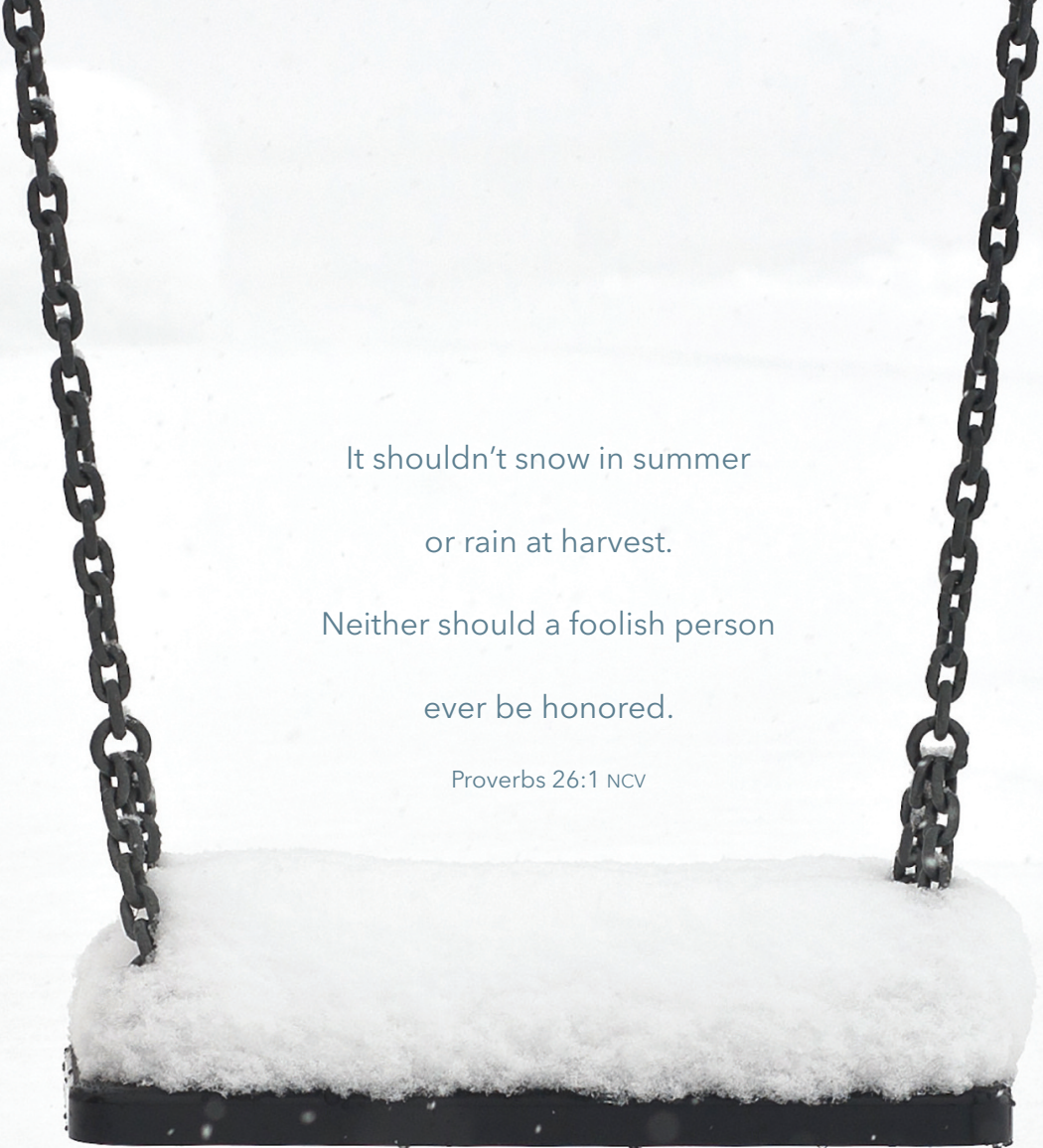


# Sabbath Recorder



It shouldn't snow in summer  
or rain at harvest.

Neither should a foolish person  
ever be honored.

Proverbs 26:1 NCV

Things God never said. Things God did say.

# thoughts from the Editor...

## Say "Thank you"...

When we were very, very young,  
there was always a voice intruding on our gift-receiving moment  
teaching us to say "Thank you."

When we were growing through the years,  
there was still that voice intruding on the moments  
reminding us to say "Thank you."

Finally! We are on our own.  
So how come that "voice" is still hovering in our memory:

Say "Thank you."

But...

How often do we say "Thank you"  
and really mean it  
and do it promptly  
and not forget?

So...

Thank you  
for making me your Editor!

---

*"We are so blessed by the gifts from Your hand,  
I just can't understand why You've loved us so much.  
We are so blessed, we just can't find a way  
Or the words that can say,  
Thank You Lord, for Your touch.  
When we're empty You fill us 'til we overflow,  
When we're hungry You feed us and cause us to know  
We are so blessed,  
Take what we have to bring;  
Take it all, everything,  
Lord, we love You so much."*

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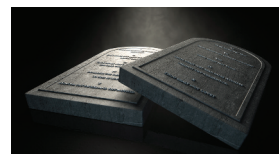
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July 26 – August 1, 2015

# Sabbath Recorder

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## Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are.

Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

### The Seventh Day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience – not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs a people with a difference.

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**M**isconceptions of God can be costly because they can be very defeating. For example, it's agonizing to me how many people think "cleanliness is next to godliness" comes from the pages of Scripture. If this is indeed a word from God, then homemakers have every right to feel guilty that their houses are not always tidy. In fact, depending on how far you carry it, people soon become more concerned about their furniture than they do their family.

And what about "God helps those who help themselves"? I've seen this used as a basis for many people thinking they can work their way to heaven. They therefore miss the biblical teaching that eternal life is free (Romans 6:23).

**Here are five other misconceptions of God's Word you'd be wise to spend a [Sabbath] addressing.**

In fact, I think you'd be wiser to give one [Sabbath] to each of these. I assure you, they are so rampant that you could easily spend a 30-minute message discussing each one. Most unfortunately of all, every single one of them in some way adversely affects our outreach to non-Christians.

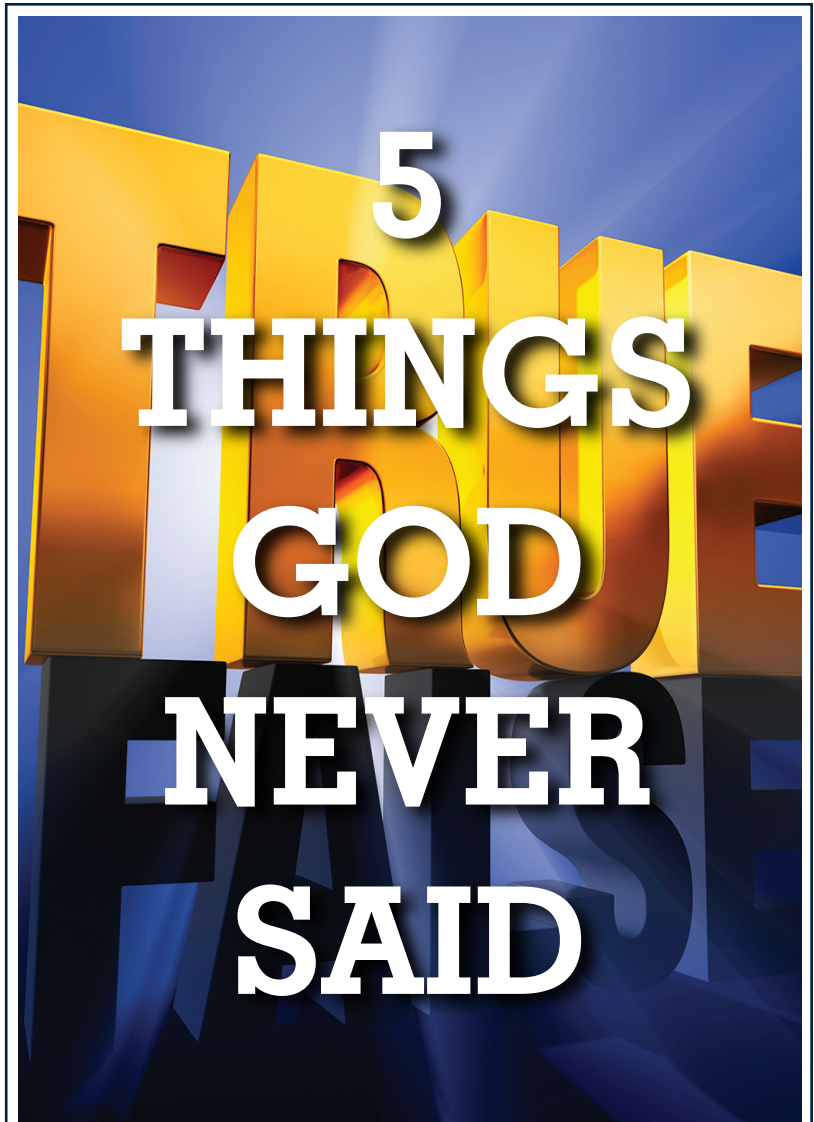
### **1. If you don't know the date you were saved, then you are not saved.**

Unfortunately, evangelists have been the worst at propagating this first misconception. The fact is, there is a split second when a person goes from darkness into light. After recognizing you're a sinner and that Christ died for you and rose again, you place your trust in Him alone as your only way to heaven.

