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S

abbath

*News for and about
Seventh Day Baptists*

February 1999

R

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“I Promise!”

**Resolving to live
what we say
we believe**

**Promises Worth Keeping:
The 1999 50-Day
Spiritual Adventure**



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 Jesus Christ.
- 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 Christ. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs just a little bit different.

If you would like more information, write: The Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711; E-mail: sdbgen@inwave.com and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

Pastors' Conference 1999

April 13-17
Denver / Boulder, Colo.
Watch Lead-Line for registration form



Missionary Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the members of the Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society will be held at the Pawcatuck SDB Meeting House, Westerly, R.I., on Sunday, March 21, 1999 at 2:00 p.m.

Death Notice

Pastor Keith Julson of the Outreach Bible Church (SDB) in Portage, Wis., died on December 28, 1998, at his home. His obituary will appear in a later issue.

Please keep his wife, Darcy, and their three children in your prayers.

Correction

In the January *SR* (p. 9), we reported that Wardner Fitz Randolph had built the chapel at Maiden Hall in Jamaica. It was in fact his brother, Winfield Fitz Randolph, who built it.

The chapel, dedicated on March 24, 1957, was in loving memory of Winfield's wife, Ruth, who passed away September 9, 1956.

Robe of Achievement

Nominations due by March 31

Send to:
Elizabeth Bidwell
PO Box 136
Shiloh NJ 08353

(see Nov. SR for guidelines)

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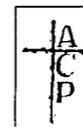


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"But you promised!"

by Greg Asimakopoulos



A tuxedo-clad young man stands at the front of a church and, with a smile on his face and a tear in his eye, pledges a lifetime of committed love to a waiting bride. He offers a sparkling diamond ring as a token of his promise.

Three years later, the ring still sparkles, but the twinkle in his eye is gone. Trust has been tarnished by unfaithfulness. As the divorce papers are signed, the rejected mate silently sighs, in a whisper only God can hear, "But you promised!"

A middle-aged woman stands over the casket which contains the remains of her senile mother. Only five years before she stood in this same funeral parlor, bidding good-bye to her father's shriveled body. On his

death bed she had promised her dad that she would care for her mother (who had just months before been diagnosed with Alzheimer's).

Within a year after her father's death, her mother needed to be institutionalized. Within weeks of moving in, the daughter opted to stop visiting her mother because the elderly woman rarely recognized her. And now, as she looks down at her mother's motionless face, she is filled with regret.

Although unrecognized, the daughter realizes she could have conveyed a sense of love to one incapable of knowing who to credit that love to. While "canned" organ music plays softly in the background,

high school kids, promising God and their parents that they would stay sexually pure until marriage. "Love waits," they sang in unison.

Today, she is three months pregnant. Her boyfriend has dumped her, and her parents alone are left to walk her through the steps of what comes next. Although assured of her mom and dad's unconditional love, the scared and guilt-ridden girl sees disappointment in their faces and is sure she can read their thoughts: "But you promised, honey!"

An 11-year-old boy proudly dons his official Boy Scout uniform before attending his first troop meeting. He stands with his peers at the front of the school gymnasium and arranges the three middle fingers of his right hand so that they stand at vertical attention while he recites the scout oath to be physically strong, mentally alert, and morally straight.

But by summer's end, he's fallen in with another pack of boys who wouldn't recite the Boy Scout oath if

The Apostle John wanted us to avoid the acid rain of guilt that accompanies hypocrisy. He wants us to experience the joy and contentment that follow those who follow through on what they say they will do.

in her heart she hears her father's voice speaking from the grave... "But you promised!"

A year ago, a 17-year-old girl stood in front of a church with 50 other

they could and who only know a different kind of finger salute. He steals money from his parents on a regular basis in order to support a pot-smoking habit he is curiously able to rationalize.

On Labor Day Weekend, the boy attends a church youth camp where he is challenged by the speaker to stand up for what is right. As he falls asleep in his sleeping bag with the Boy Scouts insignia, he starts to cry as he hears a voice in his head... "But you promised!"

A United States Senator, elected by a landslide vote six years ago, recalls being sworn in on the steps of the Capitol building, raising his right hand and vowing to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. All that seemed so magical. His wife, his parents, and even his pastor were there to witness this special occasion.

But that was then. Today, he sits before a federal district magistrate pleading "no contest" to charges of misappropriation of funds and obstruction of justice. As the judge



slams the gavel down on his bench, the Holy Spirit whispers in the heart of the fallen politician, "But you promised!"

Five examples of promises broken. Obviously, they are merely representative of hundreds of other scenarios. The list is endless. And if we are honest, we are among the transgressors.

You see, there are more promise-breakers in the world than there are promise-keepers. It's one thing to make a promise. It's something else entirely to *keep* the promises we make.

What we do with our beliefs is not only crucial; it is an indication of how sincere we are about what we say.

Do you know what oxymorons are? They are pairs of incompatible words that we use in common speech; words that cancel each other out. Like jumbo shrimp.

I found a list of the most memorable oxymorons on the Internet and thought you might get a kick out of them: Found missing. Small crowd. Sweet sorrow. Good grief. Alone together. Soft rock. Genuine imitation. Clearly misunderstood. Same difference. Resident alien. Act naturally. Plastic glasses. Tight slacks. Working vacation. Exact estimate.

Can you handle one more? Christian integrity.

Too much of the time, *we* are oxymorons. We say one thing and do another. We promise to do something, and we break our promises. We come by it naturally. It is called "being formed in sin and shaped in iniquity."

Remember Peter's bravado on the eve of Jesus' arrest at the hands of the Jewish religious elite? There in that familiar Upper Room, Jesus confronted the disciples with the fact that they would all desert him. Remember Peter's reaction? He wouldn't hear of it! Maybe the rest of the 12 would stoop so low, but he would stand tall. "There is no way I could ever betray your trust, Jesus! I will always be true. I promise!"

But Peter's promise, and Peter's performance in the hours that followed, were poles apart. Not only did Peter defect from the front lines, he denied that he even *knew* the Lord.

And he didn't deny Jesus just once, or twice, but three times!

Before judging Peter too harshly, we need to look in the mirror.

The apostle John was there the night Peter promised to be faithful. And a week or so later, he was there on the beach in Galilee after the Resurrection. Remember the day Jesus cooked breakfast for his friends? It's recorded in John 21. While John and the others looked on, Jesus called Peter aside and neutralized his lingering guilt by providing him an opportunity to declare his love not once, or twice, but three times.

I wouldn't be surprised if both that scene in the Upper Room and the one at the Sea of Galilee were in John's mind as he penned the third chapter of his first epistle years later. Listen to what he writes, beginning in verse 18:

"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the spirit he gave us" (1 John 3:18-24 NIV).

It's not a matter of simply making a promise. God's people DO what they say. John had watched Peter cave in to the pressure around him, and he knew the living hell Peter endured until Jesus assured him of his pardon on the other side of the empty grave.

John wanted his friends (and us) to avoid the acid rain of guilt that ac-

companies hypocrisy. He wants us to experience the joy and contentment that follow those who follow through on what they say they will do.

The Christians to whom the apostle John wrote were only too quick to confess that they loved God and others. But when it came to demonstrating that love, they were masters of "slow-motion" or "freeze-frame" action. John, like the apostle James, suggests that the proof of what we *believe* to be true is seen in what we actually *do*. Remember what James said in chapter two?—

"What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such a faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, 'Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?" (James 2:14-16).

Now compare that to what John says in 1 John 3:

"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" (v. 17).

They definitely are reading off the same page. They have the same concern. What we do with our beliefs is not only crucial; it is an indication of how sincere we are about what we say.

James is quite convincing. But John has a way of drawing us in that is unique to himself. He calls us "children." He knows our tendencies. He knows we are vulnerable. He knows we fall and scrape our knees (and our pride). He knows we have a lot to learn.

Throughout the entire epistle of First John, he calls us children. Besides that, I think it's noteworthy that John doesn't give us a complicated procedure to follow that enables us to follow through on our word. He just tells us to *do it*. Don't just *promise* to love somebody. Love them!

The implication? We can actually *live* what we say we believe. But in all

fairness to the apostle of love, he does refer to the power that makes it possible to keep promises. The last verse of chapter three reminds us of our ultimate dependence on the Holy Spirit. Only with God's help can we achieve what we believe.

