



General Conference Executive Committee Newsletter

An informative publication for members of the General Conference Executive Committee as a service through the office of the

SPECIAL REPORT
SEE PAGE 6

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2018

For Seventh-day

Adventists, being called out as God's remnant church is one of our 28 Fundamental Beliefs, (#13), and is core to our identity and mission.

Today, however, some may wonder if being the "remnant" is still relevant. Others may identify the concept with exclusivity, elitism, and pride.

But when we recognize it is God who calls and identifies *His* remnant, and that it is only through *His* power that the remnant can carry out *His* mission, then we realize that pride has no place, and that all are welcome to become a part of *His* remnant people.

In this issue of the *Executive Committee Newsletter*, Clifford Goldstein, editor of the *Adult Bible Study Guide* and well-known Adventist apologist, examines the concept of the remnant in the Old and New Testaments, and its application for today.

May God bless us as we consider this important Fundamental Belief.

—ELIAS

BRASIL
DE SOUZA,
DIRECTOR
BIBLICAL
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE



EDITORIAL



ARE WE REALLY THE REMNANT?

BY CLIFFORD GOLDSTEIN, EDITOR, *ADULT BIBLE STUDY GUIDE*

Suppose you were a Jew living in ancient Israel, First Temple period, and were fed up with how compromising and worldly the church had become. I mean, they were actually worshipping idols in the temple grounds! (See Ezekiel 8)

Where would you go?
Babylon? Assyria?

Or suppose you were a Jew living in the Second Temple Period, which had become so legalistic that they actually accused Jesus of violating the Sabbath. (See John 9:16)

Where would you go?
Greece? Rome?

Well, what about today?

Suppose, for whatever reason, you became upset with the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Where would you go?

That is, if you are not willing to give up the seventh-day Sabbath, you have pretty much wiped out 99 per cent of your options. If, at the same time, you are not willing to believe that evil Uncle Willy (may he rest in peace) is burning in hell right now, or that sweet Aunt Sally (may she rest in peace) is enjoying the bliss of heaven, then you have wiped out 99 per cent of the one percent of your options left.

Again, I ask: Where would you go?

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GOD HAS
ALWAYS HAD
someone—a group
of people—to carry
His light, His truth,
to the world.



No question, the difference between the religion of ancient Israel and the pagan nations around them was greater than the difference between the Seventh-day Adventist church and the other Protestant faiths around us. That's true, but the difference is still great enough, the truth still stands out clearly enough—that, indeed, there's really no other place to go.

THE REMNANT

Hence, welcome to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the remnant church.

Why are we the remnant?

Well, if you study biblical history, God has always had a group of people who He had entrusted with more light, more truth—“present truth” (2 Peter 1:12)—than anyone else around them. Not because He loved them more, or thought they were better than everybody else, but because in some way or another they showed some kind of openness to Him—and to the light, the truth, that He wanted to give. And that light, that truth, more than anything else is what made them the remnant.

You see, God has always had someone—a group of people—to carry His light, His truth, to the world. Whether or not they were faithful to the truth that they had (often they weren't, unfortunately) is another matter entirely. The point is that they still had more light, more truth, than anyone else around them—and that light, that truth, was carried on.

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

For example, Noah and his family had present truth. *It's going to rain; get on the boat.* (Read,

then, about Noah getting drunk and that whole ugly incident. It still didn't change the fact that they had present truth).

Abraham was probably the holiest, most faithful of any of the remnant, and he had more light, more truth, than the pagans around him. But he, too, wasn't perfect.

Then the children of Jacob, the twelve sons. We know the story here. Some were better than others, but they were hardly all perfect, hardly all holy, hardly all saints. Though again at least they had knowledge of the true God, which is why they are traced through the Bible as a remnant.

Then we get to the nation of Israel. Look at their teaching. Ten commandments. The Genesis creation account in contrast to pagan myths. The sanctuary service, in contrast to pagan sanctuaries, where they held sexual orgies and sacrificed children. They understood the state of the dead. They had a health message (for instance, the Egyptians would use human excrement in medical concoctions while the Jews buried theirs outside the camp). They had some understanding of the Great Controversy. They had the Spirit of Prophecy manifested all through their history. And they had knowledge of the Messiah's coming.