However, just because you don't know when that particular split second was doesn't mean you aren't saved. When Scripture gives assurance of salvation, it doesn't go back to a date or a moment; it goes back to a fact.

Who are you trusting right now? If you're trusting Christ alone as your only way to heaven, you are saved, regardless of when you crossed the line. After all, John 3:16 does not say, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, and whoever believes in Him and knows the date should not perish but have everlasting life."

*Continued on next page...*



**Most unfortunately of all,  
every single one of them  
in some way adversely affects  
our outreach to non-Christians.**

By R. Larry Moyer

Continued from previous page...

This idea is critical, because if a person buys into this misconception, it's a tremendous hindrance to their outreach for Christ. How can I talk to someone else about their salvation if I'm not entirely certain of my own?

True, some people come to Christ from a very sudden and dramatic experience, like the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26-39; he could have easily given you the date. And there's no doubt the same thing was true of Paul the Apostle in Acts 9:1-22, 26-28; I'm sure he not only could have given the date, but he could have testified of the specific *hour* he trusted the Savior. But there are those whose conversion is not as dramatic. They may have been raised in a Christian environment where Christ was spoken about frequently. Certainly, at some point in time, they came to clearly understand their sinful condition and trust Christ, but they may not know exactly when the moment occurred.

Minister deeply to your people and free them by telling them that as long as they're trusting Christ alone, they are saved, regardless of when they crossed the line.

## 2. If you want to be saved, just invite Jesus into your heart.

Well-meaning people often use the phrase "invite Jesus into your heart." They often base this on Revelation 3:20 where we're told, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me." With the phrase "stand at the door and knock" in mind, many picture the heart as a door where Jesus stands begging us to let Him in. Therefore, the lost are exhorted to "invite Jesus into their heart."

However, that verse is addressed to Christians, not non-Christians. Verse 19 reads, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." *Chasten* means "to discipline" and is used of believers, not unbelievers (Hebrews 12:5-6). The passage addresses the church of Laodicea, one of the seven churches of Asia Minor in Revelation 2 and 3. Their wealth at the time had lulled the church into spiritual sleep; Jesus Christ described this distasteful condition as "lukewarm" and invites them to repent of their condition and make Him the center of their love and worship. Additionally, in Revelation 3:20, the Greek translation of *in to* means "toward." In a figurative language, Jesus is saying to Christians that He will enter the church and come "toward" the believer for fellowship.

The word *dine* referred to the main meal of the day to which you invite an honored guest. It was a meal given to hospitality and conversation. Again, the issue is fellowship, not salvation.

Why is this phrase so dangerous to use in evangelism? There are those who "invited Jesus into their heart" and sincerely meant they were trusting Him as their personal Savior, and they are forever His. However, there are some people who think that by simply saying a prayer in which they "invite Jesus into their heart," they're saved. In this case, their trust is in a prayer, not in a Savior who died on a cross.

Ninety-eight times in the Gospel of John, the one book whose purpose was to tell us how to receive eternal life (John 20:31), we're told to *believe*. It means "to trust in Christ alone as our only way to heaven." There's nothing wrong with someone praying to tell God they're trusting Christ alone, but he or she must be aware that saying a prayer doesn't save; it's trusting Christ that saves.

Teach your people to use the right terminology. They should ask lost people to do what the New Testament asks them to do — believe — and this means to trust in Christ alone to save them.

## 3. When you miss an opportunity to share Christ with someone, it's your fault if that person goes to hell.

Many believers don't enjoy evangelism. When they do practice it, they often do it out of guilt, not grace. One reason people feel guilty is that they've been told that if they're given an opportunity to share Christ but they don't take it, they are forever responsible if that person goes to hell.

This false teaching is often based on the misuse of Ezekiel 3:18-19. There we read, "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul."

This passage has nothing to say about evangelism. God appointed Ezekiel a watchman (Ezekiel 3:17). His

job was to warn of impending danger. The nation was doomed, and only through heeding their watchman could they survive. Chapters 4-24 of Ezekiel contain his cry of alarm, which gave those outside the walls opportunity to seek protection. It also gave the people time to secure the gates and man the defenses. The death spoken of in Ezekiel 3:18-19 is physical, not spiritual. The context is the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem that Ezekiel predicted.

A person refusing to heed God's warning from Ezekiel could expect physical death. Ezekiel was to warn the righteous, not just the wicked. If Ezekiel refused to speak God's message to people who came to his house, he'd be guilty of murder. This is the meaning of "but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand." By giving a warning, Ezekiel delivered himself from the responsibility of the coming judgment. Those who ignored his warning could only blame themselves. One can see the danger when this idea is applied to evangelism; all of a sudden, we become responsible for someone's eternal destiny.

But bringing people to Christ is a God-sized job. It's our job to bring Christ to the lost; only God can bring the lost to Christ. John 6:44 reminds us, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him." Evangelism now becomes exciting. I do it recognizing that God is not holding me responsible for the results.

#### **4. If you come to Me, I want either all of your life or none of it.**

This one is said in different ways, but the meaning is the same.

There are those who exhort, "You can't meet God halfway. If you want to come to Christ, you must completely surrender to Him. God will only do business with you if you mean business with Him. He's going to get all of your life, or He doesn't want any of it." What's the problem here?

Look at the language in John 3:15, 3:16, 3:18, 3:36, 5:25, 6:47, 11:25-26 and 20:31. All of them make it clear that salvation is based on one thing: believing and trusting in Christ alone as our only way to heaven. The moment we trust Him this way, we are as certain of heaven as though we're already there.

This misconception is, again, often based on a wrong handling of Scripture. To support it, verses are cited that speak of discipleship, not salvation. Every Christian should be a disciple, but, unfortunately, not every Christian is. In fact, Christ warned people about the cost of discipleship before encouraging them to sign up (Luke 14:26-27).

Salvation is free, but discipleship involves a cost.

Here's where the misconception becomes so defeating: Who of us, at any given moment, would say that every single aspect of our lives belongs to Christ? All of us have those aspects we hold back, and, even if we do give them to Him, there are moments we take them back. If indeed He has to have control of my entire life, how can I speak to someone else about their salvation? This misconception presents new Christians with conditions that, as unsaved people, they're not even remotely prepared to meet.

Encourage your congregation, when they speak to the lost about Christ, to explain that salvation is instantaneous, but discipleship is a process. Once they decide to trust and believe in Christ for salvation, wholehearted surrender and Christ-likeness become a goal to achieve with the help of the Holy Spirit and the fellowship of believers.

#### **5. If you're not willing to confess Christ publicly, you cannot be saved.**

This misconception comes in different colors, and there are those who carry it to different extremes. Some are simply talking about admitting personally and publicly that you're a Christian. Some go so far as to say that one must walk forward in a church through what is commonly called the "altar call." Either way, the understanding is given that if you don't, you can't be saved.

When addressing this misconception in a message, approach it positively, not negatively. Stress the importance of unashamedly telling people that you are a Christian. After all, if He was not ashamed of you, why be ashamed of Him? Such a confession plays a part in receiving eternal reward. A good passage to support this is Matthew 10:32-33, where Christ declares, "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My

*Continued on page 22...*

# Devotional

Sharing the journey with you  
Pastor Scott Hausrath  
North Loup, NE

Tackling misconceptions about God is so important, because they are so damaging. It's critical to discuss what God has **not** said.

It's also important to be reminded of what God **has** said, because we are so often distracted from the foundational truths of God. With this in mind, let me share with you a few truths about God and His connection with us...

Since God crafted each of us in His own image,  
each of us is of infinite worth.



## God crafted us

All of us have read the creation accounts in the first couple chapters of Genesis, so we know that God made us. Are we aware, however, that God *crafted* each of us as an individual? In David's conversation with God, as recorded in verses 13-14 of Psalm 139, he says this: *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

To craft something means to make it with skill, and with careful attention to detail. Too often we try to value ourselves by asking the question "What do I bring to the table?" It's important to be reminded that our value is founded in our presence, not our performance. Society values us based on *our* actions. God values us based on *His* actions. Since He crafted each of us in His own image, each of us is of infinite worth.

## God is connected to us

It makes sense that since God put intentional, focused effort into crafting each of us, He experiences a deep connection with us. This connection is seen in the fact that He knows us. In verses 1-4 of Psalm 139, David says this: *You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.* Our knowledge of a person connects us to that person. God's intimate knowledge of each of us strengthens His bond with us.

We also see God's connection to us through His presence with us. Continuing David's thoughts from Psalm 139, we read this in verses 7-10: *Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle*

*on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.* God doesn't follow us around like a creepy stalker, asserting His control over us. His constant presence is an expression of the pride He takes in us. As a parent with His child, God experiences joy in sharing His life with us.

## God is concerned about us

Who are the people about whom you are most concerned? Isn't it those people with whom you are most connected? Whether our connection with someone is based on familial ties, a work relationship, or an affinity group, a strong connection breeds a strong concern. Since God experiences a deep connection with us, He also has a deep concern for us.

