit that has its roots in murmuring, as seen in the Old Testament. It settles in a few people's hearts, breeding a pocket of malcontents who look for support and lack spiritual maturity to resist the downward flow.

You try to preach, teach, promote, and be positive to get

through it, but no matter what you do, it's there every morning. It impacts your family, your friends, your own mental health and spiritual vigor. You're not sure who you can talk to and how confidential he/she will be about your feelings.

Perspective here is very difficult. Being honest with God and yourself is a key place to start. What have you done or not done to allow this? A friend helped me at this point. He said, "In every pound of criticism is an ounce of truth." So where is the ounce here?

As a leader you need a clean heart and a clear head to help navigate your congregation through the murky waters of decline. You also need a trusted friend with a proven track record and hopefully some experience in this area. Remember, you are working with imperfect people trying to serve a perfect God who wants them to grow on toward perfection and enter the perfect kingdom of heaven.

A few suggestions:

- Try to get a clear, godly perspective as to what got the church here.
- Step back enough to see the "forest" and to clarify the issues and pockets of malcontent.
- Prayerfully develop a strategy of addressing those involved and their issues.
- Choose graceful words and a prayerful attitude for the con-

Church

BA Interview with Roger Clay
Retired Executive Pastor

frontation. One approach might be to say, "It seems as if I've done something to offend you or cause a fracture in our relationship. I'm sorry for that and would like to know what I can do to restore a positive relationship with you." Wait for the response. Taking this high road may disarm your adversary, dismiss the emotion, and get to the real issues.

- If you come to an impasse, try to agree to disagree and move on with the positive things of the church. If the other person(s) cannot agree with that, suggest they find somewhere else to worship.

- Move ahead with the faithful majority to turn the church in a positive direction.

- Revisit what is positive about the church and start to live there again.

- Get the church on its knees seeking God's fresh touch and joy.

I've seen all kinds of attacks on the church: legal attacks in the local news, moral attacks on the staff, undertows of small lay-led movements trying to derail it, and verbal attacks during public services. Yes, they brought setbacks; but at its weakest, the church still stands as the greatest institution on earth "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Share your thoughts on Pastor Appreciation Month.

October is a great time to celebrate your pastor's ministry, family, and service to you. Cards with sincere thoughts about something personal that helped you and your family are appreciated. A getaway for him and his wife is always gratifying. Just do something real — anything that comes from sincere hearts.

It's been said that you have a gift of encouragement. How might our readers develop that skill, even if they don't have the "gift"?

I guess I've had great models that encouraged me. It's easy to talk about self, but to focus on others takes effort. If you are authentic toward people, you begin to see the good in them, and it's natural to compliment those things. This sign on a wall helped me see the value of others: "A man's worth can be told by the way he treats those who can do nothing for him." A worthy goal to pursue.

A recent issue of *Christianity Today* posed this question: "Are Denominations Dead?" How would you answer that and advise CoG7 regarding current church realities in North America?

Simply said, I think the word *dead* is too final. Struggling? Yes.

The worth of denominations can be seen in their worldwide



Marilyn and Roger Clay

ministry. I think about all the missionaries, hospitals, schools, universities, seminaries, faith-based support given to public assistance programs, and the millions of church people active in their communities propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ.

My advice is to move on, majoring in the majors, not getting too caught up in things that separate but focusing on the basics of truth that unite us. I learned years ago that my job as a Christian is not to prove my points but to win people. My new, young neighbors are unmarried, but I must focus not on their living together in sin but on building a bridge to introduce them to Jesus. Once they see Him, the other stuff is His problem. And trust me, He takes care of this stuff.

A great black preacher, Dr. E. V. Hill, preached a short three-point sermon at the Promise Keepers convention in Boulder several years ago. His points were, "GO ON! GO ON!! and GO ON!!!" That's my message to you. **BA**



www.comstock.com

A change in the seasons brings a change in the spirit. **by Lonna Enox**

I have seldom found myself in the slump that I have suffered this fall. As the weeks pass, I seek strength from within myself to survive. I pray, but my prayers feel empty. Writing has long been my joy, but now I approach the computer with lackluster reserve, often shutting it down without a syllable having been written. *Why, I ask myself, am I so down during my most favorite season of the year?*

During a sleepless dawn, the questions continue. *Why can't I bounce along with the diversity, and giggle at the incongruity of my life? Where is my zest? Where is my resilience? What has happened to the dreams?*

Dreams and realities

Dreaming is the thing I learned best growing up. When

one lives in virtual poverty, dreaming is a form of self-preservation — one I learned well. I dreamed of going to school and of learning to read and write. It would be exciting — an adventure and a gateway to success.