Now, I can go on and on about all their apostasy, all their rebellion, all the evil that was done by some of the them. The Old Testament is filled with a lot of stories about that. *But it doesn't change the fact that they had been given more light, more truth, than any of the other nations around them. Period.*

Having this truth might not have saved all of them, but that's not the point. The point is that *they had*

these truths, truths that no one else did, at least to the degree that they did. And that distinguished them as God's remnant.

NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY

Now, let's transition to the early church. They, like ancient Israel, had a mission to spread the knowledge of the true God to the world, only now with the added light, the present truth message of Jesus as the Messiah, who died for the sins of the world.

And yet, look at what it was like. If you read in the New Testament alone, in New Testament times, the time when Paul and the apostles were still alive, what do you find? There was fornication—a man sleeping with his father's wife (1 Corinthians 5:1). Ethnic tension between Greeks and Jews (Acts 6:1). Ethnic bigotry even among leaders, such as Peter not wanting to eat with Gentiles (Galatians 2:11-14). There were backsliders, busybodies, tattlers, gossipers, all found in the early church. Theological battles over the law and the keeping of the law. Nasty battles, in fact. Outright heresy as well. "O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you" (Galatians 3:1). Some taught the resurrection was already past. John warned about antichrists already among them; battles over the nature of Christ, with the Gnostic heresy.

All this within the church, the new remnant church of the New Testament. But despite their problems, there were still those who were faithfully looking to follow and share the light God had given them, and they had more light, more truth, than anyone else! Period.

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Where
would I
go if I
left the
Seventh-day
Adventist
Church?”

Then we get into the long period of papal supremacy and so forth that we all know so well. There were always those who preserved some modicum of truth and faithfulness though a great deal was lost.

THE FINAL REMNANT

Now, we come down to the end times, to ourselves, the Seventh-day Adventist church. We have a few texts that help define us as the remnant church of the last days.

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev. 12:17).

The remnant of her seed? Which seed? The seed of the woman. You can go back to Genesis 3:15 for that: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy *seed* and her *seed*; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

And there's more. “And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! *For the*

testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy,” (Revelation 19:10).

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12).

The commandments of God, which includes the Sabbath, and the Spirit of Prophecy.

That's us, yes.

But, *look* at us. Look at some of the struggles and problems we have. Look at the crises in our history. Look at the challenges we have today. But can we, with all these problems, still be God's remnant church?

Of course we can. And that's because the remnant is determined *by the truth it possesses and proclaims.*

But that doesn't mean we can become proud and say, “We have it all together—we have the truth!”

Listen to what Ellen White told the remnant people at the General Conference Session in 1901:

“Every soul in every conference, in every part of the Lord's vineyard, has the privilege of knowing the truth. But truth is not truth to those who do not practice it. Truth is only truth to you when you live it in the daily life, showing the world what those people must be who are at last saved.”¹

Just because you're part of the remnant doesn't mean you are saved. That's never the case. But these truths remain the truth, present truth, regardless of what those possessing it do with it.

I have often said that, however hard it was for me to become an Adventist (and believe me, it was hard), it has been the easiest thing for me to stay one.

Why? Well, again, where would I go if I left the Seventh-day

The truth, present truth, stand outs so clearly, so distinctly, from error. And it is this truth that defines the remnant—even if not all of the remnant will be saved by this truth.



Adventist church?

A Sunday-keeping church that has people already in heaven or burning in hell?

A church that believes in the secret rapture, that Jesus returns secretly, quietly, and takes His faithful to heaven while everyone else here goes through a time of trouble?

A church whose whole focus on last day events centers on wars in the Middle East, and who go to Isaiah, Ezekiel and even Deuteronomy to find texts that predict practically every battle over there?

A church which says that since Jesus died on the cross, it's OK to eat pig?

A church which teaches that even before people are born Jesus predetermines that some of them will be lost, so that no matter how they live now, they are going to go to hell and burn forever after they die?

Or a church which teaches that once you accept Jesus you can never be lost, even if you openly reject Him later?

Now, my point here isn't to judge whether these people are saved or lost. My point is simply to say that the truth, present truth, stand outs so clearly, so distinctly, from error. And it is this truth that defines the remnant—even if not all of the

remnant will be saved by this truth.