We generally use the term love when we are discussing God's deep concern. Scripture tells us over and over again that God loves us:

*I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love.* (Psalm 52:8)

*"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son."* (Hosea 11:1)

*God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.* (Romans 5:5)

So foundational is God's love for us that it describes not only His activity, but also His identity: *God is love.* (1 John 4:16)

Our amazing God has crafted each of us in His own image. Do we truly understand what this says about how valuable we are? Because of His deep connection with us, God shares His life and love with each of us. Do we share our life with Him? How can we strengthen our love for Him? [SR](#)



## Top Ten Words

### Hijacking Heaven – Exodus 20:7

*Sermon Series by Pastor Dusty Mackintosh, Next Step Christian Church, Thornton, CO*

The other day I asked Logan to go call Arabelle and Dylan in for dinner from outside. He went outside, yelled at them, “Dad says to come in for dinner!” and they came in. That’s a true story.

Another day, Dylan made his way over to the neighbor’s house. He knocks on the door and tells the neighbor, “My Dad said I could have dinner here.” In he goes, playing with his little friend there, and our neighbor starts dishing up some food.

Fortunately...he also texts me. And I get our story straight with Anna: “Did you say he could? I didn’t say he could!” and over I go.

So close...he almost snagged free dinner in the name of Dad! You are probably all thinking: “how cute” and “how innocent.” No, he’s a little devious manipulative monster!

#### God’s Name in Vain – Exodus 20:7

Exodus 20:7

<sup>7</sup> “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.”

Man, did I have fun with this one! Studying and learning and listening... I was usually taught that this was the go-to verse about not cursing. So the very worst curse words possible were the ones with “God” in them.

Now, I still hate hearing that, and my kids hear about it whenever they try picking it up from school. But somewhere along the way I had heard a little broader interpretation of this verse, and I got the chance to really dive deep and examine what is going on here.

#### Not about cursing?

This made the Top 10 list...so maybe it is not just about frivolous

cursing. But let’s be clear, whatever it means it certainly covers frivolous use of the name of God.

#### What’s in a Name

**What was so important about the name that it made it into the 10 commandments?** What is meant by the name of God? People who curse now don’t say “Yahweh”...so are they good to go? “God” is more of a title than a name. God has JUST shared the name Yahweh with His people...is He now outlawing its use? A name was not just a form of address but carried with it the character and authority of the person. Names meant something...and they were something. **The name invokes the power, authority and character of the person.**

#### “Take” God’s Name

So if you “take” someone’s name... “Take” here means to use, to lift up — you are invoking or harnessing the power, authority and character of the person with the name. This is not just something they believed back then, this is a concept my kids understand. When Logan calls Arabelle and Dylan in, they come, because I have the power and authority to command them to come in for dinner, and Logan invokes that. When Dylan “takes” my name to get dinner, he invokes my character and friendship with our neighbor, as well as my authority and power in allowing him to go. You see how sneaky he is?

Taking God’s name invokes His power, authority and character behind your word or deed. We can see how this would be really useful. There are many things we do, rightly, in His name: we baptize in His name; we gather together in His name; we are saved in His name; we dedicate and bless babies in His name.

#### In Vain

Now, the command specifies “in vain.” God gave His name. He revealed it to Moses, told him to tell the people His name.

What is it we are NOT supposed to do regarding the name? This word “in vain” is translated variously: emptiness, ineffective, without effect, deceitful, for wrong purposes. So which one is it? Yes. Let’s just take the whole bunch.

When Dylan used my “name in vain” it was an empty claim. As soon as my neighbor asked me, it was clear there actually was no power or authority behind it...because it was false. It was claimed deceitfully, being untrue, and it was used for wrong purposes: to achieve something that he was not allowed in that moment. This then serves as an excellent model for using God’s name in vain. It isn’t that you cannot accomplish anything by using God’s name, and so we are only talking about frivolous swearing. It is that you **hijack** God’s name for something that actually is not in God’s interest, from God’s word, for God’s purposes. You then create the illusion or impression that God is behind your words...when in fact He is not. We still use the phrase “hollow speech” or “hollow words” to describe lies and deception.

### Guiltless

There is the sense in which the futility of this could be kind of cute. In a Dylan sort of way:

*“Ahhh... look at the little human trying to hijack the name of God, flailing around like a wee little baby.”*

This is not the perspective God has. Instead, we have a Godfather-esque, subtle sort of threat.

*“Let’s just say... I will not hold you guiltless.”*

To see why God might take a dim look — in fact He really hates this — let’s see how this has been violated in history.

### God’s Name in Vain — A Historical Survey

Super (perhaps most) straightforward taking of God’s name in vain: **false prophets**. Someone literally says “Yahweh says this...” and he is lying. “Yahweh says everyone is going to be fine!” No, actually Jerusalem is going to be conquered and exiled because of their immorality — and you helped keep them from repenting by telling them what they wanted to hear. That is not going to end well for you... *“you will not be held guiltless...”* In fact, you’ll be stoned.

The other straightforward violation of this verse: **oath taking**. It was common to invoke higher powers in oaths. The implication was that the power was behind your words. The idea was that the higher power would punish those who lied in this way. Both of these are on the same spectrum: attempting to manipulate others into believing and doing what they would otherwise not believe and do by invoking the name of God.

**Hijacking the name of God to manipulate others.** If they thought God really would back up whatever they happened to claim — that’s actually worse. That is **attempting to manipulate God by invoking His name**.

People at the time of Jesus tried to get around this. Clearly we can’t actually say “in the name of Yahweh...” But we can get all the same advantages and avoid the literal use of the “name” by saying something like “we swear by heaven.” Well, what am I really doing with an oath? I am attempting to manipulate you into believing me when you normally would not. My simple *Yes* or *No* isn’t good enough, probably because you are skeptical of my character. So I will hijack the character and reputation of God (or heaven) so that you will now believe me. Jesus calls this sinful and calls people of the Kingdom to simple integrity: *“Let your yes be yes, and your no be no.”*

When we say “name of God” we encompass the character, power and reputation — even the person of God. So this can get pretty subtle. How about a medieval priest who uses the respect for and worship of Christ to amass personal power and wealth? How about the Catholic church at the time of the Reformation, when priests would say things like *“When the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs,”* essentially holding your ancestors’ souls ransom in the name of God?

Without ever saying the “name,” is this still taking the Lord’s name in vain? **Hijacking the name, character, power and authority of God to manipulate?** Yes it is.

How about a politician who calls himself a Christian only because it means a jump in the polls — no one who doesn’t say “Jesus” can get elected President in America. For now. How about the “Christian Business Directory.” Now probably most are loving brothers and sisters who just see another opportunity to help their business grow. But...if anyone simply adopts the name of “Christ” to capture a little Christian bubble market share... That’s gross.

### Where is my heart?

But how would you go about taking God’s name in vain if you wanted to? How do I do it?

### Do I hijack the name, character, reputation or word of God for my gain or glory?

I am not a false-prophet, a Pharisaic oath taker, a medieval priest or a politician. Where are my opportunities to hijack the name of God?

**You and I wear the name of Christ.** We announce it to the world. We share it with our friends, our neighbors, our co-workers. I hope we do. If, at any moment, we play upon any trust or respect that comes with that for our gain; if we do anything under the mantle or name of God that is not in line with His purpose...we speak in vain. If you speak on God’s behalf to impress others, you hijack the name of God. If you tell people *“I’m a Christian”* so that they’ll trust you...you hijack the name of God. (A realtor once told me that this was taught to him as a strategy: join a church, best place to get clients.)

*Continued on next page...*

## Hijacking Heaven

*Continued from previous page...*

We cannot use the name of God, our association with Him, the name of Jesus, of Christian, of Church, of anything that invokes His power, authority and character, for any purpose that is not His purpose. We cannot use or twist the Word of God to get people to do what we want. That, too, is speaking in His name for purposes that are not His. Hijacking the name of God.

Let me phrase this in a different way: **you cannot use God.** You cannot use His name, His power, authority and character, in the sense we use a tool for our own purposes. God cannot be manipulated and He cannot be used to manipulate others. You cannot use God. Many translations pick up on this, and the NIV for example translates: *“You shall not misuse the name of God.”*

**God cannot be used.** Neither will He be forced to obey you because you used His name, nor shall you attempt to coerce or manipulate or convince others by using His name as leverage or threat or guarantee of honesty.

**God cannot be used... He is holy.**

## The Total Holiness of God

Together these first three commandments capture the total holiness of God.

You cannot replace God...He is the only one worthy of worship.

You cannot control God... no image or idol can capture His essence. He refuses to be put in a box.

You cannot hijack His name, His power, or His authority. You are about Him — He is not about you. He loves you — He neither obeys nor serves you.

**God cannot be used.**

## Our Relationship with God

And this comes to our final question. It is the question we ask of every commandment. How is this showing me the course of love? What is broken in my relationship with God such that I might attempt to use His name to manipulate either Him or others?

And, maybe, it boils down to this: **He is the center.** He is the center of your relationship with Him. As hard as that is for us individualists to get: He is at the center.

