



# Adventist Youth Leader Magazine

*Spiritual Youth Leaders Resource*



- ▶ **Studying in a Public University?**
- ▶ **A Sower Went Out To Sow**
- ▶ **Bridging Heaven and Earth for God's Kingdom**





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Youth Ministries Department

**Departmental Director:** Busi Kumahlo  
**Editor:** Andrés J. Peralta  
**Advisors:** Abner De Los Santos,  
Busi Kumahlo and Pako Mokgwane  
**Editorial Assistant:** Ivonne Omaña  
**Cover & Interior Designer:**  
Had Graphic Inc. | Tel: 718-926-5468  
hadgraphic@gmail.com  
**Photos by:** © Freepik

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**For information**

Email: youth@gc.adventist.org  
Website: gcyouthministries.org

**Mailing Address:**

Adventist Youth Ministries  
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist  
12501 Old Columbia Pike,  
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, USA.

**DIVISION CORRESPONDENTS:**

Samuel Mwebaza(ECD)	Dr R N Prabhu Das (SUD)
Roman Chisacov(ESD)	Ravi Shankar(SUD)
Jonatan Tejel (EUD)	Marcel Chioalda(TED)
Al Powell(IAD)	Kevin Johns(TED)
Hiram Ruiz(IAD)	Alfred Kwasi Asiem (WAD)
Tracy Wood(NAD)	Ugochukwu Elems(WAD)
Vandeon Griffin(NAD)	Byard Parks(MENA)
Armando Miranda, Jr.(NAD)	Freinald Matondo (Gulf Field)
HoYoung Choi (NSD)	Cureni Lukwaro (Gulf Field)
Carlos Campitelli(SAD)	Gerardo Farias(Israel Field)
Udolcy Zukowski (SAD)	Richard Medina (Israel Field)
Irvin Gwatinga (SID)	James Tham (CHUM)
Nick Kross(SPD)	Ivan Romaniuk (Ukraine Union)
Petronio "Ron" Genebago (SSD)	

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## Disclaimer

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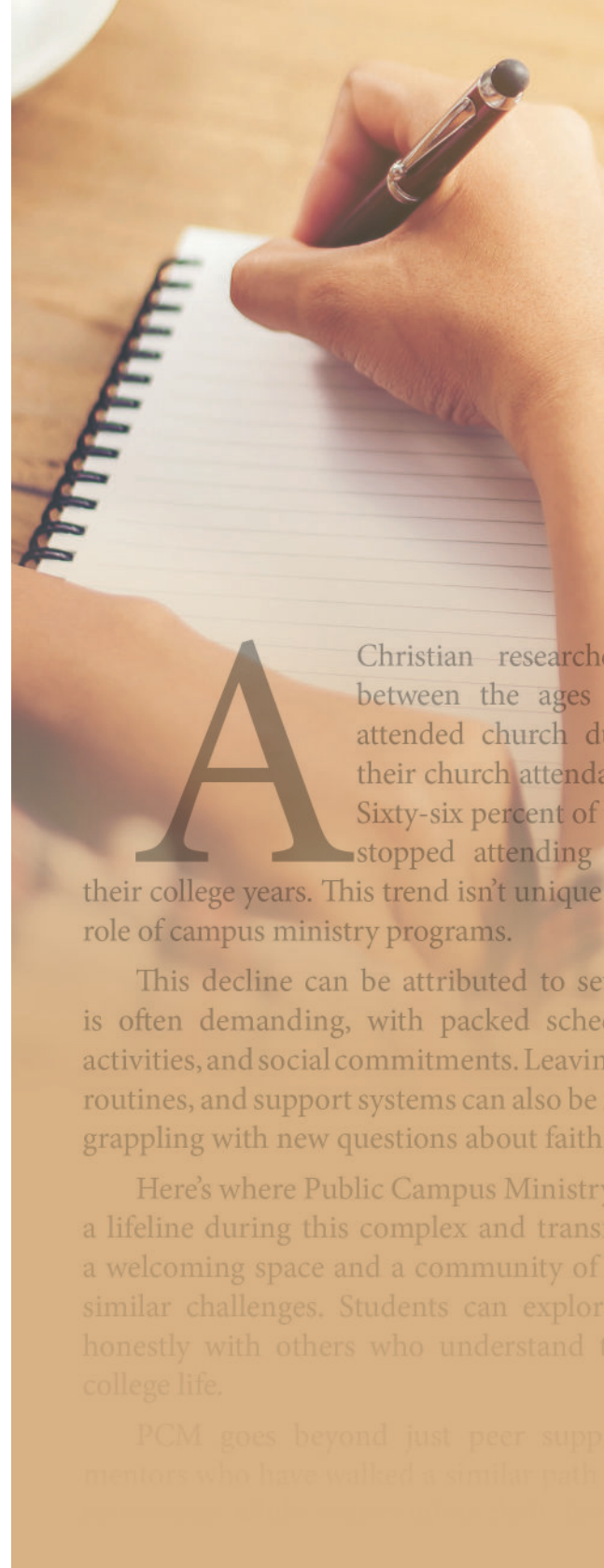
# EDITORIAL