So, whether a Jew in 9th century BC Judah, or a Seventh-day Adventist in 21st century anywhere—the question remains: *Where do you go?*

The answer is easy. As Peter said to Jesus when Jesus asked if they would abandon Him, too: “Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

ENDNOTES

¹ *General Conference Bulletin*, 1901, p. 24, <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Periodicals/GCSessionBulletins/GCB1901-01ex01.pdf>

WHY I AM A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

By Glenn Townend, president, South Pacific Division



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I now realized that Jesus died for *my* sin, and He took the full punishment for what I did.

I was born on a Sabbath into a Seventh-day Adventist pastor’s home, so I’ve always known the church. As a PK (preacher’s kid), I remember a couple of instances in particular that had a big impact on my life.

I was a pretty lively child and got into some fairly serious trouble as a little kid. I got caught doing stuff, basically red-handed, by my parents. I was punished. I knew what I had done was wrong.

The following Sabbath, my parents invited some people over for lunch. I was racing around as a 6-year-old, and a teenage boy said, “Get me your favorite story book and we’ll read it.”

I picked one up from the book shelf. He read the story of Jesus dying on the cross. It had incredible impact, because just that week I’d been caught and punished for what I knew was wrong. I now realized that Jesus died for *my* sin, and He took the full punishment for what I did. And He would forgive me. The story finished, and lunch was ready. I went to my bedroom. My mom came in and found me crying, because God had got the gospel through to me as a 6-year-old.

When I was about 14, my dad was asked to do a Week of Prayer for an Adventist school in the highlands of Papua New Guinea (PNG). We were living in Lei, PNG, as my Dad was a departmental director for the Union. Our whole family got to go with him for this Week of Prayer, way up in the mountains, at the Paglum Adventist School in the Western Highlands Mission.

My dad was giving all of these talks, morning and night for the students. On the last day, he made a call for those who wanted to follow Jesus. I kind of felt a real strange pull from the Holy Spirit saying, “Hey, this is for you.” And I’m saying, “No, it’s for the students here. No, I’m not going.” But as I

was wrestling, I heard my Heavenly Father call through my earthly father, and I said, “Yep, I’m going to give my life to Jesus.” I was baptized in my local church in Lei.

Why am I an Adventist today? Because I’m much more knowledgeable of all the alternatives—other religions and philosophies. The thing for me is, Jesus has dealt with sin, evil, death, and He gives a future hope. No other religion or philosophy deals with real issues in this world—evil and death. Only Jesus does that, so I must be a Christian.

But then why Adventism? Because our message is so Biblical. To explain our faith, to give Bible studies, everything we believe is right there in the biblical text.

Secondly, there’s our basic health principles. It just makes so much sense. We have a whole package of health.

And then, people want to know what’s happening the world. Our prophetic understanding gives me and others a sense of security. We know what’s happening and why it’s happening. Nothing really surprises us. We don’t always know all of the details, but we know that one day the enemy will have his last say, because Jesus is coming back.

We know how the last day events play out in general broad themes, so we don’t need to be worried, because Jesus is in control. That gives me a lot of hope.

And the fact that we’ve got this whole package, and nobody else has it. Other Christians have bits and pieces, but we’ve got it all, and we’ve been uniquely called to share this end-time message—I think that’s just fantastic!

These are the kinds of things I get to share as I meet with other people of our division and preach and teach—this is who we are. We should be really proud of that heritage, that prophetic heritage.

PRAYERFUL PROCESS CONTINUES: GC ADCOM EMBRACES UNITY

By GC Executive Committee Newsletter editorial team

The General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church recently took action to further support and embrace the unity of the global church, and to complement church policies already in place.

The Adventist church operates in more than 200 countries, grows at more than four percent per year, and establishes more than 30 new groups of believers each day. Growth and diversity require flexibility, always in the context of holding fast to Biblical truth and best practices of operating.

Decisions regarding agenda recommendations are determined by majority vote. Most agenda items for the world church come from processes previously agreed upon or as a result of input from elected members of the General Conference Executive Committee.