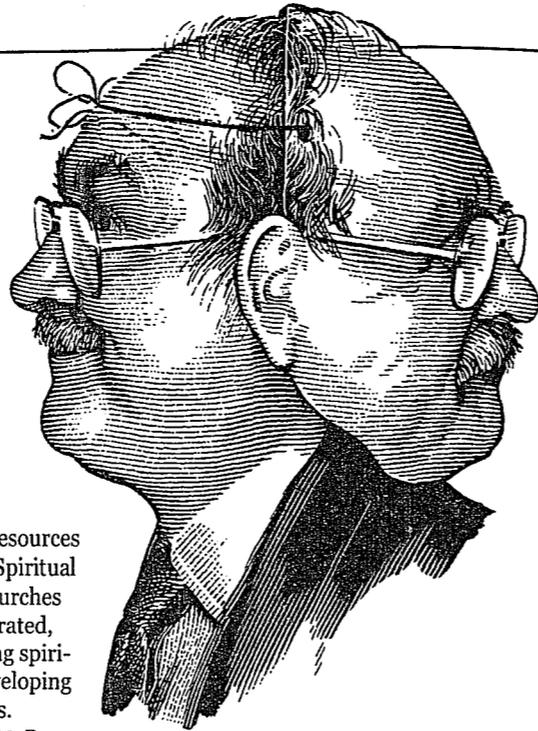
Mainstay Church Resources has created a 50-Day Spiritual Adventure to assist churches in experiencing accelerated, measurable, and lasting spiritual growth and in developing healthy spiritual habits.

If you have done a 50-Day Adventure before, you know that the action steps are the most important component. Without them, all you have is a two-month preaching series. The action steps are hands-on, user-friendly, tangible ways to personalize and apply God's Word to your life.

Action steps are a helpful tool that provide a context in which the Holy Spirit can work in our lives to do what we say. For all who want to strive to keep this year's promises (*see box*) with God's help, it's a way to get started.

If I want to live what I say I believe with regard to nurturing a growing intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ, I need to do more than just desire that. So during the Adventure, we will spend time in selected Bible passages every day and reflect in our journals what the Lord is saying to us through His Word. A daily quiet time doesn't have to be a boring, obligatory time. In addition, each week you'll be encouraged to create and customize memorable, private moments with the Lord that will let you worship in a meaningful way.

Between your daily journaling,



The proof of what we believe to be true is seen in what we actually do.

praying the daily prayer, and those weekly customized worship times, your relationship with the Lord will be nurtured. That's Action Step 1.

If I really want to cultivate vital friendships that will encourage me to keep my promises, I need to find ways to do that.

The second action step calls us to come out of spiritual isolation by deciding to give up "Lone Ranger" Christianity. You will be challenged to seek out a Christian friend or two who will encourage you to keep your daily and weekly action steps, and share your spiritual victories and defeats.

The third action step is designed to provide the necessary support to practice purity in thought and actions. In order to do that, you will be asked to identify a signature sin.

That's a sin that bears your autograph because of the degree to which it has caused you to stumble in the past (and to which you remain vulnerable).

Even if you have started to believe you will never be free of that "besetting sin," you'll discover there is hope. We're going to learn how to spell purity in a way you never dreamed possible.

In order to keep our promises about making family relationships a priority and supporting our church and its leaders, Action Step 4 offers a fun and creative way to care for those we care about.

During the Adventure, we will chart daily acts of servant love, looking for ways to esteem members of our nuclear family, extended family, and church family. In addition to setting you loose to be innovative, your journal will provide you with a raft of ideas for expressing appreciation, encouragement, and love.

The final action step provides a list of practical suggestions as we attempt to address the hidden prejudices of our hearts and seek to influence our

"worlds" with the love of Christ. This list will make it possible for you to choose to become exposed to the pain of people unlike yourself.

Because so many of our prejudices are unrecognizable to us, this action step may take more time than the others. But the end result will be freeing and God-honoring.

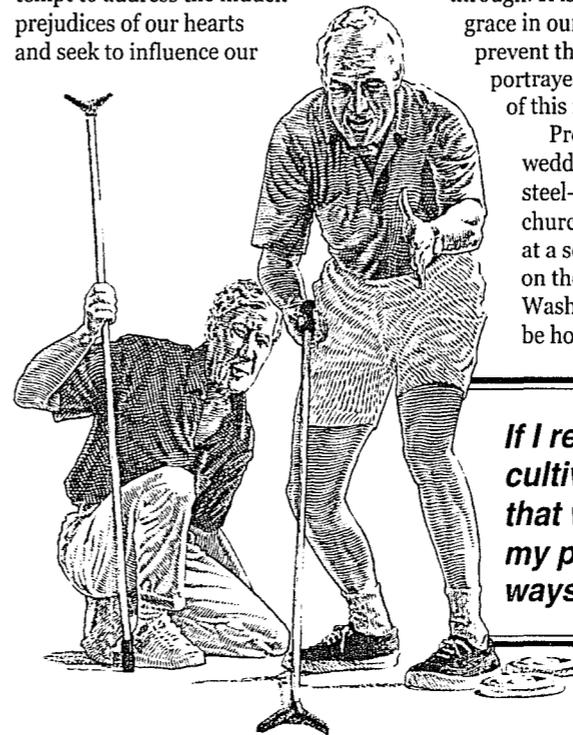
I can't read your minds, but I think I know what you're feeling. The Adventure sounds great, but it also sounds a bit overwhelming. How in the world can I do all of that?!

It does sound pretty incredible, doesn't it? But it's much more doable than you think!

What breaks it down into bite-size chunks is the journal. In the journal, the action steps are explained in detail and incorporated in the 10-minute daily assignments that carry you through the Adventure. (*See back cover of the SR for ordering information.*)

This is a 50-Day Adventure that is strong on application and follow-through. It is a means of God's grace in our lives that will help prevent the kind of pain I portrayed at the front end of this message.

Promises made at a wedding altar or over a steel-cold casket or at a church youth group or at a school meeting or on the Capitol steps in Washington, D.C., can be honored. It starts



If I really want to cultivate vital friendships that will encourage me to keep my promises, I need to find ways to do that.

During the Adventure, with God's help, we will promise to:

- 1) Nurture a growing intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2) Cultivate vital friendships that encourage us to keep our promises.
- 3) Practice purity in thought and action.
- 4) Make family relationships a priority.
- 5) Support the ministry of our church and pastor.
- 6) Identify and address the hidden prejudices of our hearts.
- 7) Influence our worlds with the love of Christ.
- 8) Live one day at a time through the power of the risen Christ.

with a return to the basics.

Relying on God's enabling power and the courage that comes from godly friendships, we can live what we say we believe. The promises that leap from our lips need not fall to the ground and break. Together, let us celebrate our heritage as promise-keeping people in a promise-breaking world. **SR**

Rev. Greg Asimakoupoulos is Director of Creative Communications at The Chapel Ministries, Wheaton, Ill.



Keep those promises

by Bob Hett

I formalized my confessed love for her in a ceremony before as many family and friends as we could possibly gather at that little country church.

"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior" (Ephesians 5:22-23).

Thirty-seven years ago, in a little country church in central Maine, my wife, Donna, and I made a promise to each other: to "love, honor, and cherish" one another, "in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, as long as we both shall live."

What are the steps that led to my making such a solemn promise?

My promise to my wife

The journey began when I believed Donna was the one for me. It was a private thought at first, but the more I saw of that beautiful, blue-eyed, five-foot-two, pony-tailed woman, the greater the conviction became.

I confessed it, first of all to her, then to others until I nearly became obnoxious. I told everyone that I loved her and was going to make her my partner for life.

Finally, I formalized my confessed love for her in a ceremony before as many family and friends as we could possibly gather at that little country church.

Now, I am living out that public promise on a day-to-day basis.

My promise to God

The apostle Paul, in Ephesians 5:22-23, tells us that there is a parallel between our relationship with our

spouse and our relationship with God.

I believed Jesus was the one He claimed to be. (Consider the "I am's" of Jesus in John's Gospel—the Bread of Life in 6:35 and 48; the Light of the World in 8:12 and 9:5; the Gate and the Good Shepherd in 10:9-10 and 14; the Resurrection and the Life in 11:25; the Way, the Truth, and the Life in 14:6; and the Vine in 15:1, 5.)

I confessed it, first to Him, then to others until I nearly became obnoxious. I couldn't stop talking about Him. I told everyone I was making Him the Lord of my life (Rom. 10:9-10).

I formalized my confessed love for Him before as many family and friends as I could possibly gather, sealing my promise through baptism and confirmation.

I am living out the promise I made to Him on a day-to-day basis.

It's one thing to make these promises. It's another thing to carry them out.

That's what this year's "PK"/50-Day Spiritual Adventure is all about: "Resolving to live what we say we believe" in our relationships with God, our families, and others.

We are aware of how God has used the Promise Keepers movement to impact the lives of

men. Now, the life-changing power of Promise Keepers can spill over into the entire church of men, women, students, and children.

During the Adventure, with God's help, we will promise to:

- 1) Nurture a growing intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2) Cultivate vital friendships that encourage us to keep our promises.
- 3) Practice purity in thought and action.
- 4) Make family relationships a priority.
- 5) Support the ministry of our church and pastor.
- 6) Identify and address the hidden prejudices of our hearts.
- 7) Influence our worlds with the love of Christ.
- 8) Live one day at a time through the power of the risen Christ.