**I am about Him. He is not about me.**

He loves me, yes. He created me. He saved me. He took risks for me. He sacrificed for me. He LOVES me. But His being is not wrapped around my being, such that I could invoke Him and use Him for my benefit. Or that I could use Him and His name to manipulate the world around me.

Even while our relationship is for my good, it benefits me, **but it is not for me.** It is for Him. It is for His glory. It is wrapped about Him: He sits at the center.

**In him we live, and move, and have our being.**

It is not ultimately about us — about you or about me. We are about Him. We are used for His purposes, He is never *used* for ours. Any word, any action, any life without God at the center is *hollow*, it is empty, it is in vain.

May we be a people that take the Lord's name in spirit and in truth; that take His name as the forever center and bedrock of our lives; that always work with His purposes because His purposes become our purposes.

*God, destroy that within me that seeks to use You and Your name for my glory and gain. Show me again Your holiness. Make me all about You. May I be holy, only and always, as You are holy.* SR

### How to Contact General Council:

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I have tried to go on at least two Spiritual Retreats per year. These times of reflection and connecting have been very beneficial to me. I do it in a hope of serving God and Seventh Day Baptists with a renewed purpose. On May 17-19, 2015 I finished my first retreat of this calendar year.

Back in the April and May SR I wrote about “making the effort in unity” and to also “encourage in a positive way.” It was mentioned about us being a “family.” We are a diverse family — who have a common belief with diverse relevance across ethnicity, languages, and cultures. The purpose of these two articles was to encourage us all on “how we all can work together in maintaining our UNITY.”

These articles are brought up because there have been some discouraging comments lately. Comments aimed at not trusting our leadership, or taking a “wait-and-see” attitude how things will turn out. Others stated that they fear that we are becoming too authoritative and that the decisions are being made by a few. I can tell you that this is not the case.

The General Council was put into a position that caused them to make some very quick, serious, and tough decisions. Those decisions came very fast, compared to traditional SDB decisions. That has caused some to feel that we are moving at “break-neck” speed. But I assure you, things will slow down to a more respectable pace going forward.

These concerns and comments were on my mind going into my spiritual retreat. So unlike previous retreats (and no two are ever the same) I organized my retreat to answer some questions. I started by reading Philippians 4:8: “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” So, I thought about the good things listed there, described what they meant to me, and then gave examples of each from my life.

- True** – Steadfast, honest .....loyal, real deal
- Noble** – fine personal qualities or  
high moral principles .....trustworthy
- Right** – what is good, proper, or just.....fair and honest
- Pure** – free from what weakens  
or pollutes .....I work hard at this
- Lovely** – of a great moral  
or spiritual beauty .....helpful, dependable
- Admirable** – excellent, first-rate .....compassionate
- Excellent** – possessing  
outstanding qualities .....aware of others
- Praiseworthy** - deserving of praise,  
commendable.....thinking of others first

Then I read Ephesians 4:11-13: “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in



## TAKING A SPIRITUAL RETREAT

*the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”*

**I then asked the Holy Spirit to show me how I can best serve in the body of Christ, and how I feel about my world and myself.**

I can best serve the body of Christ by leading other leaders and doing so by example. By this I mean that there is nothing that I should ever ask anyone else to do, if I am not willing to do it myself. One of these joys is being able to lead our three younger Directors in their ministry efforts.

I can show God’s love and compassion by continuing practical acts of kindness. One of the attributes I received from my mother was always thinking of others first. My wife says that is one of the things that she loves about me. I look for ways that I can serve, and it crosses all social, economic, and racial barriers. Everyone deserves compassion.

With this in mind, I want to grow more as a Christian by my understanding of God’s mysteries; I want to be bolder in my Christian walk. I need to be bolder and speak up about God’s laws — but it must always be done in love.

As a real conundrum to what was stated above, I have struggled for years by being too judgmental. Although it has improved vastly, I still can be too harsh and quick in my judgment. The Holy Spirit has made it clear to me to always be aware of this and in what situations I am most vulnerable for this to happen.

What I am feeling mostly about myself and my world is that I am **content**. The Brazil trip in April was outstanding! I wish I was with my wife and family more often, and things are not ideal. I am enjoying watching my granddaughter grow up. I feel that I am not with her enough. But I am **content**. SR

Executive Director  
Rob Appel



# Churches Planting Churches



America has an estimated 200 million lost and unchurched people. Yet today there are far fewer churches per capita than one hundred years ago. Many missiologists contend that the best way to fulfill the Great Commission and to evangelize is by means of church planting. Intentionally parenting a daughter church is one of the best ways to reach the unchurched. It is often far easier to plant a new church than to revitalize a dying one.

Yet it is insufficient to plant new churches for pragmatic and demographic reasons. We must be driven by Scripture. There is a solid biblical imperative for established churches taking the initiative to intentionally reproduce themselves.

## The Creation Mandate

From the beginning, the Creator designed all healthy organisms with the capacity and desire to reproduce. God's purpose for all living creatures was clear: "*Be fruitful and multiply*" (Gen. 1:22, 28). Multiplication was the sign and substance of God's blessing. Each group was commanded to "bring forth" (reproduce) "after its kind." Since the church is a living organism, God's creative plan requires that it too continually reproduce itself. Thus, church parenting is *natural*.

## The Commission of Christ

The Great Commission strategy of Christ is actually a spiritual multiplication mandate. He expects his followers to make and multiply disciples (Matt. 28:19-20). His method for accomplishing this objective is evangelism, baptism, catechism, and congregationalism. Christ's disciple-making plan is to be carried out through the agency of the local church. Thus, to obey his mandate, if there is no congregation in a nearby community, we must start one. That is the story of the book of Acts: When people were saved, they were added to the church (2:42-47). Christ's call is for both individual and corporate reproduction. Thus, church parenting is *biblical*.

## The Pattern of the Early Church

The book of Acts shows how the apostles and first Christians carried out the last command of Christ. The historical record shows they reached their world through intentional church multiplication. When God's people obeyed their marching orders, three things are said to have "multiplied" — the Word of God (Acts 6:7; 12:24), the number of disciples (6:1), and the number of churches regionally (9:31).

At each of these marker points in Acts, multiplication is the end result. The same Greek word is used for "multiply" in each of these references — *plēthunō*. This word speaks not just of adding to the church (Acts 2:47) but of exponential increase. It is a mark of the work of the Spirit of God. Luke shows how the church started by Jesus continues to expand as the Holy Spirit works through the disciples. This expansion is geographic, but growth is quantitative, qualitative, and organic. Luke is recording for believers of every age what the church should look like.

Throughout Acts, the spread of the gospel and the expansion of the church are intertwined. Acts 16:5 summarizes the rapid expansion: "*So were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.*" They started with one church in Jerusalem; now there were many through multiplication. Thus, in Acts, church parenting is seen as normal — not the exception.

## Two Examples

The Antioch church is a fine example of an intentional mother church sending out its best, Barnabas and Saul, to do the Great Commission work of evangelistic church planting in pioneer areas (Acts 13:1-3).

Intentional church reproduction is best seen in the Ephesian church. Using the school of Tyrannus as his regional training base, Paul evidently mentored and sent about fifteen leaders

to plant at least six daughter churches in Asia Minor so that the entire region “heard the word of the Lord” (Acts 19-20; Rev. 2-3). Epaphras, one of his disciples, started the church at Colossae. Evidently, Ephesus became the mother church of all the churches of Asia Minor.

### The True Fruit of a Church

An analogy might help. Let’s ask: “What is the true fruit of an apple tree?” Many would say, “It’s an apple, of course.” But that is wrong. The true fruit of an apple tree is another apple tree!

The true fruit of a small group is not a new Christian, but another group. The true fruit of an evangelist is not a convert, but new evangelists. The true fruit of a leader is not followers, but new leaders. Likewise, the true fruit of a church is not a new group, or more new believers, but another church!

Roland Allen in his classic missions text, *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*, echoes this insight: “When the Church is truly alive, spontaneous multiplication takes place, and spontaneous expansion of the church involves not

merely multiplication of Christians but the multiplication of churches.”

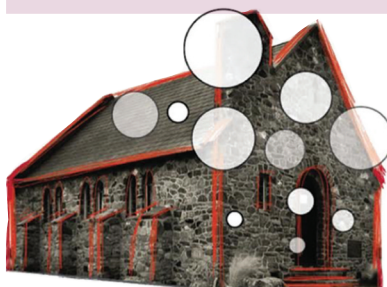
### Conclusion & Application

Church planting is not just the latest popular church fad. Birthing daughter churches is a thoroughly biblical concept. It is based upon God’s original creation mandate, Christ’s final commission to his Church, and the example of the early church. Healthy churches reproduce! In Scripture it is *natural*, *biblical*, and *normal*.

Pastors and church leaders: make no mistake. Developing a culture of church multiplication will likely be one of the most challenging — yet rewarding — assignments you’ll undertake.

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Announcing the  
**MULTIPLY Church**  
Development Conference  
October 22-26, 2015  
Colorado Springs, CO

allow His work to be done among ordinary folks like us.