In reality, it was all those things, as well as sometimes mundane, sometimes scary, and often unhappy. My teachers were not pleased that I had taught myself to read before they could teach me, and they did not find my stories as interesting as the Dick and Jane series we read in school.

Still, I pushed on toward the dream, earning scholarships to college and filling my life with experiences and knowledge that would prepare me for success.

Finally, I dreamed of when I would be “grown” with a home of my own. I would have a hand-

some husband who would adore me, beautiful children, a rambling two-story house, cats everywhere. And I would write, write, write.

Again I learned that you temper those dreams with reality. Cats and children require upkeep, financial and physical. Often my writing took second place to motherhood: Brownie Scout leader, Bible school teacher, sleepover parties, chicken pox. I learned the energy it takes to keep a two-story house in working order. I snuggled into my reality, forged a career in the classroom teaching high school seniors to create and follow dreams of their own, and stored my dreams for another season.

Autumn adjustments

Then I dreamed about the autumn of my life, when I would retire from teaching, become a doting grandmother, and write, write, write. I would still be young enough, and have the time, to write.

Now that autumn has arrived, I am eligible for that early retirement I planned for. But facing the dream I've nurtured for so long daunts me. Can I meet the financial challenges? After all, I had not completely realized how enormous it would be educating those children, so my finances are not as great as I'd hoped they would be. Neither had I expected that adoring, handsome husband would die so young of cancer. My own diagnosis of a chronic health problem now requires more attention and care.

Have my dreams "dried up" now that I have reached the autumn of my life, when I have become "a woman of a certain

age"? Are they disappearing over the horizon, along with my unlined skin and good health? Have I deferred them, or have they deserted me?

Return to faith

Is there life without dreams?

In the sea of my trepidation, my answer arrives from the Scriptures. I read the beautiful third chapter of Ecclesiastes. How many times have I repeated those verses? "To everything there is a season."

All these years amid those dreams, I have lived through the seasons of the life God had promised. My dreams have been His gift. Now my season is a time to make new dreams, to move to a new step, and to rely on the faith taught to me in my childhood.

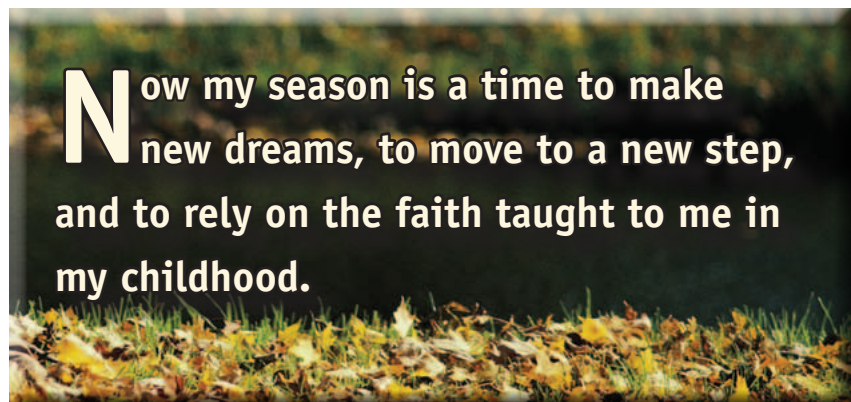
Dreams through the years have kept me strong. They have given me the courage to keep standing up when I was flattened by adversity; they have fed my soul when it encountered a "starvation" diet. They have given me hope when none existed, happiness amid sorrow, excitement amid the mundane, and a sense of urgency amid the lackadaisical. They have given me purpose.

Revival

Herein lies my answer. My dreams and my faith enrich each other. I take long walks, watching the beauty of the natural critters going on with their lives and adversities without pause. I hold my first grandbaby in my arms, my heart swelling until I almost choke with love as I look into those innocent, trusting eyes. I forge ahead into a new career with the dedication, courage, and love I had given my first one. And in the early hours of an autumn morning, my heart opens to new dreams.

My dreams have not been deferred; they have been revived. They have been given new life, a new direction, and new dimensions. Excitement blooms within as I gather courage and embark on that path to a destination dreamed of so long ago. In the freshness of a new day, I chide myself for those moments of doubts until I realize that they are also just a part of the growth process, the pattern of my life. **BA**

Lonna Enox writes from Roswell, NM.