Five action steps will help us accomplish these promises:

- Create memorable moments with Jesus.
- Come out of spiritual isolation.
- Confess and confront a signature sin.
- Care for those you care about.
- Choose to become exposed to the suffering of others.

I encourage you to enter fully into this Adventure. **SR**

Rev. Bob Hett pastors the Bay Church in Alton Bay, N.H.



The life-changing power of Promise Keepers can spill over into the entire church of men, women, students, and children.

A picture of health

by Don Holmertz

"We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body" (2 Corinthians 4:10 NIV).

It was the perfect "win-win" combination.

Ron had taken his brilliant academic background into business. When a pastor introduced him to another Christian with business savvy and a great idea, they formed a partnership.

Was Ron's plan just another worldly scheme to make a million and retire? Far from it. He planned

to invest the money he'd make into missions, not mansions. He wanted to show off God's love, not his own Lexus.

Ron put his life savings into the business to get it off the ground. His partner used the wealth of his family, even his own mother's. Ron was gratified to see the business take off like a rocket. God was indeed honoring his plan.

But Ron's doubts started to surface when his partner became evasive when questioned, and obsessed with the need to acquire and spend. Instead of being a respected church

On the outside, he looked like the ideal Christian businessman—



but inside he was empty and cold-hearted.

member, past problems with alcohol resurfaced. His marriage fell apart. One night while driving under the influence, his car swerved off the highway, and he was killed.

The legacy of Ron's partner was one of betrayal, deceit, and greed. On the outside, he looked like the ideal Christian businessman, but inside he was empty and coldhearted. He left his mother, wife, and children nearly destitute. And Ron was immobilized by thousands of dollars in debt.

Ron's great plan went up in smoke, and with it his trust of Christians and his belief that a Gospel based on grace can really transform lives.

Unfortunately, the landscape is littered with the smoking remains of broken promises. Every time a believer breaks a promise, those around him or her will see it as a promise broken by God.

In 2 Corinthians 4, Paul clearly sets out our dilemma as Christians. But just as clearly, he paints a picture of hope.

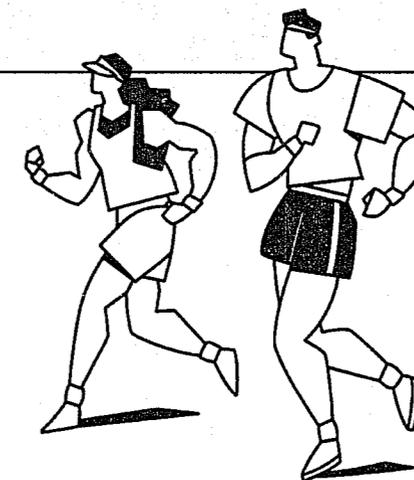
Our humanity and our vulnerability to death (v. 10a)
—*"always carrying in the body the death of Jesus."*

Our human bodies are like imperfect clay jars (v. 7). Most of us don't have to go far to be reminded of that.

But when the money is rolling in, when the spotlight of admiration is on us, when the plan is working, our human frailty is forgotten. Even by those, like Ron, who knew better.

The apostle had people—like his detractors in Corinth, and persecutors at every seaport and crossroads—to remind him of his deathbound humanity.

Who in your life will give you a "reality check" in the Spirit? Who needs one from you?



Our bodies are used not to peddle death, deceit, and debauchery but to radiate the integrity and amazing grace of God through Christ.

The life of Jesus shines through the cracks (v. 10b)
—*"so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies."*

The risen Christ is no longer visible in His resurrection body, but He is visible in *our* bodies.

This is why our bodies are used not to peddle death, deceit, and debauchery but to radiate the integrity and amazing grace of God through Christ.

Like ripples on a pond, this year's 50-Day Adventure begins inside—with our memorable moments with Jesus. Without these, there will be nothing to be seen except an empty, cracked pot.

We must also come out of spiritual isolation. From there, we move to the power of "we." With the help of a partner, I will practice purity and confront my signature sin.

The life of Jesus in me becomes visible to my family, as I make them a priority. The waves of influence then affect my church and, yes, even those with whom I have cultural and racial barriers.

Ultimately, the life of Jesus becomes visible globally, and in every sphere I touch.

The impact of this Adventure will be determined by the degree to which we begin to live what we say we believe. According to pollster George Barna, the problem of Christians losing societal influence is simple to explain.

Barna says that non-Christians don't see substantial differences or "transformations in the flesh" between themselves and Christians. "For example, 33% of non-Christians watched MTV, as did 26% of Christians. Also, 30% of Christians, and 40% of non-Christians, viewed R-rated movies in a given week. Nearly the same number of Christians and non-Christians believe that money means success in life."

For years, Barna's data has shown that the divorce rate among Christians is virtually the same as among non-Christians.

Seeing the gap between what we say we believe and our behavior, is what this Adventure is all about. **SR**

Rev. Don Holmertz pastors at the Valley Evangelical Covenant Church in Stillman Valley, Ill.

The Promises Worth Keeping

Prayer



Lord, I want a growing relationship with You. I'm tired of broken promises. Guide me to godly friends who will help me remain pure and honor my priorities. Open my eyes to hidden prejudices in my life. Open my heart to the needs of my church and its leaders. Teach me to reflect Your love in the world around me. Help me to _____ so I can live today what I say I believe.

Amen.

Gear Up for a Great Adventure with these:

An Adventure Journal

Daily journals are available for four age-groups: adults, students, upper elementary, and early elementary.



People of Promise

An enjoyable exploration of the Spiritual Adventure themes, this Adventure Guidebook comes in printed or audio format.



The Little Scripture Pack for Practicing Purity

Verses related to Promise #3—Practice Purity in Thought and Action—will help you in your day-to-day confrontation of a signature sin.



See back cover for ordering information



Women's Society page by Donna Bond

Promises of past and present

The clan gathers at "The Gathering Place" ...

On November 7, 1998, family and friends of Don and Ilou (Miars) Sanford assembled at a senior citizens' center in Milton, Wis., to celebrate promises made and kept by the Sanfords for half a century. Immediate family hailed literally from "Cali to Jersey," from "Texas to Seattle." In SDB tradition, a rendition of the "Youth Rally Song" would have been appropriate!

As my sisters and I (in various stages of raising families) compared notes, we realized that keeping those promises made on October 29, 1948, could not have been easy. Still, Mom and Dad persevered in such a way that it never, *ever* entered our minds as children that they might even consider divorce.

God keeps His promises, and He expects us to do the same insofar as we are able. Unfortunately, we do not always think through the consequences of our promises. Nor do we always have control over all of the circumstances which might preclude our stated plans.

When our children were small, Tim and I learned to say, "If things work right, we will do 'such-and-such.'" For weather, illness, or other unexpected circumstances would sometimes force us to renege on activities or purchases which Levi and Sylvia understood to be promises cast in stone.

As we celebrate St. Valentine's Day this month, let us strive for that perfect *agape* love, ordained by God, which enables us to make promises we can keep and keep the promises we make.

Our SDB sisters have found various ways to demonstrate love—many



Our SDB sisters have found various ways to demonstrate love—many of which have something to do with feeding the body as well as the soul.

of which have something to do with feeding the body as well as the soul.

During 1997-98: Daytona Beach (Fla.) provided meals for the Senior Saints; Alfred Station and Alfred (N.Y.), and Battle Creek (Mich.) and Milton hosted funeral receptions, bridal/baby showers, and other luncheons as needed, as well as Association meetings; the New York City church distributed tracts, clothing, bread, and canned goods as available; Battle Creek hosted a local pastors' conference and will be hosting General Conference this year.

Daytona Beach hosted Church

Women United (CWU) in May, and made quilt tops and lap robes for them; Shiloh (N.J.) and Riverside (Calif.) collected eyeglasses for Africa; a sewing committee in Battle Creek made contributions to the Charitable Union, while others in Battle Creek provided health and school kits to CWU; Milton kept a prayer chain in operation; and Shiloh sent cards to the sick and bereaved every month. New York City held an evangelistic campaign during Conference year 1997-98.

Many of our women were also generous with their finances, but that's material for another issue!

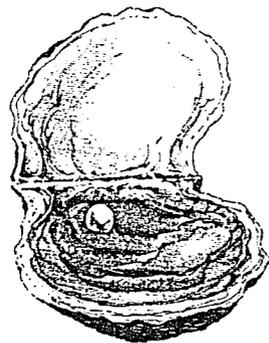
The following tidbit, submitted by the Women's Circle in Milton, describes an outreach program which was successful in their community:

"Our Women's Circle invited women from community churches and the Senior Center to a 'Remember When' Silver Tea on October 7. Hats were provided for any who came with heads uncovered. Guests and hosts joined one of six groups to reminisce—from baths in front of the kitchen stove, to doctors who made house calls, to one-room country schools, and much, much more as the groups came together.