A Christian researcher polled young adults between the ages of 23-30 who regularly attended church during high school about their church attendance in their college years. Sixty-six percent of the polled group said they stopped attending church regularly during their college years. This trend isn't unique and highlights the crucial role of campus ministry programs.

This decline can be attributed to several factors. College life is often demanding, with packed schedules filled with classes, activities, and social commitments. Leaving home churches, familiar routines, and support systems can also be isolating for young people grappling with new questions about faith and purpose.

Here's where Public Campus Ministry (PCM) steps in, offering a lifeline during this complex and transformative time. It creates a welcoming space and a community of like-minded peers facing similar challenges. Students can explore their faith openly and honestly with others who understand the unique challenges of college life.

PCM goes beyond just peer support. The program offers mentors who have walked a similar path and navigated the college experience while maintaining their faith. These mentors act as guides, shedding light on students' questions and challenges. They

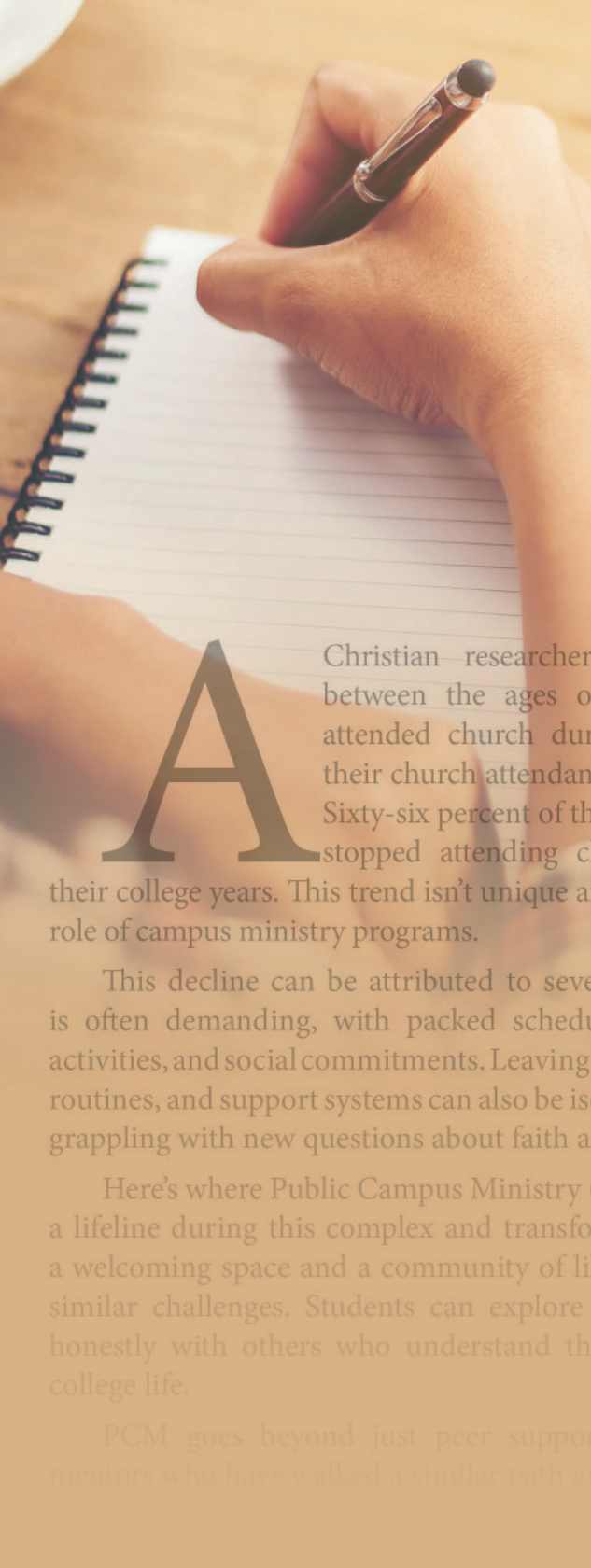


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**A** Christian researcher between the ages of 18 and 24 who had attended church during their church attendance. Sixty-six percent of those who had stopped attending church during their college years. This trend isn't unique to the role of campus ministry programs.

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Here's where Public Campus Ministry (PCM) can provide a lifeline during this complex and transformative time. PCM offers a welcoming space and a community of individuals facing similar challenges. Students can explore their faith honestly with others who understand the unique challenges of college life.

PCM goes beyond just peer support; it provides mentors who have walked a similar path and

offer support, encouragement, and a relatable perspective honed by their own collegiate journeys.

For students, we offer a message of encouragement: "Keep going for Jesus!" Remember, in all things, put Christ first, for when we seek His kingdom, all other things will be granted to us. Prioritize your faith, even within the demands of college life.

Mentors, your work is never easy, but it's incredibly rewarding. "Press forward"; the work of a mentor is never easy, but God has placed you here for such a time as this. You play a vital role in "shepherding the flock," guiding students through their journeys. The moments of feeling overwhelmed are inevitable but remember the importance of your work. Press forward, fulfill your mission, and continue making a difference.