Cheers for May-June!

In this issue I have found "Prayer Ode for Elders," "Ditches Along Grace Way," "Marion Moms," "Tested Church in a Wicked World," and CoG7 in Action more interesting and good to know. Thanking you, I will be waiting to receive your next issue.

*U. R.
Andhra Pradesh, India*

From cover to cover, I believe this is the best I have read, if not ever, then certainly in a long time. "Ode to Elders" was very good. "Ditches" really hit the nail on the head. It's sad when people don't learn the true meaning of law and grace and the difference of legalism. I enjoyed "Questions & Answers." That subject has come up a lot lately, and you answered it so well. "Marion Moms" is an inspiration. That kind of support group should be available to all young families. "Secrets of the Sisterhood" is so to the point, as well as "Mothers Gap." The whole HeartSpeak section was pointed also. And I loved the church tests — we all should take them occasionally. The Church Forum was inspirational and encouraging.

I could go on, but you get the picture. Keep up the good work.

*P. L.
Oklahoma City, OK*

We always enjoy every BA, but we were joyously overwhelmed with the May-June edition. We so much enjoyed the messages of family love and how blessed it is for all to care for each other. May God bless and bless, as He clearly does.

*N. and N. S.
Lodi, CA*

Deeper study

"Ditches Along Grace Way" was special, so timely for me. Our men's fraternity here is called MOB — Men of the Bible. About forty — mostly retired, with college degrees but little Bible instruction — meet every Thursday at 6:00 a.m. We've been through Genesis, Luke, and now Exodus — ten weeks each. As writer of two sessions, I've spent more time studying these magnificent books. We're having a fantastic time relating Exodus events to current social issues. This week we're dealing with God's attitude towards aliens (chs. 21, 22), relating it to our attitudes on amnesty. Makes for good discussion.

*H. D. F.
Grass Valley, CA*

"Ditches Along Grace Way," explaining the difference in and the necessity of law and grace, is the most perfectly taught means of Scripture interpretation I have ever read. I will definitely be using the message in my upcoming [Bible] school lesson.

*D. S.
Tipton, OK*

Your BA has improved while other magazines have failed or stopped being published. Please continue sending it to peruse and for retention. Issues on prophecy are encouraging. Keep up the good work!

*Elder O. K.
Kenya, East Africa*

House of Healing, House of Loss

continued from page 5

and magnificence of the casino, people go in whole and leave wounded and despondent.


What a glaring contrast between the way God and the enemy work. God, ever loving, ever true, will work in any environment, humble or rich, to heal, bless, and give a peace that surpasses all understanding. While He touches the senses, He does not need to gratify them. The change He offers goes much deeper and affects our whole being — the way we look at and live our lives.

By contrast, the enemy is the ultimate loser. Having nothing of substance to offer, he focuses on gratifying the senses. Yet even as he does, his goal is to destroy peace and wholeness and lead his unsuspecting victims to ruin. His houses are houses of loss and pain. And they abound.

But thank God for the opposite reality — for the Filipino Adventist church in Hong Kong and thousands of similar houses the world over. While they stand, there is hope for this world. May every Sabbath church be a house of God where wounded people can become whole. **BA**

Dr. Papaioannou is assistant professor of New Testament Studies, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, in The Philippines.





**Frost sets the trees aflame
Coppered oranges
Burnished reds
Mellow, translucent golds
Glowing tapers of light
Gifting every passerby with
Incandescent glory**

**Watch fires scattered
Tongues of fire
Hue-hooing praises
To their God.**

Petey Prater

Did you know . . .

- the next ten years are critical for developing pastoral leaders who will equip others to build up the body of Christ?
- less than 2 percent of the ministers licensed by our North American Ministerial Council are now under the age of 40?
- by 2020 some 85 percent of our current ministers will be above retirement age?
- 215 students are currently enrolled in LifeSpring's Certificate of Biblical Studies and Diploma of Pastoral Ministry programs, and 105 of these are under age 40?
- if every CoG7 member gave \$35 this year, LifeSpring's budget would be met and students could attend LifeSpring tuition-free?

CoG7 Ministries



These LifeSpring students and instructors immersed themselves in study and fellowship on the Michigan campus of Spring Vale Academy, June 6-11. Others joined those who remained for a second week of coursework June 13-19.