"Spiced tea and an assortment of small cookies, bars, and mini-muffins were served from the decorated tea table, with refills passed as the conversation continued. A brief hymn-sing with piano accompaniment closed the afternoon fellowship." Sounds like fun, *n'est-ce pas?**

Whatever your local Society does to celebrate love and promise-keeping, lay aside church politics and do it as to the Lord! **SR**

* *n'est-ce pas*—French for "doesn't it?" "isn't it?" etc.



Pearls from the Past by Don A. Sanford, historian

Chicago Council revisited

Over a century ago, in 1890, President Herman D. Babcock opened the 77th session of General Conference. Using his business expertise, he challenged the Conference to work toward what he called "Denominational Economy."

As a household of faith, he declared, "economy ought to be characteristic of us, for scholars say that the word 'economy' originally meant the management of a household. Now our denominational household ought to be well managed."

Babcock then suggested several areas in which denominational economy could strengthen our work:

"In the first place, we need more general uniformity throughout the denomination in all methods of work. While we are perhaps more united than any other Christian people, because of our common heritage so precious in our eyes—the Sabbath—we nevertheless are almost unique among denominations because of the extent to which individualism is carried by us."

Another principle of economy mentioned by Babcock was that of centralization, at least of the executive functions.

"Our tendency now is divisive and separative rather than moving towards economic centralization. Along with this centralization is the economic principle of division of labor. In every well-ordered business establishment or factory the division of labor is carried out to the farthest limit, but no successful business was ever prosecuted where there was division of executive function."

Then our Conference president

drew attention to "the principle of business management that when one line of policy is followed for a fair length of time and found to fail, or to be attended with more loss than gain, or where the gain is not commensurate with the amount of money and energy expended, the line of policy should be changed for one better adapted to secure the end desired."¹

Babcock ended by stating that "there are now before us certain open doors of opportunity," and "certain imperative obligations." Among them were:

"A duty, imperative and absolute, rests upon us who dwell in the older portions of our denomination, that we reveal a cheerful, consistent, Sabbath-keeping Christian life in our homes and in society..."

"We must all feel that we are, each of us, personally responsible for each and every branch of our work.... Before looking with an air of criticism at the policy of our several Boards, let us see if we are bearing the full measure of our duty in the line of their work. Before we throw stones, let us see if our houses have not at least some dangerously large windows."²

It was at this same session that A.H. Lewis proposed calling a special

Council to take up some of the issues raised by president Babcock in his opening address.

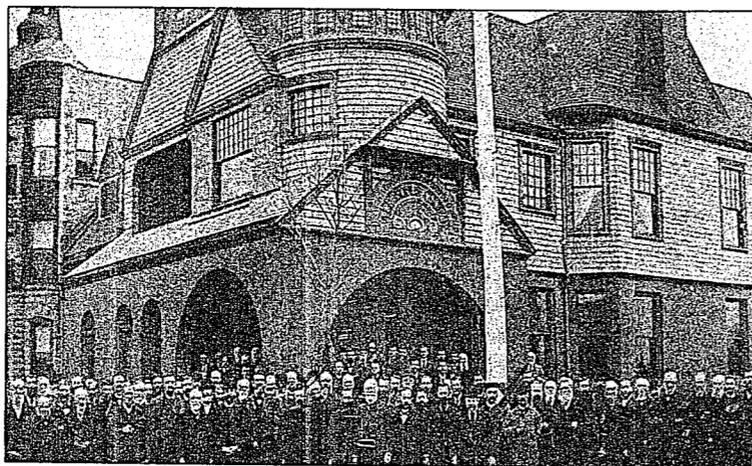
"Whereas, New and powerful influences are now arising which directly affect the Sabbath question, and our denominational work, and our future prospects, and

"Whereas, The consideration of present and prospective demands upon us cannot be fully and carefully considered at this session for want of time, therefore,

"Resolved, That the President of the Conference be hereby empowered to appoint a committee of five which shall report to this session a plan for calling a special denominational Council, which shall convene before the close of the current year, 1890, to consider and report upon all important questions, pertaining to our present and future work, and our denominational status and duty."

From this action over a hundred years ago came the Chicago Council, composed of representatives from each church and each denominational agency. Ninety-eight delegates attended, representing 78 churches, and continued meeting through eight days. Numerous visitors from the

cont. on page 26



The Chicago Council of SDBs met at the All Souls Church in 1890.



SR Almanac

A look at where we have been
from the pages of *The Sabbath Recorder*

One year ago—February 1998

Readers learn about the latest 50-Day Adventure: "Untapped Miracles for Tapped-out Christians." The focus is on Scripture, prayer, and fasting.

Center-spread pages contain world map and pictures identifying locations and leaders of the SDB World Federation.

SDB leader in The Gambia relates testimony of his imprisonment for doing the Lord's work.

Seminars and workshops listed for July's Conference in West Virginia.

Fire guts the parish house in Daytona Beach, Fla.; ice storm strikes area around the Adams Center, N.Y., church.

Linda Bingham Hays shares her salvation story.

Five years ago—February 1994

Writer Tim Bond, and pastors Ken Chroniger and Matthew Olson discuss the topics of eternal security and conversion.

"Focus" page relates the struggles of SDBs in The Gambia trying to register as a recognized church.

Former *SR* editor K. Duane Hurley reflects on his editing days of 1945-1947.

News updates come from these Florida churches: Bradenton, Palatka, and West Palm Beach.

The Associated Church Press praises the *SR*'s June 1993 full-color outreach issue.

10 years ago—February 1989

Architectural student Morgan Shepard shares his vision of an expanded SDB Center and campus. Shepard used this dream for his bachelor's degree thesis.

Janet Thorngate tells the story of John Comer (1704-1734), Baptist pastor who collected valuable historical information on Newport, R.I., SDBs.

Five areas targeted for outreach: New York City; Santa Barbara, Calif.; Rapid City, S.D.; Miami, Fla.; and Doniphan, Mo.

Publishing ministries expand in Poland and Brazil.

Editor D. Scott Smith presents his final editorial and last regular *SR* issue. Smith gives thanks to many, and an inspiring challenge to all readers.

25 years ago—February 1974

Gladys Randolph edits theme section, "Little things can mean a lot."

Nurse Sarah Becker returns to the United States following another four-year term of service in Malawi, Africa. Miss Becker had served previously in Malawi as well as in China.

Waterford, Conn., church purchases ranch-style parsonage.

"The passing years and a tired back" force Henry Poulin into retirement. Poulin served for over 40 years as a pressman at the SDB Publishing House.

Planning Committee announces the RON (Reach Out Now) project.

50 years ago—February 1949

Kenneth Smith, a sophomore at Salem (W.Va.) College, now serving as acting pastor at the Lost Creek, W.Va., church.

Berlin, N.Y., area suffers flood damage as Little Hoosic River overflows its banks.

Rev. Herbert C. Van Horn passes away at his home in Milton, Wis. He pastored many SDB churches and served as editor of the *SR* for 14 years.

Cover of the February 28th issue shows dozens of candidates for baptism prior to the baptismal service at the SDB church in Shanghai, China.

Los Angeles SDB Church votes to purchase property to build a new church.

...where are we headed?

Pray for—

- a personal spiritual adventure
- our SDB World Federation members
- this year's Conference preparations
- God's blessing on former denominational workers
- safety during natural disasters
- our SDB boards and agencies
- positive methods to reach out in Christ's name



Taking nominations for Sabbath School Teacher of the Year

The Sabbath School Committee of the Seventh Day Baptist Board of Christian Education invites each member church of the General Conference to nominate one Sabbath School teacher for the 14th annual *Crystal Apple* Award. The 1999 Teacher of the Year will be selected from the nominees using the following criteria:

- Is a member in good standing of the nominating church
- Exhibits the qualities of faith and teaching found in the life and teachings of Christ
- Currently serves as a Sabbath School teacher

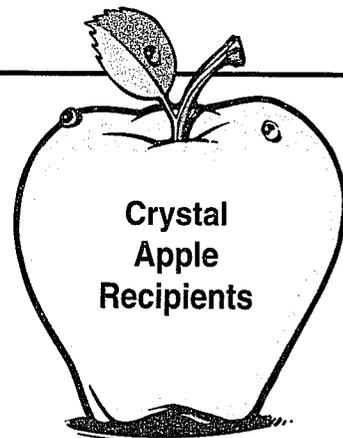
The local church pastor and superintendent are asked to complete, sign, and return the form certifying the nominee's church membership, present teaching position, previous teaching experience, unique teaching skills or practices, and other Christian Education service. The post-marked deadline is June 30, 1999.

The Board is seeking nominees whose teaching skills have contributed to the Christian conversion and nurture of our people. The Board understands that it is not possible to recognize and honor every worthy teacher. Nevertheless, we wish to honor one such teacher on behalf of all our Sabbath School teachers. We urge the local church to annually recognize all of their teachers.