On July 17, 2018, the General Conference (GC) ADCOM established five compliance committees to serve unity, helping retain voted church beliefs and operating procedures and process. The terms of reference for these committees are available [here](#). The names of the committees and those elected to committee membership can be found on the next page.

Two Primary Expressions

The establishment of the five compliance committees resulted from two primary expressions of the world church:

1. A worldwide survey conducted by the church's Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research of church leaders, including all union presidents, showed strong support for some type of consequences for entities not in compliance with voted actions

of GC Sessions and of the GC Executive Committee. Results of the survey were published on March 23, 2018, by [Adventist News Network \(ANN\)](#) and [Adventist Review](#), and in the April 2018 [GC Executive Committee Newsletter](#) (ECN).

2. For several years General Conference Executive Committee members have correctly observed that non-compliance to GC Session and Executive Committee actions can be found in several areas of church practice and operation. Repeatedly, questions have been posed asking why church leadership has not addressed these issues. This action by ADCOM responds to those concerns.

The purpose of these committees is to have a group of qualified people, upon the recommendation of GC ADCOM, look into reported non-compliant practices. The goal of each committee is to focus the church on its mission and message, using a redemptive approach to achieve church unity. In addressing compliance issues, this model could also be adopted by other levels of church organization.

As explained in the vote taken by the GC ADCOM, the subcommittee process begins with a referral from the GC ADCOM and thereafter follows the normal practice of gaining wide input, building a majority consensus through the GC ADCOM, General Conference and Division Officers (GCDO), and the General Conference Executive Committee.

A Common Understanding

Church authority is owned by the

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It is Biblical for people and organizations to work together with a common understanding that the message and mission found in God’s Word might circle the globe.

membership of the church. The decisions that come out of GC Sessions and Executive Committee meetings endorse Biblical beliefs and define church operating policy and practice. It is Biblical for people and organizations to work together with a common understanding that the message and mission found in God’s Word might circle the globe.

Hensley Moorrooven, secretary of the GC ADCOM makes this prayerful appeal:

“What we really need is to have the church be found on their knees, praying for the Holy Spirit to draw us together. Regardless of where on the continuum we come from, we have a mission and we have a message, and that needs to become the focus of the church. That is the appeal of the leadership of the General Conference, of the divisions, unions, conferences, pastors, and members. Let us be on our knees.”

General Conference Compliance Review Committee with Doctrine, Policies, Statements, and Guidelines for Church Organizations and Institutions Teaching Creation/Origins

MEMBERS

Stele, Artur A, Chair
Gibson, L James, Secretary
Donkor, Kwabena
Klingbeil, Chantal
Nalin, Ronald
Phillips, Suzanne

Porter, Karen J
Ryan, Michael L
Standish, Timothy G
Thomas, John H
Yunker, Randall W

LEGAL ADVISOR

Woods, Jennifer

EX OFFICIO

Wilson, Ted N C
Ng, G T
Prestol-Puesan, Juan R

General Conference Compliance Review Committee with Doctrine, Policies, Statements, and Guidelines for Church Organizations and Institutions Regarding Homosexuality

MEMBERS

Stele, Artur A, Chair
Brasil de Souza, Elias, Secretary
Beardsley-Hardy, Lisa M
Blanchard, Gary T
Landless, Peter N
Mueller, Ekkehardt F R

Nedley, Neil
Oliver, Elaine
Oliver, Willie
Proffitt, Kathryn L
Santos, Gerson P
Yingling, Lori T

LEGAL ADVISOR

Wetmore, Thomas E

EX OFFICIO

Wilson, Ted N C
Ng, G T
Prestol-Puesan, Juan R

General Conference Compliance Review Committee with Doctrine, Policies, Statements, and Guidelines for Church Organizations and Institutions Regarding Issues of Ordination

MEMBERS

Biaggi, Guillermo E, Chair
Moorrooven, Hensley M, Secretary
De los Santos, Abner
Finley, Mark A
Hasel, Frank M

Page, Janet R
Page, Jerry N
Ryan, Michael L
Stele, Galina

LEGAL ADVISOR

Doukmetzian, Karnik

EX OFFICIO

Wilson, Ted N C
Ng, G T
Prestol-Puesan, Juan R

General Conference Compliance Review Committee with General Conference Core Policies