The weekend will start on Thursday, October 22 after dinner time, with an introductory session with just SDBs. Friday and Saturday morning, we will join


Director of Church Development & Pastoral Services, John Pethtel, our Church Planting Task Force, and the Council on Ministry have been working to help provide an opportunity for those who are seeking to start new SDB expressions of faith or revitalizing the ministry that God has called them to.

We are partnering with Frontline Church Planting and their annual MULTIPLY Conference to serve SDBs. Leaders and speakers from around the country will gather for this weekend to share stories, knowledge, and strategies with one another. SDBs will have their own sessions as a cohort before and after to discuss specifically SDB-related challenges.

We believe that there is great traction in advancing God’s Kingdom when mission-minded leaders gather to connect, reflect, and dream about what God is doing in our midst. There will be great content but we also believe there will be great relationships built. It is our hope that by gathering leaders who dare to dream, that God can and will do something fresh among SDBs — that He will

with others attending the MULTIPLY Conference where there will be a variety of topics and options of learning available, through the main sessions and breakouts, to speak to you where your ministry is currently. During the rest of Saturday and Sunday morning, we will meet together again as SDBs to worship and talk about SDB-specific challenges in our ministries and to pray for one another.

The MULTIPLY Church Development Conference is open to all SDBs who are interested in breathing new life into their local church or our family of churches. There will be no cost for registration or for lodging (although this option is limited). The only costs are your food, time, and travel to Colorado Springs (There might even be a scholarship available for travel.) More information will come as we get closer to the date. We are looking forward to seeing you or someone from your church there!

Please register at the MULTIPLY Conference website: [tiny.cc/MULTIPLY2015](http://tiny.cc/MULTIPLY2015) if you are interested in attending. 



## God is not finished

A few weeks ago, I stopped at a red light waiting for my right turn arrow. Because the light is on a sensor, I was impatient to get to this particular intersection — but I didn't make it in time. For some reason I stopped several yards before the intersection. This is extremely uncharacteristic for me, even when I'm not in a hurry. As I was sitting there, I heard the unmistakable screech of tires and looked over just in time to see a speeding car spin out of a turn and head straight for me!

I did not see my life flash before my eyes. I just went blank and thought, *"Could this be how my life ends?"* A legitimate thought, dramatic morbidity aside, as people die in car accidents every day. The other car's emergency brake engaged and stopped a yard away from mine. The metal sign that was knocked off its post clattered to the ground inches away from my front bumper. If I had pulled forward in normal fashion, I would have had a sign through my window and a car in my side. But other than a quick shock to my system and a very frightening few moments for the driver who lost control, no significant damage was done to anything but the median sign. It was a near miss — and I'm assigning that to God.

This incident got me thinking about different situations that could have turned out very differently give or take a few moments or inches. My experience led me to think of a phrase that I'll borrow from presentations Director of Education and Ministry, Nick Kersten, gave a few years ago: *God is not done with me yet.* If God were finished with the work He wanted to accomplish with me and through me, I would not exist in this atmosphere any longer. I'm here — and God has a purpose.

It seems a bit elementary, but I realized I've been walking

around for some time unsure about whether or not God was "done" with me. I didn't think I was a perfected work, but my life seemed stagnant and I subconsciously interpreted that as God taking a step back.

Though my life seemed stationary and rote, that didn't mean God had taken a step back. Instead of huge or profound changes, God was making little refinements, teaching me everyday lessons I needed to learn — even if it didn't register on my "god-dar."

Narrowly avoiding a head-on collision with an out-of-control vehicle puts things into perspective. I may not understand or have a set direction that I can see — but that doesn't mean I'm not moving on a path, and it does not mean that God has completed His living work of art and released me into the fray. If that were true, there is no reason for my continued existence on Earth — sort of macabre but true.

Since I am here and well, in spite of the odds against it, I am led to conclude that God is not finished with me yet. Nor is God finished with you. In spite of all statistical probability to the contrary, you are here, alive on Earth as part of God's infinite plan. At no point is it possible for you to be outside of it.

Regardless of your feelings, you are a part of His purpose. Knowing that, even when you can't see or understand, is important. Without that knowledge, how can you be prepared to *"give an answer for the hope you have in Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 3:15)? We can hope because we know His purpose for this world and that we exist as a part of that purpose. God is not finished with us yet. [SR](#)





# Iron Sharpens Iron

**T**he Christian walk is a walk of great sacrifice and ultimately eternal reward — but nobody said it was going to be easy. Along the way we will be faced with challenges and obstacles to overcome. It is essential to have the support and guidance of other Christians who can provide Godly counsel. Having this support system of believers is an important part of every Christian's walk and growth, but is a particularly valuable asset to youth and young Christians. In today's world there is a new and ever growing set of obstacles and challenges faced by young Christians that requires God's wisdom and more peer support than ever before.

In my personal experience, I have learned that surrounding yourself with other Christians can help you filter out the distractions of life and focus on God in all that you do. This concept may seem simple, and it is. But all too often we, as young followers of Christ, take our focus away from the One who carries us through all of our triumphs and failures. Carrying this toxic attitude in our walk as Christians will only serve to hold us back from what God has planned for us by replacing His will with a false sense of self-accomplishment. Taking our eyes off of the Lord usually leads them to places they should not go. On the contrary, Philippians 4:8 says *"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."* With a group of people around you who have also put their faith in Christ it becomes easier to think about the things mentioned in Philippians 4:8.

Another reason why support from Christian peers is essential to our own personal walk and growth is because we have been given a task to complete. As Christians we are the body of Christ, as stated in 1 Corinthians 12:27.



As members of Christ's body, we all have different functions and are accountable one to another to carry out our purpose. Having other Christian friends who also understand the significance of many members acting together as one will not only help you grow as a Christian but will also afford you the opportunity to test yourself and help others do the same. At the end of the day, the work that Jesus has left with us is to bring the good news of His truth to others and be a light in the dark of this fallen world.

As Christians we are often faced with distractions, obstacles, and trials that are designed to take our focus away from God and the task that He has given to us. Philippians 4:13 states that we can do all things through Christ who gives us strength, and there is strength in numbers. As a Christian, when it comes to having the support of your brothers and sisters in Christ, the verse that always reminds me of this responsibility is Proverbs 27:17 *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."* God calls us when we are young because we are strong. This verse reminds me that I need to be strong for my brothers and sisters in Christ and when I fall they must be strong for me. Divided we fall but together in Christ we will stand. [SR](#)



# Partnering with India in Prayer



by better understanding and applying His true love in their lives and ministries. Then the first morning there before I was going to be speaking with a congregation, I was reading a Bible scripture passage as a devotional and found it articulated just what I had been praying for the Seventh Day Baptists in India.

In May of 2015 I was able to visit the two groups of Seventh Day Baptist churches in India with Nicholas Solomon from the Salem SDB church in West Virginia. One was the established SDB World Federation conference in Andhra Pradesh (the Kerala, India, conference was no longer active). The other was the group that had just started holding services in January of 2014 in the remote Indian state of Manipur bordering the country of Myanmar.

The Manipur group had their start from a visiting Indian pastor at a conference in Seoul, South Korea, when I was there meeting with Seventh Day Baptists in late 2013. The Indian pastor was invited by my hosts to come and learn more about our beliefs and polity from sessions I was going to be giving to the Koreans. He came and quietly listened, introduced himself, and I expected that was going to be the last I would hear from him. To my surprise a few weeks after my return to the office, I received emails from a far eastern part of India that contained images of meetings being held with a banner advertising sessions regarding the teachings and beliefs of Seventh Day Baptists. Today their group has two churches on each side of the Indian-Myanmar boarder. They are anxious to reach people of Burmese descent in the region, particularly in areas where Christianity is a tiny minority.

This was not the only amazing event regarding this visit. Even before entering the country, I had been praying that the Holy Spirit would open the hearts and minds of the Indian SDBs to a closer walk with Jesus

This was the prayer from the third chapter of the book of Ephesians:

- 14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*
- 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,*
- 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;*
- 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,*
- 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;*
- 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.*

For me this was a blessing and a miracle for multiple reasons. One reason: it affirmed to me that morning this was a worthy prayer for me to be praying for the struggling churches in India — because Paul, the apostle, had been praying this prayer for the early Church in Ephesus. Also, because Paul had written it about two thousand years earlier, what I wanted them to clearly understand was available and already converted by others into the local languages by Bible translators.

Both of the groups I visited embraced this prayer for them and requested that others pray for this and their ministries. **Please, consider making these groups a priority in your regular prayers. I would like to find each of these groups a prayer partner congregation to share each other’s challenges and victories. Maybe your church could be the first to ask to be a partner in prayer with them?** [SR](#)





# Change is the Only Constant:

## Updates on the Helping Hand



Seventh Day Baptists have a long tradition in Christian Education. Among our earliest emphases as a Conference of churches was institutions and programs which fostered discipleship and spiritual education. Perhaps no other single effort has had a larger impact on our educational ministries as a Conference than the *Helping Hand*. From its first issue in 1885, the *Helping Hand* has encouraged and guided SDBs to the Scriptures as individuals and congregations for 131 volumes, right up to the present. Over that span of 130+ years, the publication has changed many things: formats, sizes, editors, contributors and subscribers. The publication is truly an international discipleship tool, used outside our Conference around the world to the profit of the subscribers.