Nomination forms will be mailed this month to pastors and Sabbath

School superintendents. If you need a replacement form or further information, please contact the Board of Christian Education, P.O. Box 115,

Alfred Station, NY 14803-0115, or telephone (607) 587-8527. **SR**



•**George Parrish**
Battle Creek, Mich.
1986

•**Shirley Cargill**
North Loup, Neb.
1987

•**Margaret Allen**
Lost Creek, W.Va.
1988

•**Helen Bond**
Columbus, Ohio
1989

•**June Johnson**
Nortonville, Kan.
1990

•**Ruth Bennett**
Battle Creek, Mich.
1991

•**Dan Richards**
Texarkana, Ark.
1992

•**Lewis H.V. May**
Riverside, Calif.
1993

•**Alan R. Crouch**
Daytona Beach, Fla.
1994

•**Madeline Fitz Randolph**
Boulder, Colo.
1995

•**Karen S. Payne**
Dodge Center, Minn.
1996

•**Janis M. Bond**
Shiloh, N.J.
1997

•**Earl W. Hibbard**
Central, Md.
1998



Many children are among the displaced Rwandans. Behind these people are fields of sweet potatoes, peas, and beans.

When I visited Rwanda last November, I learned of a new ministry in the SDB churches: supporting the resettlement camps set up for Rwandans displaced from their mountain homes and villages. This is a viable ministry and will help spread the Gospel as well as the Seventh Day Baptist denomination.

One of the camps I visited was named Kinigi, situated northeast of Ruhengari at the base of majestic volcanic peaks. We checked with government officials to make certain that we would be able to tour the settlement and talk to the leaders about starting a church. To our surprise, they encouraged us to do whatever is necessary to begin that ministry.

We went out among the huts where the people live. They were chased out of their villages and homes by renegade bandits who conduct raids to secure food and anything else they need.

Eventually, the people grew weary of "feeding" these armies of marauding bandits and fled. The government has provided land for new housing until the bandits are removed from the mountains. The result is acres and acres of huts.

These huts are built of various materials, including grass and tar-

peas, and beans in the surrounding fields. I marveled at the number of people in the camps. One had over 70,000 people; another had over 50,000. In one area, I could look out over the land and see nothing but huts stretching for miles.

The volcanoes looming in the background are grim reminders of

This is a viable ministry and will help spread the Gospel as well as the Seventh Day Baptist denomination.

paulin coverings. The grass is virtually free, but tarpaulins cost about \$35. Several tarpaulins have been shipped to Rwanda to help construct homes for church members. This same type of material is also used to cover the roofs of churches.

the instability of the land. The huts are also grim reminders of the instability in the lives of these citizens of Rwanda. **SR**

(More photos on page 23.)



the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship February 1999

Youth camp held in Philippines

(This report comes from Angela Catayen of The Philippines—Editor Aubrey Appel.)

I'm happy to greet you in the name of Jesus Christ. I trust that everybody is doing fine and struggling hard to preach the Gospel of Christ.

For the first time in the history of our church, we were able to have a youth camp at Tuburan, Cebu, last October 30 – November 1, 1998. It was a nice experience for everybody that we were able to impart the talents that God has given to us. It was a training ground for our youth so they can be a great help in preaching the good news of God. As our theme said, "Go Forward for Church Growth" while waiting for His second coming.

The first Sabbath of each month is a time for the young people to lead the Sabbath services. I was amazed that all the young people who went to the camp were willing to render their part during the services without hesi-



Participants of the SDB Youth Camp '98 in Cebu, The Philippines.

tation; not like before, when you asked them to lead the prayer or give a special song, they would always refuse because of shyness. As a result of the camp, they were able to overcome those feelings with the help of God who strengthens us. The appreciation they express is so encouraging to those who didn't join the camp and also to the other members of our church.

We plan to have another camp, God willing, and save enough money for the budget because it costs a lot. But I trust that God will provide if

you ask Him to support you in all your dealings (Jeremiah 33:3).

We want to send over encouragement to our young people in the Faith. Please keep us and our ministry in your precious prayers.

Yours in Christ,
Angela Catayen

Care to drop Angela a note? Her address is: 226-S.A. Lopez St.
Cebu City 6000
Philippines 6401

(More photos on page 23!)



Seeking Spiritual Maturity: STEWARDSHIP
An annual emphasis of the SDB General Council

Keep meetings focused on serving the Lord

Encourage stewardship of time and talents, too



For many small group organizers, as well as church and school leaders, planning an opening devotion in addition to preparing for regular meetings can be challenging.

God First, from Concordia Publishing House (CPH), is a convenient collection of short, stewardship-oriented Bible studies at the beginning of congregational meetings, programs, or functions.

Designed in the same format as CPH's popular *5-Minute Bible Studies* series, these single-page, reproducible studies follow the regular cycles of congregational life and the church calendar.

The 64-page *God First* includes a total of 52 studies—one for each week of the year.

The convenient, one-page format is ideally suited for pastors, school principals, board chairpersons, or other busy ministry team leaders who may need an inspiring study to share on short notice.

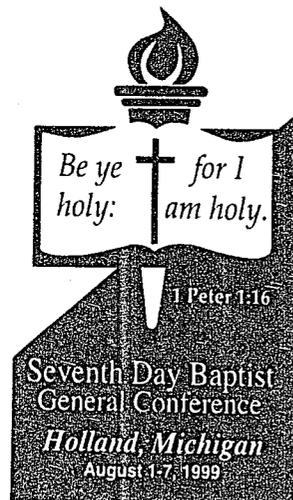
They're also a convenient way to introduce the benefits of Bible study to even more members of the church. **SR**

For more information, contact Doris Engstrom:
Concordia Publishing House
3558 South Jefferson Ave.
St. Louis MO 63118-3968

E-mail: dorise@cphnet.org

Website: www.cphmall.com

Phone: 1-800-774-0274



A few years ago, I read an intriguing series of cautionary statements that went something like this:

- Be careful what you think, for your thoughts become your words.
- Be careful what you say, for your words become your actions.
- Be careful what you do, for your deeds become your habits.
- Be careful of your habits, for your habits become your character.
- Be careful of your character, for your character becomes your destiny.

The way one thing leads to another is also borne out in this story that appeared in the *Daytona Beach News Journal* last fall:

At age 15, a local girl began to sample marijuana; by 17, she had moved on to alcohol and hard drugs. This was followed by promiscuity, unwanted pregnancies, dropping out of school, out of the army, and finally, out of life.

At age 36, she is partially paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair, the result of riding a motorcycle while drunk. And it all began with just a little "pot."

Even the notorious David Berkowitz, who murdered six people and wounded seven others in New York City during his "Son of Sam" reign of terror, points to his gradual evolution from rebellious youth to serial killer as evidence that decisions "off by a few degrees" can totally ruin lives.

The President's Page

Be careful what you think

by Norma Rudert

From prison, Berkowitz now says he was converted to Christianity in 1987 after reading a Bible given to him by another inmate. Although some may doubt his transformation to "Son of Hope," I believe God's great mercy can forgive large sins as well as small ones.

I don't believe that anyone reading these words is in danger of becoming another serial killer, but Scripture warns us against the complacency that leads to serial sinning. The beginning of a new year (the final one of this millennium!) is a good time to reflect on the direction we are heading.

What if our spiritual journey toward sanctification is like being on a slowly moving escalator going down? Unless we conscientiously climb, we could be losing ground!

In *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis, the seasoned devil advises his nephew, Wormwood, "It does not matter how small the sins are, provided that their cumulative effect is to edge a man away from the Light and out into the Nothing."

Here's another thought to give one pause: Whatever you are like during your adult years, you will be like when you are old—only more so! Crabby people become irascible; self-centered individuals become totally oblivious to others' concerns. But those who pay attention to their spiritual standing can grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

In Romans 5:3, Paul discusses another chain reaction. "Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has

poured out His love into our hearts." That sounds like progress toward holiness. One of the Bible Studies planned for Conference in August will discuss how people can be sanctified by suffering.

I don't know if this is good theology or not, but I'll pass it along:

"It is easier to act your way into a new way of thinking than it is to think your way into a new way of acting."

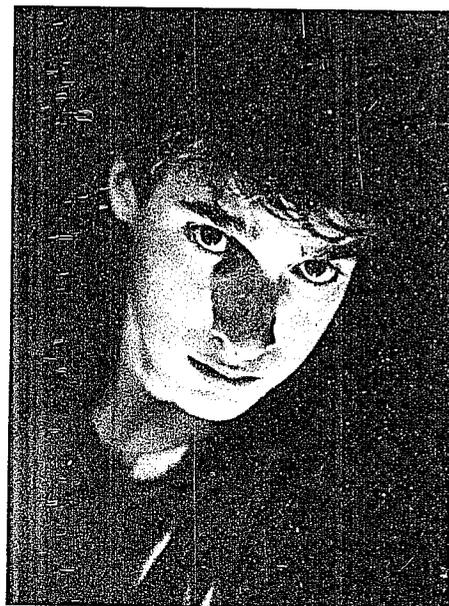
That reminds me of David's desire expressed in Psalm 19:14: "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer."