LifeSpring School of Ministry

Larry Marrs, Director

Effective leaders. They bridge the gap between what *is* and what *can be*. They seek the Lord, walk in humility, build unity, encourage others, provide focus and direction, organize resources, and commit themselves and their organization to excellence. They equip the members of their team to accomplish the greater goal.

Developing a new generation of effective leaders is by far the most urgent and important task we face as a denomination.

The closest thing to a job description for pastoral ministry is Ephesians 4:11-13:

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

This passage establishes the role of pastors (equipping saints for works of service) and defines an ultimate purpose: building up Christ's body.

This need for leaders extends beyond pastors to men and women who will minister through worship arts, Christian education, family ministry, missions, and the workplace.

The goal of LifeSpring School of Ministry is to serve the body of Christ, His church. It does this by training a generation of selfless, committed, and vibrant men and women dedicated to passionate worship, compassionate service, aggressive witness, strong fellowship, and committed discipleship as we

- honor and glorify Jesus Christ the Lord and Savior, Son of God the Father
- teach students to honor and trust the Word of God, the Bible, as His authoritative and inspired Word
- prepare students to live in Christ's current kingdom in intimate relationship with their Creator
- help students bond to the heart of God and be transformed to the mind of Christ in preparation for the eternal kingdom
- mold and mentor students as authentic disciples of Christ
- teach students to live in edifying and healing Christian community
- assist students in discovering and developing their God-given gifts, talents, and calling
- prompt students to become lifelong learners and pursuers of truth
- train students to be servant leaders after the model of Christ — agents of holy change in and out of the church
- prepare students to minister to the hurt, broken, and lost at home and elsewhere

To request a LifeSpring application, please visit www.lifespringschool.org or e-mail office@lifespring.school.org.

Island Leader Passes

Elder Gershaw Wallen, long-time minister of CoG7 in Jamaica, died on June 30 at age 90. Pastor Wallen, who succeeded founder Charles Ellis as president of the Jamaican Conference, is survived by his wife Susan; daughters Grace (wife of Port St. Lucie pastor Al Haynes), Donna, and Elaine; and sons Winston and Wesley. Condolences to the Wallens and to the entire Church family in Jamaica as they grieve this loss.



Dr. Ranjit Moni (third from left) of Sri Lanka met with representatives of CoG7 on his U.S. visit in June. Having come to similar understanding of the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God, Dr. Moni seeks to establish the Church in Sri Lanka. Others pictured are (L to R) Whaid Rose, Calvin Burrell, Dr. Moni and his brother (from Dayton, Ohio), Bill Hicks, and Richard Jensen.

New Intermediate Curriculum

Produced by Bible Advocate Press and Church of God (Seventh Day) writers, our new Intermediate Sabbath School curriculum is ready for the fall quarter of 2010, beginning in October. These lessons are geared for grades 4, 5, and 6.

The theme *God Promises a Savior* features lessons about prophecies that foretold Jesus' first coming, birth, childhood, and early ministry. John the Baptist's birth and ministry are also taught in these thirteen lessons.

Curriculum components include a teacher's overview for the quarter, weekly teacher's guides, student handouts, activity worksheets, and resource sheets.

This new curriculum will be provided via e-mail attachments that can be downloaded and printed. It is also available on CD's for those who prefer that method. These copyrighted lessons will be forwarded to those who order and pay for specific quantities.

A free sample lesson and order form will be e-mailed on request. Contact the Bible Advocate Press at bap.orders@cog7.org.

Two Golden Anniversaries

Congratulations to Henry and Delores Schelert, of Selah, Washington, who celebrated their golden anniversary on July 24 and to Dale and Ethel Lawson of Marion, Oregon, who also reached 50 years of marriage on August 21.



Fearless in Salem

People gathered – more than 600 of them – in beautiful Salem, Oregon, July 6-10, for the West Coast District Conference with a “Fearless” theme.

Each day began with food and fellowship in the large breakfast room, followed by workshops that included Sabbath School Revitalized; Summoning Courage in Crisis; Prayer’s Calming Effect; Why We Are Afraid; De-Stress: Sabbath Rest Embraced and Shared; Living Fearless in a Post-Christian Culture; Fear of Change; Fear of Insignificance; Fearless: A Christian Philosophy; Life’s Final Moments Fearless; Family Driven Faith; Fearless in the Face of Evolution-Teaching; and Fear of Heights.

The youth program was full with worship and interaction, an outing to Silver Creek Falls State Park,

and a community service opportunity. Children’s classes provided a thriving atmosphere for kids.