And yet, despite that success, the publication is in a position where it must change again, or face increasing difficulties which could threaten its existence.

As part of the transitions of the past months, several challenges have arisen with the *Helping Hand* which the new Christian Education Council is addressing. We want to keep the readers of the *Recorder* (and our subscribers) in the loop.

The first challenge relates to the mailing arrangements for the publication. We are aware that there have been some bumps in the delivery process for the past two quarters. Those bumps were the result of changes in our mailing processes and procedures, as well as one gigantic failure on the part of the United States Postal Service. **We have been working with our new mailing company and the Postal Service to correct these issues, and we believe we have solved this problem. We are sorry for the difficulties in the past few months. We would very much like to continue to hear from churches who do not receive their allotted subscriptions in the coming months to make certain we have worked out all of the difficulties in the new process.**

We appreciate the patience and understanding of our subscribers as we worked to implement this change and solve the various issues which arose.

The second challenge relates to billing. Obviously we cannot charge for a publication which we did not successfully deliver to our subscribers. **We are working to bill churches and individuals for what they have actually received from us.** If you have a question about your billing, please contact us!

The third challenge is wrapped up in the costs of the publication. **Our costs to produce the *Helping Hand* have increased in two key areas (printing and postage) in the last few years. There has been another large spike in the last two months.** As a result, **we are announcing that we will implement increased subscription rates to the *Helping Hand* beginning with the December 2015-February 2016 issue.** For domestic subscribers, a yearly subscription will cost \$17. For international subscribers, a yearly subscription will cost \$21.

Because of this increase in printing and shipping costs, **we will soon offer a digital distribution system for the *Helping Hand*,** both in North America and abroad. For members of the USA & Canada Conference, we will be rolling out a digital license for the *Helping Hand*: churches can pay for a license based on the number of copies they expect to print, thereby saving themselves the shipping and mailing costs. For international subscribers, we are encouraging a move to a digitally distributed PDF file, which we can offer for free, provided that there is agreement that it is not to be distributed. We have already made arrangements with one sister Conference to deliver the digital version to their Conference office for further distribution to SDB churches, and we hope to replicate that arrangement with other Conferences. **There is no plan to discontinue the print version of the *Helping Hand* at this time.** We do warn subscribers that with the rapidly changing printing and mailing environments, more price increases for the print version seem likely, and on an expedited time table.

Steve Osborn, who has done a remarkable job during this sometimes challenging transitional time, remains the editor of the publication, and he's doing a great job producing a high quality publication for use in your spiritual growth. He remains committed to that task!

We realize that these necessary actions represent changes from the established pattern, but we feel they are necessary to secure our ability to continue to deliver the educational content that our subscribers expect. We would welcome your feedback about these changes, and we hope you will contact us ([nkersten@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:nkersten@seventhdaybaptist.org), or 608-752-5055) if you have questions or concerns! We are glad to continue to fulfill our mission of aiding Seventh Day Baptists in your walk to maturity in Christ! [SR](#)



## Historical Society has Annual Meeting; Votes to Merge with General Conference

On May 17, at the SDB Center in Janesville, more than four years of careful consideration ended with a decision from the membership of the SDB Historical Society to merge with the General Conference by a vote of 85-6. The vote centered on the completion of the merger by the adoption of the documents which will make the merger official. Society members were given the opportunity to vote either in person or by proxy.

This vote was a final response by the members of the Society to a request from the General Conference to consider merger in 2010 in response to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Denominational Organization and Structure. The Society has carefully sought questions and feedback from its membership and other stake holders over the past four years, moving as directed by the membership towards this final vote. The final tally reflected nearly exactly the vote at last year's meeting encouraging the Society to seek out a merger agreement.

The final vote included the adoption of the official legal merger agreement, as well as an additional document which outlines the bylaw revisions necessary to integrate the Historical Society into the General Conference. The document recommends the creation of a new Council on History to take over the work of the Historical Society under the new arrangement. If the recommendations in the document are adopted by the Conference, the new

Council will retain the same number of members as the current Board of Directors of the Historical Society, and potentially, the same leadership. In addition, the supporting documents reaffirm the conditions of the merger, including the continued dedication of current Historical Society endowments solely to historic preservation and communication work in the future.

In addition, the supporting documentation adopted by the Society provides for supporter categories analogous to the current Society membership structure, with Life Members of the Society becoming Patrons of SDB History, and Annual Members of the Society becoming Friends of SDB History. An additional category (Legacy Partners) was also adopted by the Society to honor those who make significant contributions of more than \$5,000 to the Centennial Fund.

The next step in the completion of the merger process will take place at the corporate meetings of the SDB General Conference the week of July 26 – August 1, 2015, at Lancaster Bible College, Lancaster, PA, when the General Conference in session will vote with respect to the merger. If the merger vote is successful at Conference, the two organizations will legally finalize the merger, likely sometime early in 2016 — which is the 100th anniversary of the Society's founding in 1916.

Besides the merger vote, Life Members were officially admitted to the Society by vote, in accordance with the bylaws. Also, the Society re-elected current President Janet Thorngate to another five-year term as a Director, and the Officers for the Society were also elected. The Society accepted, with regrets, the resignation of Rev. Brent Hannah from the Board of Directors (and as first Vice President), and elected Kim Merchant (Alexandria, VA; Central Maryland SDB Church) to the Board to complete the remaining 3 years of his term and fill his role as VP. In general, summaries were given of the ministries and finances of the Society. It was an encouraging time, even in the midst of organizational change. [SR](#)



# *Hello Beacon readers!*

*Once again, it's Becca.*

And Ellie! This is our last Beacon article here with you as your editors.

*I can't believe after having this job for two years,*

*I will never write another Beacon article.*

This year has been great and I know that I've truly been blessed to write for you and have your attention as you read!

*You have been the best readers we could have asked for –*

*I've really appreciated all the notes of encouragement I've received.*

I hope as we have written we've left you with thoughts that have changed you, even just a little bit.

*And I hope I haven't offended anyone too much.*

*I seem to have a knack for picking the controversial topics.*

We will greatly miss writing for you and we humbly ask for your prayers as we move into the next chapter of our lives!

Houghton College is where I am headed to study Business Administration with a minor in Accounting, and these next four years of college will be hectic.

*I'll be studying Nursing at my local community college, and I am so excited to see where God's plan is leading me (I honestly have no idea).*

Life is about to change drastically for the two of us, but we know there will always be encouragement in God's word.

I ask that as we all continue over the next few years that we remember these verses and persevere.

We thank you for remembering us in your prayers, and we wish the best of luck to the Beacon editor of 2016 – we know the column will find its way into good hands. SR

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Romans 5:3-5(NKJV)

*And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*



## 5 Things God Never Said

*Continued from page 7...*

Father who is in heaven." The context clearly explains that the issue is not eternal life; the issue is discipleship. Then show your people that confession is not an issue of salvation by pointing out three things.

The first is John 12:37-43. The miracles of Christ were designed to wave a flag before the Jewish people proclaiming Christ as God. Many refused to believe. John tells us "although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him." Some, though, did believe. John 12:42-43 says, "Nevertheless, even among the rulers, many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." In the book of John, the words *believe in* are used consistently for saving faith. Jewish rulers had trusted in Christ the Messiah, who could save them from their sins. But confessing Him in public would have resulted in their excommunication. You can also show them the many verses that condition salvation upon faith alone, apart from any public confession. For example, John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." Romans 4:5 says, "But to him who does not work, but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness."

You might also point your audience to the thief on the cross. The thieves on the cross were divided in their view of Christ. One extended the condition, "If you are the Christ, save yourself and us" (Luke 23:39). The other placed his faith in Christ, asking, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom" (vs. 42). Christ's response was the best news a dying man can hear. "Surely I say unto you, today you'll be with Me in paradise" (vs. 43). There was no way this dying thief could have told others of his salvation. He was saved by recognizing Christ as who He said He was — the only One who could save him from his sin.

Romans 10:9-10 is many times used to support the misconception that if you don't confess Christ publicly, you can't be saved. We read "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness and with the

mouth confession is made unto salvation." Above all else, it's worth noting that the word *righteousness* in Romans 10:10 is a noun form of the verb translated "justify." Romans 5:1 reads, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." *Justified* here means "to be declared righteous." Therefore, the meaning of the first part of Romans 10:10 is "with the heart man believes and is justified before God." But *confession* in Romans 10:9-10 is a part of what's necessary to live a victorious Christian life. The context is arguing that one has to be willing to confess Him publicly in order to triumph over sin. For further explanation of this passage, I would direct you to my book *Free and Clear*, which has a chapter titled "If I Don't Confess Him, Do I Possess Him?"

Regardless, the passage itself clearly says that believing is what justifies a person before God. A public confession of Christ is very important, but the importance is not related to our eternal salvation. Upon trusting Christ, we receive His gift of eternal life. By confessing Christ consistently and unashamedly, we experience victory over sin and gain eternal reward when we see the Savior face-to-face.