"A prudent man gives thought to his steps" (Proverbs 14:15).

"The path of life leads upward for the wise" (Proverbs 15:24).

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable... think about such things" (Phil. 4:8).

Be careful what you think... *SR*



Pastor Profile



Name: Steven James

Birthdate and place:

November 8, 1959 Akron, Ohio

Current pastorate:

Verona, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church

Family:

Wife of 21 years (12/10/77) Debbie (what a babe!); Keith, 20; Kristi, 18.

Education:

Northwest High School, Canal Fulton, Ohio; T.I.M.E. Program; Summer Institute; Courses taken at Empire State Baptist Seminary, Liberty University, and Trinity College and Seminary.

Former pastorates/employment:

Junction City Seventh Day Baptist Assembly, Junction City, Kan., 1988-1990.

Miscellaneous jobs ranging from restaurant management, farm work, shoe repair, vacuum cleaner sales, encyclopedia sales, custodial, dishwasher/cook, warehouse manager, supply specialist/colonel's driver in U.S. Army, apartment building manager, floral delivery driver, and driving taxi.

My first job was:

Picking up sticks in a neighbor's yard next to my grandparents.

Personal hero:

John Maxwell

Favorite Bible passage:

2 Corinthians 9:8

Favorite author:

John MacArthur

Most people don't know (about me):

That I proposed to my wife in my junior year of high school.

When I have time, I enjoy:

Exercising; spending time with my family; movies.

A great answer to prayer was:

Being called to pastor the Verona church.

A church project I'm excited about:

Seeking further vision from God that will take us higher, further, and deeper in His will.

My vision for SDBs:

That we pursue honest relationships with Christians and non-Christians in order to bring salvation to the lost and the Sabbath to the saved.

Daytona church faces "dangerous" times

by Pastor John Camenga

(Written to his flock in a recent newsletter.)

It is an exciting time in the life of our church here in Daytona Beach, Fla. Our addition has been completed. The annex has been restored from the fire. New contacts are coming by dozens instead of one at a time.

It is a dangerous time in the life of our church!

I believe that we can respond to the dangers in effective, positive ways, but we need to be aware of them and understand that they are present. Let's look at three dangers we face right now.

1) There is the danger of looking at buildings rather than people. God

has allowed us to have good facilities to use. We need to remember that facilities are not an end in themselves. While limited facilities limit growth, good facilities do not cause growth. God draws people to us.

2) There is the danger of looking at numbers rather than individuals. I must confess that it is exciting to me to see more people present for worship, study, and fellowship times. It is easy to see attendance figures as the thing that proves how significant ministry is. We MUST remember the story Jesus told. The shepherd valued one missing sheep so much that he went out to look for it, even though he had 99 others.

3) There is the danger of looking at programs instead of ministry. A common comment that new contacts make about our church is the genuine love they experience from the people. This quality is far more important than any particular program or set of programs. Caring, compassionate relationships that lift and build up, especially in times when people are hurting, are more important than any program or project we can develop.

Perhaps these dangers are enough for us to deal with right now. There are some methods of dealing with them that sound simple, but take prayerful determination to put into practice. They take more effort than construction projects, attendance goals, or new programs.

1) We have the goal of being faithful to God, without concern for the things that many people use to measure "success" in church life. Our responsibility is to love, honor and serve Him with equal devotion in times that are easy and times that are tough.

2) We have the goal of being loving to each of our brothers and sisters. The world teaches selfishness and "looking out for number one." We must demonstrate a better way.

3) We have the goal of being the kind of people God has called us to be "from the heart." We are called to do more than have appealing presentations and positive appearance.

Notice that, while these three goals require action, they are "be" goals, not "do" goals. Our objective is to represent a loving heavenly Father in a world that is dying for lack of His love. We must avoid these dangers and apply our hearts to these goals. Being faithful in these matters pleases God. **SR**

Former SR building torn down

by David L. Snyder, editor
The Alfred Sun

The first edition of *The Alfred Sun* was published on December 6, 1883, at the former Sabbath Recorder Printing House located at 61 N. Main St., Alfred, N.Y.



Office and staff of the Sabbath Recorder Publishing House in the late 1880s. The Recorder was printed here in Alfred, N.Y., from 1872 to 1895.

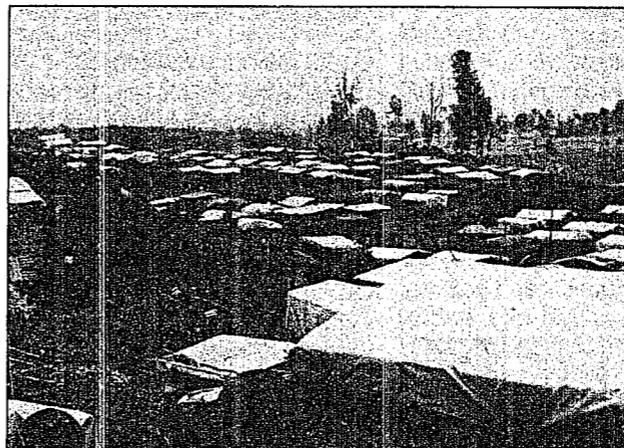
University students returning from Thanksgiving break noticed a change in Alfred's streetscape as, sadly, that first home of *The Alfred Sun* was razed on November 27, 1998.

Believed to have been built in 1860, the two-story, three-bay frame commercial structure had served numerous purposes over the years. Its most recent use was for student apartments, but the building had stood vacant for two years because of irreparable conditions.

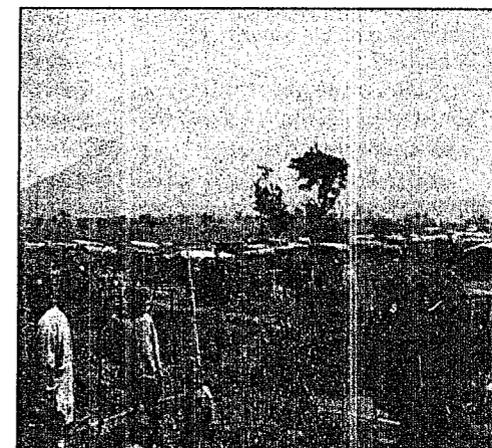
And while its removal opens up the view of Main Street from the Post Office, the old structure had a long and storied past.

It is interesting to note that *Sun* co-founder and legendary editor Frank Crumb set the type of his "dream" of 1,000 subscribers to the *Sun* in the Sabbath Recorder Publishing House that is now gone. **SR**

Resettlement camps in Rwanda (story on p. 17)



Acre after acre of resettlement huts are located in the Ruhengari region of Rwanda.

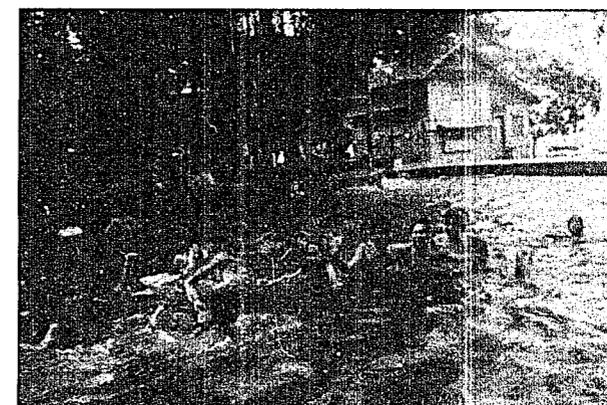


Volcanoes on the horizon serve to reinforce the instability of these Rwandans.

Youth camp in Philippines (story on p. 18)



A special song during Divine Worship. Singers (l. to r.): Marian Billiones, Merari Contridas, Angela Catayen, and Adam Gilunsad.



Youth campers enjoying the fresh water at the Molobolo Spring.

Outreach tools still available

A book:

A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists (Broadman Press)

by Don A. Sanford.
Documents our history from the Reformation in Europe to modern times in America.

—Reduced price of \$20 includes postage

A video:

"A Choosing People: The Seventh Day Baptist Story." This half-hour television film captures the loving flavor of this special people. A dramatized look at Sabbathkeeping, church work, and our history will enlighten your viewers.

—Only \$7.00 each plus S&H

A magazine:

Our full-color special issue *Sabbath Recorder*, "Seventh Day Baptists," introduces the reader to SDBs through our distinctives, history, and statement of belief. —Send a donation for quantities

Contact the SDB Center
at (608) 752-5055
sdbgen@inwave.com

Accessions

Miami, FL
Andrew Samuels, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Itymay Brown
 George Walters
 Joined after testimony
 Ivy Hooker
 Nojah Williams

North Loup, NE
Christian Mattison, pastor
 Joined by letter
 Christian Mattison
 Becky Mattison
 Becky Faith Mattison

Marriage

Walters - Walker.—George Walters and Angelyn Walker of Wilton Manors, FL, were married on January 1, 1999. Pastors Andrew Samuels and Alvin Bernard officiated.