MEMBERS

Wahlen, J Raymond II, Chair
Orion, Daisy J F, Secretary

Biaggi, Guillermo E
Richli, Claude J

*Two additional members to be named
GCAS Associate from the Region Under Review*

LEGAL ADVISOR

Pierre, Josue

EX OFFICIO

Wilson, Ted N C
Ng, G T
Prestol-Puesan, Juan R

General Conference Compliance Review Committee with the Distinctive Beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for Church Organizations and Institutions

MEMBERS

Brasil de Souza, Elias, Chair
Wahlen, Clinton L, Secretary
Arrais, Raquel C
Finley, Mark A
Goia, Pavel
Moorrooven, Hensley M

Page, Jerry N
Small, Heather-Dawn K
Simmons, Ella S
Thorp, Brad
Timm, Alberto R

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Prestol-Puesan, Juan R

CHECKUP



CREATING A HEALTHY BALANCE

As leaders, creating a healthy balance in our lives can be challenging. We feel the weight of heavy responsibilities. Trying to balance between work, family, and personal time can be difficult. Nevertheless, it's important to keep this inspired counsel in mind:

“God has endowed us with a certain amount of vital force. . . . If we carefully preserve the life force, and keep the delicate mechanism of the body in order, the result is health; but if the vital force is too rapidly exhausted, the nervous system borrows power for present use from its resources of strength, and when one organ is injured, all are affected. Nature bears much abuse without apparent resistance; she then arouses and makes a determined effort to remove the effects of the ill-treatment she has suffered. Her effort to correct these conditions is often manifest in fever and various other forms of sickness. . . .

“Some make themselves sick by overwork. For these, rest, freedom from care, and a moderate diet, are essential to restoration of health. To those who are brain weary and nervous because of continual labor and close confinement a visit to the country where they can live a simple, carefree life, coming in close contact with the things of nature, will be most helpful.”

— *Ministry of Healing*, p. 234, 236

Here are six tips for leading a more balanced life:¹

1 Spend quality time with God at the beginning of each day, reading Scripture and praying.

Making this a daily habit can lead to a sense of calm assurance throughout the day.

2 Schedule down time into your day.

Just as we schedule work appointments, schedule time with family and friends—go on a picnic, go hiking, do something together in your community, spend time with those you love and care about!

3 Cut out things that don't add value to your life.

How much time do we waste on things that don't really matter or benefit us? Television, internet, social media and other distractions can quickly absorb our valuable time and energy.

4 Choose wisely who to spend time and energy with.

Limit time with people who only want to gossip, speak negatively, or constantly vent with no intention of solving their issues. Choose to spend time with those who are uplifting and encouraging.

5 Rethink your tasks.

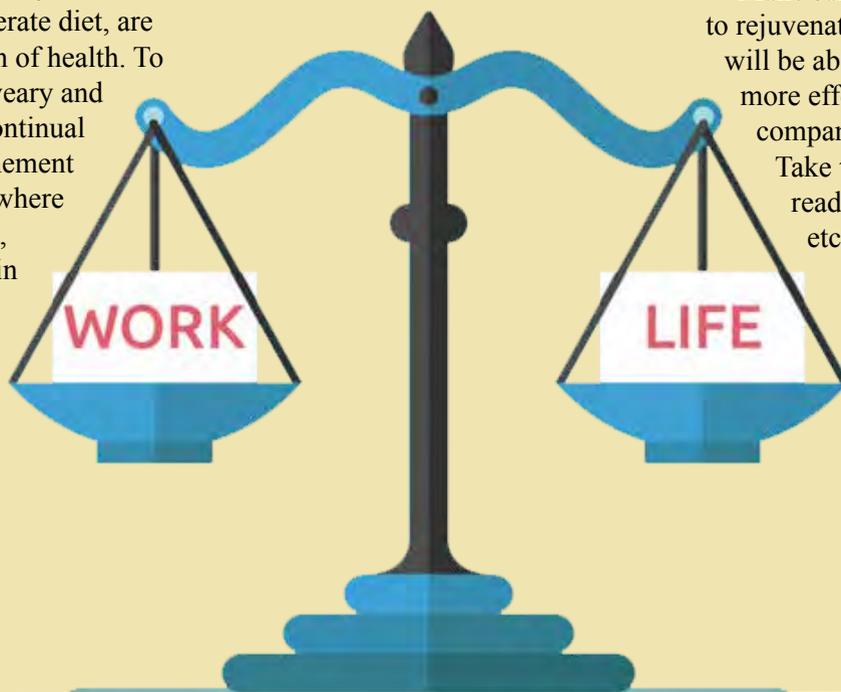
Are there things that you can do differently or delegate to free you up to do the things that only you can do? Don't be afraid to delegate.