We were blessed with a facility that provided lots of room for visitation, and we made the most of it. An old-fashioned family picnic at Riverfront Park, a short walk from the hotel, was a great time of watermelon, games, and sunshine.

Evening services continued the “Fearless” theme. Elder Whaid Rose wrapped it up on Sabbath morning with his message “The Healthy Fear: Fear of the Lord.”

In her humorous, heart-warming style, afternoon guest Sheri Rose Shepherd spoke on “Seven Things Worth Fighting For.” An evening concert by an African gospel group Acappella closed out the conference with joy. We were refreshed with God’s strong, hopeful presence, and were left with a renewed sense of trust in Him.

– Brian Larson and Larry Zaragoza



Octoberfest Family Retreat October 15-17, 2010

Church Of God (Seventh Day)
Jasper, Arkansas
Contact: jasonverman@hotmail.com or
870-446-5736

NAMC This Fall

The North American Ministerial Council has set its biennial meeting for October 18-23, 2010, at the Glen Eyrie retreat center in the Rocky Mountain foothills near Colorado Springs. All CoG7 ministers and lay pastors in the U.S. and Canada should plan to attend.

Major agenda items include consideration of our attitude toward the few affiliated ministers and congregations who observe one or more of the annual Hebrew feast days of Leviticus 23, eight hours of instruction on “Church Revitalization” by Dr. Tom Cheyney, and approval of a CoG7 book of doctrines.

Ministers or pastors not yet registered for the council may contact NAMC president Calvin Burrell for information: 303-452-7973 or namc@cog7.org.

NFYC Registration

Stay connected with the National FYC through registration, the Gimme Five program, Hunger Lock-In, our Web site, and our newsletter and text list. We need you to complete us: Together, we share the powerful experience of God!

Thanks to these youth groups who have registered so far in 2010:

Alberta: Calgary and Parkland

California: Sacramento South Fellowship and Visalia

Florida: South Miami

Indiana: Ft. Wayne

Kansas: Topeka

Missouri: Stanberry

New York: Roosevelt

North Carolina: Farmville

Oklahoma: Claremore

Oregon: Harrisburg and Marion

Pennsylvania: Harrisburg

Texas: Conroe Emmanuel, Corpus Christi Violet, El Paso Central, Grand Prairie (Familias Victoriosas), Houston (Floral, Park Terrace), Midland, San Antonio (Ceralvo, Muskogee, Triple Trees)

All registered youth receive our e-newsletter and text list, with periodic notes of encouragement, verses, jokes, and more! If your church is not listed above, please ask your youth worker to make the connection right away. It can be done online at nfyc.cog7.org/register.

— Kurt Lang
National FYC Director



Publications

Ministry Loves Company

Have you heard of the “Facebook frenzy”? That’s the rush of people in the last year or so to connect with their friends, relatives, and others through Facebook, probably the most popular social network site.

But Facebook is more than just a gathering place for friends and family. It’s also where you can connect with nearly every organization and business: the manufacturer that made your car; the retail store where you buy clothing and food; the denomination you attend (yes, CoG7 is there!); and now, the magazine you hold in your hand.

That’s right. In June the *Bible Advocate* staked its place on Facebook. The Publications staff believes the incredible growth of this social group presents incredible opportunities for outreach. In the first six months of 2010, Facebook ballooned from 350 million users to 500 million, all linked to each other and expanding their conversations around the globe. This massive audience can now learn about the magazine that has been publishing the good news of grace and truth for 147 years.

Right now, the BA has well over 100 Facebook fans from eleven different countries, and we want to see it grow. If you stop by for a visit, you can . . .

- comment on articles in the latest issue and in *Now What?*
- explore Bible topics more thoroughly
- ask questions of the editor
- share stories of what God is doing in your life

Check out the BA on Facebook and join the conversation!

Not a member of Facebook? It’s easy! Just visit www.facebook.com and follow the directions.

— Sherri Langton
Associate Editor

International Tour



@ Kalina Vova—Dreamstime.com

India

Decade of Unity and Dedication

With more than 250 congregations spread over the states of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Mizoram, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, we have been striving since the formation of the Association of the Churches of God (Seventh Day) in India (February 2001) to bring unity among the brethren here.

Supported by a team of dedicated servants like Elders George Hnamte, P. Kennedy, T. V. Rao, and other ordained ministers and evangelists, we have taken the initiative to preach the gospel of Christ to millions of souls and bring people to receive the Creator's blessings — in part, by honoring Sabbath.