Joined after testimony
 Lee Allbery

White Cloud, MI
Bernie Wethington, pastor
 Joined after baptism
 Lori Schondelmayer
 Joined after testimony
 Christina Shearer

Births

Giles.—A son, Jacob Ryan Giles, was born to Emery and Donna Giles of Battle Creek, MI, on November 22, 1998.

Adams.—A son, Jarrod Lee Adams, was born to Jason Adams and Stacy Hahn of Battle Creek, MI, on November 25, 1998.

Thompson.—A daughter, Alysha Julia Thompson, was born to Ray Thompson and Judith Livingston of Miami, FL, on December 2, 1998.

Obituaries

Cass.—Vivian L. Cass, 70, of Sandusky, N.Y., died on April 6, 1997, at her home after a long illness.

She was born on April 29, 1926, in Shinglehouse, Pa., the daughter of Jesse and Myrtle Sherwood. On August 11, 1946, she married Willard M. Cass in Nile, N.Y.

Vivian had resided most of her life in Friendship, N.Y., and attended Friendship Central School. She was a member of the Nile Seventh Day Baptist Church for 17 years. When it closed in 1959, she transferred her membership to the Richburg, N.Y., SDB Church. During her 38 years of membership there, she served on the Advisory Board, was president of the Ladies' Aid, and helped her husband with custodial duties.

She was also a member of the Allegheny Mountain Engine and Implement Club in Port Allegany, Pa.

In addition to her husband, survivors include two sons, Daniel and Brian, both of Sandusky; two daughters, Janet Duncan of Idaho Falls, Idaho, and Brenda Cowles of Olean, N.Y.; three brothers, Richard Sherwood of Allegany, N.Y., Keith Sherwood of Valerico, Fla., and Roy Sherwood of South Carolina; two half-brothers, Jody Sherwood of Salamanca, N.Y., and Jerry Burrell of Franklinville, N.Y.; two sisters, Dreatha Guthrie of Ayr, Canada, and Betty Madore of White River Junction, Vt.; one half-sister, Judy Donovan of Olean; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on April 10, 1997, with Rev. Robert Harris officiating. Burial was in Maple Grove Cemetery, Friendship.

Drake.—M. Elizabeth "Betty" Drake, 82, of Shinglehouse, Pa., died on April 20, 1998, at Charles Cole Memorial Hospital, Coudersport, Pa., following a short illness. She was born on November 7,

1915, in Friendship, N.Y., the daughter of Clayton and Jessica (Irish) Burrows. On April 21, 1935, she married Leon F. Drake in Friendship. He died on November 16, 1988. She was a graduate of Friendship High School and sold cosmetics for the former Beauty Counselor Co.

Betty was a member of the Nile, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church before transferring to the Richburg, N.Y., SDB Church in 1935. During her 63 years there, she was a member of the Ladies' Aid, and served on the Advisory Board and various committees. She was also a member of the Bolivar 4-Cs Senior Citizens Group and served on the Sharon Township Board of Elections.

Survivors include one son, Denver, of Shinglehouse; four daughters, Nettie Sue Nichols and Carman Drake, both of Shinglehouse, Fawzia DeLong of Bristol, W.Va., and Rachel Bollinger of York, Pa.; one sister, Alberta Wightman of Friendship; five grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. In addition to her husband, she was predeceased by a brother, three sisters, and two granddaughters.

Funeral services were held on April 23, 1998, at the Virgil L. Howard Funeral Home, Shinglehouse. Rev. Robert Harris of the Richburg SDB Church, and Rev. Gordon Lawton of the Little Genesee, N.Y., SDB Church, officiated. Burial was in the East Sharon Cemetery.

Lawrence.—Edward D.

Lawrence, 76, of the Maurice House in Millville, N.J., died on November 5, 1998, in South Jersey Hospital, Bridgeton, N.J.

Born in Quinton Township, he was the son of William R. and Katherine (Davis) Lawrence. He graduated from Salem (N.J.) High School in 1941, and worked on his family's dairy farm in Quinton for several years.

He was employed for nearly 20 years before retiring as a service technician for Woodruff Energy Company in Bridgeton. He was a member of the Marlboro Seventh

Day Baptist Church.

Survivors include one daughter, Jeanne Dickinson of Stow Creek Township; two sons, Robert of Hopewell Township and Edward of Bridgeton; one sister, Katherine Baker of Burlington, N.J.; and eight grandchildren. He was predeceased by one son, William; one sister, Margaret Sheppard; and three brothers, William, Erwin, and Henry.

Funeral services were held on November 10, 1998, at the Marlboro SDB Church, with Pastor Larry Graffius officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Berryhill.—Dewey Thomas Berryhill, 63, of Iowa Park, Texas, died on November 15, 1998, at Bethania Hospital in Wichita Falls, Texas, after a long and valiant battle with cancer.

Survivors include three daughters, Lora McManus, Victoria Marshall, and Christiana Massie; three sisters, Modema Gaily and Emma and Mable Oller; and five grandchildren.

Graveside services were held on November 20, 1998, under the auspices of Hampton Vaughn Funeral Homes, Wichita Falls. Pastor William L. (Bill) Sharon officiated.

"Tom" Berryhill is greatly missed.

Howard.—Mildred S. Howard, 93, of Milton, Wis., died on November 25, 1998, at Memorial Community Hospital in Edgerton, Wis., where she had been a long-term resident since December of 1997.

She was born in Gentry, Ark., on May 20, 1905, the daughter of Edward C. and Graca (Babcock) Severance. She married R. Spencer Howard in 1926. He preceded her in death in 1980.

Millie graduated from high school in Garwin, Iowa, and attended Milton College. For many years, she worked as a receptionist/bookkeeper for Drs. Milton Davis and H. Laurence Burdick in Milton. A member of the Milton Seventh Day Baptist Church, she was devoted to her faith and actively supported her church.

Millie lived in her home in Milton

for 70 years. She mowed, shoveled, climbed ladders, and maintained her home until she broke her hip in 1997. Her creative crafts continue to be enjoyed by friends and family far and wide.

Inside the cover of her Bible she penned the following: "Oh God, give me the guidance to know when to hold on and when to let go, and the grace to make right decisions in the right way at the right time."

Survivors include one son, K. Spencer; one sister, Elda Handtke; and one grandson, Jeremy Howard.

A memorial service was held on December 12, 1998, at the Milton SDB Church. Burial was in the Milton Cemetery.

Kaase.—Beulah Babcock Kaase, 92, died at Mercy Manor in Janesville, Wis., on December 22, 1998.

She was born on June 23, 1906, in Milton, Wis., the daughter of Floyd and Mignon (Whitford) Vincent. She entered Milton Union High School as a freshman when it first opened in October of 1920 and graduated in 1924. In 1942, she graduated from Milton College with a degree in philosophy.

On September 5, 1927, Beulah married O.T. Babcock, who died in March of 1952. In December of 1957, she married Paul G. Kaase, who died in February of 1968.

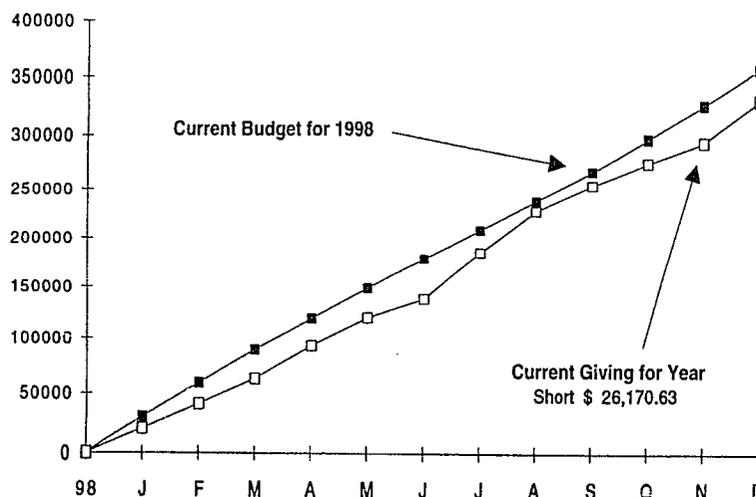
Beulah was the assistant registrar at Milton College from 1941 to 1971. From 1973 until 1985, she worked in the Country Storekeeper at the Milton House.

On June 7, 1986, she received the Pillar of Milton Award. She belonged to the Milton College Alumnus Association and was active in the Milton SDB Church for many years.