## Conclusion

Misconceptions can be damaging and defeating. The above five can be a particular hindrance in our outreach to non-Christians. The result is a confusion of the message, the questioning of our own salvation and even a lack of boldness in speaking to others about the Lord.

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*Dr. R. Larry Moyer is a veteran evangelist and a frequent speaker in evangelistic outreaches, training seminars, churches and universities around the world. Born with an inherited speech defect, Larry vowed to God as a teenager that if He would allow him to gain control of his speech he would always use his voice to declare the gospel. In 1973, Larry founded EvanTell, where he now serves as President and CEO. He has written several books on evangelism and frequently contributes articles to ministry publications. More from R. Larry Moyer or visit R. Larry at <http://www.evangelism.net>*

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*Ed.Note:*

*The Editor replaced the word "Sunday" with the word "Sabbath."* SR



## Surprising Reasons to Drink Water

What is calorie-free, virtually cost-free, and essential to keeping you alive? Plain ol' water. Water drives basic body performance. All of the systems in the body require water for proper functioning, as do 90 percent of all chemical reactions in the body.

**Water will help you de-stress.** Sipping water throughout the day can soothe stress-induced symptoms such as headaches, tense muscles, fuzzy thinking, a pounding heart and low energy. Stress taxes all your basic body systems and when you are dehydrated, the effects are magnified. More than half your body weight is water so just a 2 percent reduction in hydration has a dramatic impact on energy levels and cognitive function. Dehydration raises levels of cortisol — the “stress hormone.” Water won't wash your stressors away but it can provide you with more energy, ease tension, slow breathing and reduce the strain on your heart.

**Drinking two 8-ounce glasses of water before meals has been associated with weight loss.** Water is filling, so you feel fuller and eat less. One study found that drinking water before meals meant that 75 fewer calories were consumed per meal. Another factor is that often water drinkers swap this zero-calorie beverage for sodas and other caloric beverages. When you're well hydrated, your body is working closer to maximum efficiency, enhancing aspects of weight loss, like digestion and muscle function, when you exercise.

**You'll be less apt to be sick.** Hydration keeps your mucus membranes in top working order. They're gatekeepers to the natural defense system that helps keep out germs such as cold and flu viruses. Germs can more easily penetrate to the nasopharynx where the nasal passages and mouth meet, when these tissues dry out. If you catch a bug anyway, the severity of your illness is more likely to be lower if you are well hydrated.

**Water is an especially smart health move when you're traveling.** Most commercial planes fly at elevations between thirty and thirty-five thousand feet where humidity is ten percent or lower. You are breathing dry air in a tight space filled with germs from

dozens of people. Water keeps your mucus membranes moist and your defenses high even in such a challenging situation.

**Drinking water whether it is ice cold or hot will keep you warmer on a cold day and cool you off on a hot one.** Water helps regulate body temperature. Your body's temperature-regulating system works less well if you're dehydrated.

**Drinking water helps regulate your blood pressure.** In 2010 the Red Cross discovered that blood donors fainted less often when given 16 ounces of water to drink before giving blood. Water activates the sympathetic nervous system making you more alert, elevating blood pressure momentarily and boosting energy. Not drinking enough water on a regular basis can also raise blood pressure because dehydration causes blood vessels to constrict as the body strives to conserve water. This makes the heart pump harder, bringing blood pressure up.

**Tips to help you drink more water include:**

- Start your day with a glass of water to remedy any overnight dehydration.
- Drink one cup of water a day instead of a soda, coffee or hot chocolate. Increase as time goes by.
- Carry a bottle of water with you to remind you to drink.
- When flying take an empty bottle to the airport and fill it once you've gone through security.
- Flavor your water by dropping some fruit into a pitcher and letting it sit a few minutes or let an herbal or flavored green tea bag steep in unheated water to accent the taste.
- Eight 8 ounce glasses of water a day is a guideline. The right amount for you depends on your age, activity level, health level, medications and the weather. Follow your thirst and know that you are on the right track if you have straw-colored urine.

Most of us find it difficult to drink enough water. With all the health benefits it offers, we need to make a resolution to drink more. SR

*(Adapted from 5 Most Surprising Reasons to Drink Water [www.caring.com](http://www.caring.com))*

## BIRTHS

**BRUCE** – A son, Jacob Oliver was born to Abigail (Vaught) and BJ (Robert Lourance Jr.) Bruce of the Portland Area SDB church on May 13, 2015. He was also welcomed by a brother, Robbie (age 5), and a sister, Amelia (age 2).

**LOONEY** – A son, Jagger Blake, was born to Jenna (Richards) and Matt Looney of the Texarkana SDB church on May 14, 2015.

## NEW MEMBER

### ALFRED STATION SDB CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Chroniger  
Alfred Station, NY

Joined after baptism  
Mark Stevenson

## MARRIAGES

### TYLER – ROLLE

John Tyler (of Metro Atlanta SDB) and Rose Rolle (of Miami SDB) were married on April 24, 2015, in a private ceremony in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. Pastor Andrew Samuels officiated. John and Rose Tyler now reside in Newnan, GA, and attend the Metro Atlanta church.

### UHLAND – HARRIS

Travis Jay Umland and Emmily Juanita Harris were married May 9, 2015, at the SDB Church of Shiloh, NJ. Pastor Donald Chroniger officiated.

### VEALE – CHRONIGER

Andrew (AJ) Veale and Jessica Chroniger were united in marriage on June 13, 2015, at the SDB Church of Shiloh, NJ. The bride's uncle, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth Chroniger of the Alfred Station SDB church, officiated.

## OBITUARY

**ROGERS** – Ruth Sarah Davis Rogers, 99, of Salem, WV, passed away Tuesday, May 26, 2015, at her home. Born October 22, 1915, in Salem, WV, she was the daughter of the late Okey Worthington Davis and Frances Ella (Edwards) Davis.

Mrs. Rogers was a lifelong resident of Salem. She graduated from Salem High School in 1934 and received an AB degree from Salem College in 1938, with a double major in music and English. In 1939, she married the late Clarence Mord Rogers. The following two years she attended Westminster Choir College in New Jersey, earning a Master of Arts in Music degree. Some years later she received a Master's degree in Education from West Virginia University.

Mrs. Rogers was Minister of Music at Babcock Memorial Church in Baltimore, MD, 1940-41. Following the war years, she taught Music and English first at Salem High School and then at Bristol High School. In 1955, she retired from public teaching intending to stay at home, but accepted a teaching position at Salem College where she taught music courses, served as the music department chairman, and was adviser to MENC (Music Educator's National Conference). In 1980, Ruth retired from the college as Professor Emeritus.

Mrs. Rogers joined the Salem Seventh Day Baptist church when she was eight years old and remained a devoted member for ninety-one years. She served in numerous positions, among them church clerk, Sabbath School teacher,

choir director, and Women's Society officer. For many years, her home was a magnet for college students who loved a good meal and family fun on Sabbath days after church.

Ruth was also actively involved in community affairs. She enthusiastically supported Fort New Salem and for five years served as corresponding secretary and writer and publisher of THE ECHOS (a Fort New Salem newsletter). For many years, she was a member of the Randolph Terrace Board of Directors. She used her gifts of music and voice to enrich not only her church family but the community as well.

Mrs. Rogers was the recipient of several awards, among them Business and Professional Women's Woman of the Year (1983), Salem International University Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award (2003), and the Seventh Day Baptist Woman's Society Robe of Achievement.

She was preceded in death by her husband of thirty-five years, Clarence Mord Rogers, and one brother, George Edwards Davis. Left to cherish her memory are five children: Stephen Clarence Rogers (Josephine) of Belpre, OH; Sarah Jane VanHorn (Clinton Chris) of Renick, WV; Alfred Randolph Rogers (Calette Smith) of Georgetown, SC; Elizabeth Ann Muldoon (Joe Parker) of Athens, WV; and Christina Ruth Green (Norman) of Salem. Mrs. Rogers had numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and step-grandchildren.

Rev. Dr. Dale Thorngate conducted the memorial service in the Salem SDB Church, Sabbath afternoon June 6, 2015.



## OBITUARIES

**STEELE** – Richard L. Steele passed away Friday, April 17, 2015, in Fort Lupton, CO, at the age of 91. He was residing in Ashley Manor Assisted Living Center, and died of natural causes.

Richard was born in Boulder, CO, on February 21, 1924, to Ivan Walter Steele and Mildred (Andrews) Steele. He was preceded in death by his parents, his sister Leota Pearson, his second wife, Virginia Marie (Saunders) Steele and wife Mary Jean (Watson) Steele (who he was married to twice and who was the mother of his children).

Graduating from high school in Boulder, Richard joined the Navy and served aboard the U.S.S. Shipley Bay, a jeep carrier tasked with ferrying supplies to various theaters in the Pacific. Richard was injured in a loading accident and was subsequently medically discharged.

Richard became a tool and die maker and worked at various metal shops in and around the Denver area. In 1974, he moved to Oregon where he continued his trade until retiring and returning to Colorado in 1986. For the next 17 years Richard resided in Loveland, Lafayette, then Frederick/Firestone, finally moving to a Longmont retirement home with Mary in 2003. Mary passed on July 28, 2007. Richard's health began to fade a bit but he still pursued photography and fishing when and where he was able. His pictures of flowers in the Longmont area have been awarded special places with all of his children and church family.