Whether you're a student seeking a supportive community or a mentor ready to share your experience, you'll find valuable resources and inspiration to strengthen your connection with God and each other in this issue.



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By: Mwenya H. Mpundu  
Media Coordinator

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**Remember, in all things,  
put Christ first, for when  
we seek His kingdom,  
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”



## WHETHER YOU ARE STUDENT OR STAFF MEMBER

Dear Public Campus Ministry Family

**H**ope gleams brightly on every corner in a world engulfed in chaos and uncertainty. Among all of God's creations, you are specially selected to be His ambassadors. Yes, you are that light, a beacon of light to illuminate the world. God intentionally placed you on a public campus to share the Good News of the Three Angels' Messages.

This year's theme for Public Campus Ministry is **'My City, My Mission.'** It beckons for year-round engagement, urging all Adventist students and staff on public campuses to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those around them. **'My City, My Mission'** is a celebration of unparalleled passion for **YOUR CITY** and **YOUR MISSION.**

- I encourage you to seize the opportunities before you.
- Start by attending to the needs of people around you.
- Soon you will win their confidence and ultimately bid them to follow Jesus.

Heartily and enthusiastically embrace the values of true education, service, community engagement, personal growth, and empowerment. **Learn! Collaborate! Impact! Lead! And be Authentic.** Being authentic will create a positive ripple effect in your community. In turn, you will experience the remarkable feeling of performing profound acts of kindness. Engaging in ‘My City, My Mission’ will INSPIRE you with a sense of purpose and a deeper connection to your community. Resources: <https://>

[www.gcyouthministries.org/events-and-projects/pcm-day/](https://www.gcyouthministries.org/events-and-projects/pcm-day/)

The year 2024 is even more noteworthy because the Seventh-day Adventist Church is celebrating 150 years of Mission to the world. Every Adventist student, faculty, or staff member on a public campus is encouraged to reflect on how they can reignite their passion for the mission. This significant milestone invites you to explore innovative ways to celebrate and honor the shared commitment to spreading the message of hope and love. Resources: <https://www.gcyouthministries.org/initiatives/150-mission-anniversary/>