Survivors include one son, Bryce Babcock of Cottonwood, Ariz.; one sister, Doris Baker of Dade City, Fla.; four grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held on December 29, 1998, at the Milton SDB Church, with Rev. George Calhoun officiating. Burial was in the Milton Cemetery.

Current Giving 1998



churches also participated in some of the deliberations.

The very process of the meetings was important, for it brought together key individuals in what later generations would term "think tanks" or "brain trusts," using some of the industrial techniques of "management by objectives." It differed from the annual sessions of General Conference, which emphasized corporate worship services interspersed with

and hopes for the present and future, but it implied a certain disunity in practice. It reported: "We need a close-knit organization, whether actual or virtual, to plan our denominational work, and to apportion it and carry it to success."³

Succeeding decades showed efforts to strengthen unity of purpose through a unified budget, Advisory Boards, and the establishment of a Commission and employment of an

The decade following the Chicago Council showed an increase in membership, extensive Sabbath promotion, and a strong desire for more unified work.

review and general approval of the societies' work.

During the Chicago Council, about a dozen different committees considered ways for more effective understanding and work. At times, several committees met together, sharing mutual concerns and visions. Some dealt with specific areas, but others centered on basic philosophy and purpose.

As to the ways and means of doing our work, the Council urged full consecration and better observance of the Sabbath, instruction of our own children in the matter more thoroughly, and the improvement and use of Sabbath publications.

Not all the recommendations from the Council were fully implemented. Nonetheless, the decade following the Chicago Council showed an increase in membership, extensive Sabbath promotion, and a strong desire for more unified work which was evidenced in the Alfred (N.Y.) Council which met in 1902.

This latter Council began with the premise of unity based upon common ancestry, traditions, interests,

Executive Secretary. A succession of denominational emphases that were designed to focus goals ranged from the "Forward Movement" of the 1910s; the "New Forward Movement" and the "Onward Movement" of the 1920s and 1930s; the "Five Year Plan" of the 1940s; "Program for Advance" in the 1960s; "Facing Frontiers with Faith" and "Commitment to Growth" in the 1970s; "Decade of Discipleship" in the 1980s; and "MORE 2000" of the 1990s.

There was value in setting goals and making use of materials from other denominations or church growth seminars, but what was successful in other churches did not reach expectations among Seventh Day Baptists.

A.H. Lewis once commented that, "Our church polity is so simple that we lose organic power, as do all who follow extreme congregational organization in the matter of leadership."⁴

An advertising executive, speaking at that same Conference, pointed out that what is everybody's business is often nobody's business. "If you want counsel and advice, have a large com-

mittee, but if you want something done, have a committee of one. Re-organization without the central idea of someone to do something is a hollow mockery and will be a failure. But re-organization, if it is an organization standing loyally back of a chosen leader, may lead us out into a new and Promised Land."⁵

A little over a century ago our forefathers proclaimed that "new and powerful influences are now arising which directly affect the Sabbath question, and our denominational work and our future projects."

They recognized that the printed word had the potential to reach far more people than the spoken word from the pulpit. More books, periodicals, studies, and tracts flowed from presses in two decades (from 1890 to 1910) than at any other period of our history.

The printed word still has its place along with the spoken word, but the means of communication have changed dramatically. We, too, can say that new and powerful influences are arising which can directly influence our denominational work.

Perhaps it is time to consider another "Chicago Council" type experience of evaluation and planning. It could be face-to-face discussion, or keyboard-to-keyboard sharing.

If we still believe that we have a message the world needs to hear, let us be at it! **SR**

¹Herman D. Babcock, "Denominational Economy" address as president of Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, August 20, 1890, printed in *The Sabbath Recorder*, Vol. 46:35, August 28, 1890, p. 545.

²Ibid.

³Report of Advisory Council, Conference Minutes SDB Yearbook, (1903), p. 28.

⁴A.H. Lewis, "Christian Leadership, or Christ Our Leader," Conference Minutes, SDB Yearbook, 1904, p. 62.

⁵Charles B. Hull, "Systematic Leadership," Conference Minutes, SDB Yearbook, 1904, pp. 98-106.

KEVIN'S CORNER

"But you promised!"

How many times have your children said this to you—or you have said those words to your kids?

But how many of us have ever said these words to God: "Do as You promised!"

David dared utter this to the Almighty in 2 Samuel 7:25. Charles Spurgeon, in his devotional classic *Morning and Evening*, commented on this verse:

"God's promises were never meant to be thrown aside as waste paper. He intended that they should be used. God's gold isn't miser's money but is minted for trading.

"Nothing pleases our Lord better than to see His promises put in circulation."

So many people see God as an angry taskmaster or tyrant, doling out commands and expecting perfection from His creation. God does issue commands, but they are not without a connected promise.

For instance, the Lord commanded Abraham (in Genesis 12) to leave his homeland and his kindred. This call to separateness was certainly a test of love and loyalty. But was it some sort of cruel punishment?

Remember, every commandment that comes from God contains an implicit or explicit precious promise. (And how many of us want to claim His promises without meeting the conditions?) The commandment and the promise are always tied together.

Abraham was commanded to leave his country; a tough tour of duty. What was the connected promise? There were several:

"I will make you a great nation."

"I will bless you, and make your name great."

"You will be a blessing."

"I will bless those that bless you, and curse those who curse you."

"By you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Wow.

How did Abraham respond? "So Abram left, as the Lord had told him." Abraham trusted the promise-keeping word of God.

Back to David. David was probably recalling how God kept His promise to Abraham and the Chosen People. It was likely that David remembered God's very personal promise of "I will be with you" granted to Moses and to Joshua and to Gideon. But did that allow David to storm the gates of heaven with a command of his own?—"Do as you promised, God!"

Check the next phrase. It turns out that I added the exclamation point. Verse 25 ends with "Do as you promised"—comma! Then verse 26 continues, "so that *your name* will be great forever."

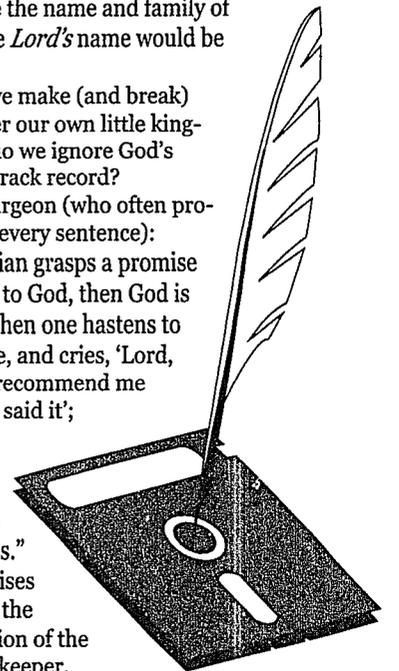
David was not expecting God to keep a promise just to increase the name and family of David, but that the *Lord's* name would be exalted.

How often do we make (and break) promises to further our own little kingdom? How often do we ignore God's promise-keeping track record?

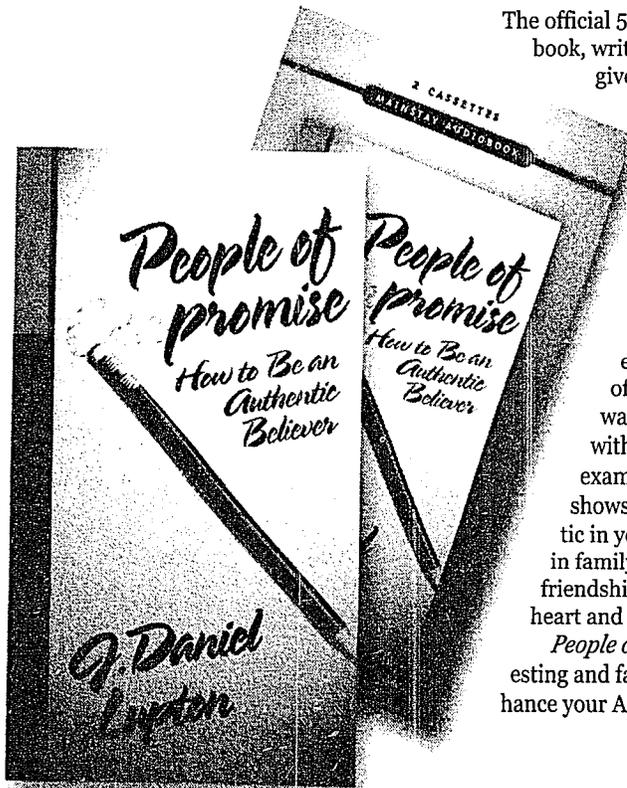
Again from Spurgeon (who often provides a sermon in every sentence):

"When a Christian grasps a promise but doesn't take it to God, then God is dishonored; but when one hastens to the throne of grace, and cries, 'Lord, I have nothing to recommend me but this: You have said it'; then the desire shall be granted. Our heavenly Banker delights to cash His own notes."

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