Richard was a strong Christian and his faith was evidenced by his love for his family and his service to many. One of his favorite passages: "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:11-13 ESV). Richard's passion was to share the Word, praise God, then go fishing (and take pictures of the whole thing). Richard was a long time Deacon for the Boulder SDB Church.

This godly man is survived by his four children; Darwin Steele, Gisele Evans, Valerie Heath, and Fay Ann VanDyke; eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His leadership, love and mentoring will be greatly missed. Memorial service was Sunday, May 3, 2015, at the Boulder SDB Church. Maranatha!

### TO ORDER SDB PUBLICATIONS:

Online at SDB Website: [www.seventhdaybaptist.org](http://www.seventhdaybaptist.org)

Phone: (608) 752-5055

**BOWEN** – Grace Arline Bowen went to her Lord on April 3, 2015. She was born in 1927 to Kenneth Paul Stearns and Minnie Sunbeam (Barton) Stearns in Portland, OR.

The youngest of three daughters, she grew up in a loving home surrounded by joy and laughter. She was especially close to her Grandfather, Judge Joseph O. Stearns. She would recall her days as a young girl going to his home in SE Portland to spend time with him, whether it entailed visiting him at home or going out with him for her favorite dish, potato salad.

One of her favorite pastimes as a teenager was to go roller skating at Oaks Park. She met her first husband, Kenneth Bowen, there while he was on leave from the Marine Corps. It seemed like love at first sight, and they were married shortly thereafter. While Kenny was serving overseas, Grace worked as a waitress and cashier. When he finished his tour and was discharged to come home, she quit her job to become a homemaker. Shortly afterwards, she started a new career as mother.

She had three children, Gary Bowen, Karen (Bowen) Schmidt, and Alex Sandra (Bowen) McNabb. All three are living in the greater Portland area. As the years went on, she became a grandmother to nine grandchildren, Angie, Kenny, Jason, Marlee, Ryan, Christopher, Brandon, Kay and Tierra. Then to seven great-grandchildren, and finally one great-great-grandchild.

Grace enjoyed her grandchildren, and would have a yearly Christmas cookie bake with them as well as an Easter egg hunt in her backyard. She also enjoyed shopping and scrapbooking. She would have scrapbook weekends with her two daughters, making pages in her pajamas and eating pizza and cupcakes, having a great time. She was famous for her "Wall of Photos" in her living room. The entire hallway was covered in photos ranging from her grandfather down to the youngest members of her family.

Grace was active in her church, serving as a Deaconess in the SDB Church in Portland. She had been a member since the '80's and was dearly loved by everyone there.

She and Kenny were married for 56 years. They had a re-marriage ceremony to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. Kenny passed on in 2002. She then married Mark Herod in 2005. They spent nine years together until his death in 2014.

Grace loved her home and remained there with her dog Holly until her passing.

In lieu of flowers, Grace requested that donations be made to the Shriners Children's Hospital in Portland, OR.

## Where the rubber meets the road

Over the past year I have traveled a lot on the weekends to share what God has given me as a vision for General Conference. It's been great visiting various congregations and talking about being "Steadfast." On most of these weekend trips I've shared some things about myself I feel I'm steadfast about. I'm a Seattle Seahawks fan; I enjoy Presidential historical sites; I'm a Seventh Day Baptist; and I bike ride. It's easy for me to qualify my team fandom by citing trivia, showing ticket stubs, wearing my team shirt, etc. It's easy for me to quantify my Presidential history hobby by posting pictures from visits on social media, showing books I've read, sharing facts I've learned, etc. It's also fairly easy for me to verify my being a Seventh Day Baptist by highlighting my attendance at church, finding my baptism certificate from the Shiloh SDB



church, seeing the committees on which I serve, even noting my current "General Conference President" title, etc. It's not as easy with bike riding. I'm not in a large stadium; I'm not at a historical site with hundreds of other people (OK, we'll say ten if I'm lucky...); I'm not in a pew beside several dozen other worshippers. Typically it's just me, or me and a friend. Unless you pass me on the road, you wouldn't know I'd gone bike riding unless I mentioned it. It's that fact that makes me think about being "Steadfast" in a different light. You see, as I mentioned, I have been traveling a lot on the weekends, and that's when I usually do my bike riding. It wasn't until recently that the weather and the schedule allowed me to get back out on the road with my bike. I met my friend early on Sunday morning in May and off we rode on our usual circuit. Shortly into our ride, I could tell it had been a while since I'd ridden. I wasn't as quick up the hill; I grew short of breath more quickly; I wasn't keeping pace

as easily as I had on previous rides. Other things had filled my schedule, and now I was seeing the results. I've been sharing on my church visits that I'm a steadfast bike rider. Had I reached the point that I **was** a steadfast bike rider? It was evident that I needed more time on my bike to get back to feeling the way I have felt in the past. Similarly, I see this as a danger in my spiritual walk. I can say I'm a steadfast Christian, then allow other things to take my time away. Maybe I don't make it to church as

regularly as I have; maybe I skip a "daily" devotional; maybe my language starts to slip; maybe my comments and discussions become more like gossip and criticisms. Soon, like my bike riding, the only evidence of my being a Christian is the fact that I tell people I am. God showers Steadfast mercy down on us. Shouldn't we be more steadfast in our desire to better represent

Him? It's only by working at my endurance on my bicycle that I have any hope of improving on it. Saying I have worked at it doesn't count. It's where the "rubber meets the road" that the work gets done. That's true for getting my bike tires actually out on the road, as well as getting my knees on the ground in prayer or my eyes on the pages of Scripture.

As we close in on the General Conference sessions later this month, I pray we all remain steadfast for Christ. He provides such opportunity for us all with His steadfastness. Let us all feel inspired to be steadfast Christians with more than lip-service. Let's represent our Savior each and every day.

God bless, and I look forward to seeing everyone at Lancaster Bible College!

# Conference Highlights

Wondering who will speak at Conference? Here are two speakers you won't want to miss!



## Wednesday Evening:

### REV. DAVE BAILEY

Ranch Hope was founded in 1962 by the Rev. and Mrs. David L. Bailey. While Rev. Bailey was in the pastorate, he gave a speech to a local service organization entitled,

"Youth in Trouble." After the meeting, a member of the organization challenged Rev. Bailey to do something about the problems he had outlined in his talk. The seed was planted to back up his concern for pre-delinquent teenagers with action.

When Rev. Bailey's "dream" was made known to the public, an insurance man from Bridgeton, NJ, made the first contribution (\$20.00) to begin the work. It was this gift that launched Ranch Hope. On May 5, 1964, the first boy came to the Ranch from the Woodbury Probation Department. Within a few months, the first residence was filled with 12 boys. Rev. and Mrs. Bailey, with their family, served as the first house parents. A small school was also started on the campus with teachers donating their time.

In the years that followed, Ranch Hope expanded to 130 acres in order to care for more young men. Ranch Hope now serves over 90 young men and women, offering a high school education and a full-time residential program with an emphasis on bringing the Gospel into the lives of its students.



## Tuesday Evening and Wednesday Seminar:

### MARK HAMILTON

Born in Australia, Mark Hamilton is the founder of Young Life Belarus & the Baltic States. Having come from a non-Christian background, Mark knows what it means to reach out to teenagers: "When I was 15 I saw something different in a friend at school; he told me it was because he was a Christian. I was instantly intrigued and it wasn't long before I gave my heart to the Lord. From that moment, I always had a heart for reaching non-Christians."

He met his wife Lera, who is from New York, during a short-term mission trip to Belarus. Today they have five children and run ministries in Belarus as well as Lithuania and Latvia.

When asked, "Why Belarus & Baltic countries?" they respond, "we fell in love with the people, culture and history of this area; there is a great need here with very few missionaries or ministries reaching the non-Christian youth. It is our hope, with God's help, that we can introduce Jesus Christ to every young person and give them an opportunity to follow Him."



July 26 - August 1, 2015  
SDB General Conference Sessions

Lancaster Bible College  
Lancaster, PA



# The 3rd annual Gospel Feet 5K

Join us on July 31 at 7:00 a.m. on a course that runs through the beautiful Lancaster Bible College campus. The race theme is "ties" — come to the race wearing your best half-windsor, bow tie, and/or scarf to support professional training.



Looking to run a race for a good cause? The 3rd annual Gospel Feet 5K will support the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society ([www.sdbmissions.org](http://www.sdbmissions.org)) and its goal to train pastors and leaders in Zambia. Fundraising of only \$150 will support training for one Zambian Pastor for one term. The overall fundraising goal for the project is \$20,000 — imagine the impact this will have in Africa!



Prizes will be handed out for the best fund raisers, race times, and much more!

Register for the General Conference 5K walk/run, register for the 1K event, or just make a donation to help provide desperately needed disciple-making training for Zambia SDB leaders.

Register or Donate online:

[www.active.com](http://www.active.com) (Seventh Day Baptist Gospel Feet 5K & 1K 7:00am)

[www.sdbmissions.org](http://www.sdbmissions.org)