6 Make time for yourself.

Make sure you take some time to rejuvenate and refresh. You will be able to perform your job more effectively and be a better companion to those around you. Take time to enjoy a hobby, read a good book, exercise, etc.

Endnotes

¹Adapted from Fukuda, M. and Fukuda, D. (2016). *Habits That Heal: Habits of America's Longest Living People*, 46.



WRITING LETTERS, SHARING FAITH

One woman makes a difference

BY REBECA RUIZ LAGUARDIA



A Spanish housewife read a startling Ellen White passage that prompted her to embark on a 35-year letter-writing campaign to proclaim Jesus' coming to Spain's king and queen, prominent actors and singers, and late Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

The missionary initiative began the same day that the housewife—my mother, Pilar Laguardia—read the following statement:

“Those who belong to the higher ranks of society are to be sought out with tender affection and brotherly regard. Men in business life, in high positions of trust, men with large inventive faculties and scientific insight, men of genius, teachers of the gospel whose minds have not been called to the special truths for this time—these should be the first to hear the call. To them the invitation must be given. There is a work to be done for the wealthy. They need to be awakened to their responsibility as those entrusted with the gifts of heaven. They need to be reminded that they must give an account to Him who shall judge the living and the dead. The wealthy man needs your labor in the love and fear of God. Too often he trusts in his riches, and feels not his danger. The eyes of his mind need to be attracted to things of enduring value. He needs to recognize the authority of true goodness, which says, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for My yoke is easy, and My burden is

light.’ (Matthew 11:28-30). Those who stand high in the world for their education, wealth, or calling, are seldom addressed personally in regard to the interests of the soul. Many Christian workers hesitate to approach these classes. But this should not be. If a man were drowning, we would not stand by and see him perish because he was a lawyer, a merchant, or a judge. If we saw persons rushing over a precipice, we would not hesitate to urge them back, whatever might be their position or calling.

Neither should we hesitate to warn men of the peril of the soul” (*Christ Object Lessons*, p. 230).

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As a simple housewife, how can I reach these people?

What Can I Do?

The statement deeply impressed my mother. After she read it, she asked herself, “As a simple housewife, how can I reach these people?”

A moment later, she hatched a plan. She would listen to interviews with prominent people on radio and television and also read newspapers and magazines with their interviews. She would seek any

hint of interest in eternal matters in their interviews and then introduce them to God.

My mother found many opportunities to share her love for God. She started writing a letter as soon as she heard someone say, “I wish I had faith” or “I’m agnostic” or “I have an emptiness inside.” My mother has an incredible ability to take a simple phrase and develop a theme for a letter. Without a doubt, the Lord has helped her give glory to Him.

In her letters, my mother takes a tender approach

in presenting the Savior. She sends books, articles, and sermons with the letters.

My mother believes that the gospel must reach everyone, even if she doesn't receive a reply. At the very least, the recipients have been offered the "water of life." She has written to politicians, authors, actors and actresses, singers, journalists, priests, bishops, archbishops, and Spanish presidents and government ministers.

Some of the well-known recipients include Fidel Castro, Italian singer Al Bano Carrisi, author Paulo Coelho, author José Saramago, and Spain's king, Felipe VI, and queen, Letizia. My mother also has written to imprisoned criminals about the love of Jesus, repentance, and the power of God's forgiveness. She has lost count of how many letters she has written.

At a time when the Internet did not exist, she never had difficulty finding mailing addresses. Sometimes, newspaper articles offered clues for where to send the letters. Other times she called a television station or prison and somehow obtained the desired information as God opened doors.

Not everybody has responded to her letters, but quite a few have.

"The important thing is to plant seeds," my mother said. "The work is from God. The Lord says: 'Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days' (Ecclesiastes 11:1, NKJV).