Literature. We have distributed thousands of tracts, translating some of these into the local languages of Telugu and Oriya. Funds are needed for this.

Training for widows, etc. This program began with the objectives of equipping poor women in sewing of garments for self-employment and using this opportunity to introduce Jesus Christ to unsaved families through them. Thus far, 60 women have completed the training, with certificates and Bibles issued to all.

Bible distribution. Several free Bible camps have been conducted with donated funds.

Children's ministry. We conduct Bible schools and invite children from the community to attend. This year we distributed Samaritan's Purse gift boxes for children. Individuals are needed to sponsor 500 boxes in 2011. These can be shipped from the U.S. directly to India.

Buildings. We are grateful for generous Missions Abroad offerings through which we started construction or repair for churches in Umamahesh-

waram, Konicherla, Laxmipuram, in West Godavari and Khammam districts. Support for several more churches is yet needed.

Mizoram. Subsidy from Missions Abroad to pastors in Mizoram, under Elder George Hnamte's leadership, was restored in January 2010. We are also happy to reestablish communication with the group headed by Pastor T. Vanbawia.

Myanmar. We established contacts with several Sabbath-observing pastors interested in affiliation, and plan to meet these leaders during the visit of Elder William C. Hicks late in 2010.

You may e-mail V. Jacob S. Rao, general secretary of the churches in India: coghydvsjr@hotmail.com or acog7_india@yahoo.co.in.





Halftime

Imagine that a daily deposit of \$1,440 is made to your bank account. You cannot

save it; you must spend it, or it will disappear at day's end.

You've guessed it: Every day 1,440 minutes are deposited into our "life account." We can't keep them, can't store them up for tomorrow; at the end of each day, they're gone forever.

It's called *time*, and it's how we measure life. From our first breath, the sand begins to fall in the hourglass, the clock starts ticking, the fuse burns.

My clock seems to tick faster these days. I just celebrated my fiftieth birthday. This happens to some 12,000 Americans every day, many of whom are frightened by it. For those in crisis at midlife, thankfully, Bob Buford offers hope and insight in his bestselling book *Halftime*.

He compares life to a ballgame, reminding us that the game is won or lost in the second half. Life's focus shifts from success to significance, from getting ahead to making a difference. The first half is about getting, the second about releasing and relinquishing. We discover the difference between efficiency (doing things right) and effectiveness (doing right things) — so critical at halftime. We come to terms with our busy-ness, much of it driven not by having too much to do but by neglect of the "one thing" we ought to do.

Halftime is not an escape from reality nor a more respectable midlife crisis. It is not a reaction to something negative but rather a response to positive hopes and dreams. The key to a successful second half is not usually to change jobs; it is to change heart, to change the way we view the world and order our lives.

Early in the book Buford shares his own epitaph, crafted by asking life's important questions: Am I listening to the still, small voice? Is my work the

center of my life and identity? Is an eternal perspective the prism through which I view life? What is my truest purpose, my life work, my destiny? What does it really mean to "have it all"? What do I want to be remembered for? What would my life look like if it really turned out well?

To ask these questions is to search "the heart's holiest chamber." To answer them honestly and live accordingly is to discover life's center, where the extremes of boredom and frantic, success-driven lifestyle are avoided.

Buford's business success brought him to halftime earlier than most. As a Christian, he was challenged about what he would do with the rest of his life and his money. We're better able to leverage time in the second half, and good financial stewardship in the first half positions us for greater spiritual investments during the second. Buford believes Christianity is filled with the latent energy of half-timers who have yet to discover their "one thing I do." He has made it his life's mission to release that energy — for the kingdom.

Some believers' lives fit one pilot's description of life in a cockpit: "Endless boredom, punctuated by moments of sheer panic." May we live high above boredom, pessimism, and cynicism, especially during our second half, "redeeming the time" (Ephesians 5:16). May we give our lives to a cause greater than ourselves, with courage and adventure, as described in "Rabbi Ben Ezra," by Robert Browning:

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be
afraid!"

— *Whaid Guscott Rose*
General Conference President

Bible Advocate
(USPS 054-160)
P.O. Box 33677
Denver, CO 80233-0677
USA

Periodicals
Postage Paid
at Broomfield,
Colorado and
additional offices



North American Ministerial Council
Glen Eyrie Conference Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado
October 18-23, 2010

Invited: all licensed or
credentialed ministers
and lay pastors

Registration: call 303-452-
7973 or download forms
at www.cog7.org