Another promise she claims is Psalm 126:6: "He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Those Who Wrote Back

Some of the most significant answers that she has received are as follows:

Madrid's mayor wrote, "I greatly appreciate your health advice. I'm reading the Conflict of the Ages series

and I'm in the chapter 'The Awakening in Spain' in *The Great Controversy*. It's very interesting, and I will continue reading it."

A well-known singer said, "Thanks for caring about my spiritual life."

A prominent agnostic writer said, "I suppose that faith, dear friend, is the slow process of doubt. Who knows if the ear of wheat will blow away?"

An inmate convicted of three murders wrote, "Don't leave me. Keep writing to me."

A bishop expressed gratitude for *Steps to Christ* and the Conflict of the Ages series and wrote, "May Divine mercy do what's needed to bring us light."

Another bishop said, "I want to study the Bible better and to serve God better. Maybe I need to correct some of my interpretations of the Bible."



Pilar Laguardia, 73, left, with her daughter, Rebeca Ruiz Laguardia, 34. (Family photo)

Isabel, a physician who abandoned her career to enter a cloistered convent as a nun, kept contact with my mother by phone and letters for months after receiving *Steps to Christ*, the "Conflict of the Ages" series, and Bible study materials. In her first letter, she said, "You can send me all the Bible materials you want." So, my mother did. The light of the everlasting gospel arrived in this Cistercian convent. The seed was planted, and the results are in the hands of God.

At the beginning of her ministry, my mother wrote by hand. When I was 15, my parents bought my first computer, and I started to help Mother in her precious work of planting gospel seeds in the souls of affluent people. My father helps by searching for Bible texts in the concordance and taking packages to the post office. We work as a family for God!

My mother, born in the humble home of a Spanish shepherd 73 years ago, is joyfully leading souls in the flock of the Great Shepherd. I'm thankful to God for giving me such a mother, and I am grateful to be part of her ministry. May God grant my mother more years to proclaim the gospel until that wonderful day when Jesus comes to take us home.



THE BACK PAGE

Directions: For more information on an item, click on the corresponding number on the map.

1 Adventist Health System (AHS), headquartered in **Altamonte Springs, Florida**, recently announced the organization will change its name to AdventHealth as of January 2019. AHS manages 50 hospital campuses and hundreds of care facilities mostly in the Southern and Midwestern regions of the United States. While AHS is not owned directly by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the health care system maintains close and positive ties with the denomination. For more, click [here](#).

2 Adventist business owner Eugene Benjamin was recently honored at the Inter-American Division’s Adventist-Laymen’s Services and Industries (ASi) meeting in **Cancun, Mexico**. Benjamin is a lay preacher who funds his quarterly evangelistic meetings with earnings from his electrical power and distribution service company and hardware stores in Antigua. For more than 20 years he has been a lay preacher in the Caribbean region, Inter-America, and the United Kingdom. So far, more than 10,000 new believers have joined the church through his lay evangelism ministry. To learn more, click [here](#).

3 More than 220 university students from North and South America took part in the new Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) volunteer program “ADRA Connections” this past summer in the Brazilian Amazon. The students assisted in the construction of the Adventist Technical School of Massauari (ETAM) in **Boa Vista do Ramos, Amazonas, Brazil**. The only way to reach the ETAM site was by boat. The school serves students aged 5 to 14, some of whom have had no previous education. Learn more [here](#).

4 Dr. Obed Jiménez has taken up duties as the eighth president of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS). Located in **Silang, Cavite, Philippines, AIAS** is a GC graduate-level educational institution with a Theological Seminary and School of Graduate Studies. Before coming to AIAS, Dr. Jiménez served as President of Antillean Adventist University in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico in the Inter-American Division. Read more [here](#).

5 The fifth-annual *Camp Sibiryaki* for young men, aged 13-17, was held in **Novosibirsk, Russia**, this past summer. Participants came from across Siberia to learn about healthy lifestyle choices, acceptance of responsibility, the essence of masculinity, dangers of pornography, and more. Spiritual mentorship was provided and lessons from the lives of Bible heroes discussed. At the end, several young men decided to dedicate their lives to Christ. Read the story [here](#).

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