Public Campus Ministry is now ten years old. Over the past decade, we have tirelessly worked together, achieving milestones and positively impacting the lives of Adventist

students, faculty, and staff on Public Campuses. May we reflect on our journey with gratitude, honor the dedicated individuals who have contributed to the mission, and together, look forward to a future filled with continued growth, service, and success. Resources: <https://www.gcyouthministries.org/events-and-projects/pcm-day/pcm-10th-anniversary/>

Imagine the impact if we all passionately and sincerely said, “I Will Go.” Thank you for being an integral part of this incredible journey! Don’t stop ***Following Jesus. Embrace His Mission wholeheartedly and Change the World!***



Pako Mokgwane,  
PhD  
Associate Youth  
Director, GENERAL  
CONFERENCE





## STUDYING IN A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY? WALK IN GOD'S WAY, WITNESS TO CHRIST'S METHOD

\*Ted N. C. Wilson, "Studying in a Public University? Walk in God's Way, Witness to Christ's Method," Reprinted with permission from *Dialogue* 33:1 (2021): 24-26.

*Studying in a public university provides a unique opportunity to be a true missionary. Use Christ's method of making friends, place yourself in God's hands, and God will touch the lives of many!*

**S**eventh-day Adventist education is a wonderful blessing to God's church. God has blessed this system so that it is the largest Protestant school system in the world. As of December 31, 2019, the church worldwide had 6,621 elementary schools, 2,713 secondary schools, 37 worker-training institutions, and 118 colleges and universities.<sup>1</sup> This educational system is based on the foundation of God's Word and His intentions for our lives. It is a system that helps to form our

characters as we grow physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. It helps prepare us for heaven through the power of the Holy Spirit working through consecrated and dedicated Seventh-day Adventist teachers from elementary school through graduate studies.

I recently had the privilege of helping to inaugurate the seventh medical school in the Seventh-day Adventist educational system. This one was in Rwanda. We praise God for His leading and the instruction in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy that will be available here as at all Adventist schools. I urge you to support our schools and use them. But not everyone has the privilege of going to an Adventist school, especially when it comes to higher education.

The Bible counsels us to “train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6, NKJV).<sup>2</sup> This educational process ideally begins in the Christian home as mothers and fathers provide loving, biblical instruction that will prepare children for eternity. But not everyone has the privilege of growing up in a God-fearing home.

Even if one did not have the benefits of an Adventist school and home, there is a powerful means of development freely available to all. In the book *Education*, Ellen G. White pointed to the source of wisdom by writing the following:

“In these days much is said concerning the nature and importance of ‘higher education.’ The true ‘higher education’ is that imparted by Him with whom ‘is wisdom and strength’ (Job 12:13), out of whose mouth ‘cometh knowledge and understanding.’ Proverbs 2:6.

*“In a knowledge of God all true knowledge and real development have their source. ... The mind of man is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite. The effect of such communion on body and mind and soul is beyond estimate.*

*“In this communion is found the highest education. It is God’s own method of development.”<sup>3</sup>*

Such an education is available to all, anywhere, anytime, through Bible study and prayer. It was my privilege to personally benefit from attending our Seventh-day Adventist educational system beginning with first grade in Beirut, Lebanon; completing elementary education at Johns Nevins Andrews Elementary School in Takoma Park, Maryland, U.S.A., and then secondary education at Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Maryland; graduating from Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University) in Takoma Park, Maryland, with a double major in religion and business; and earning with two graduate degrees—MDiv from Andrews University and MSPH from Loma Linda University. The Seventh-day Adventist educational system treated me well, and I learned much for my lifework. However, we must never stop learning especially in our informal learning, picking up invaluable practical lessons about life as we progress through our adult work assignments and activities.

After pastoring a local church in the Greater New York Conference territory on Long Island, I was asked to join Metropolitan Ministries, a special urban ministry outreach sponsored by the conference. We were tasked with helping conferences in the metropolitan New York City area to implement





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God's plans as outlined in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy for large cities such as New York. It was a great learning experience and opportunity to research God's plans for the cities and put into practice elements that would help us touch the lives of people in urban areas.

This led me to do a graduate degree at New York University (NYU) and to the topic that became a central focus in my graduate work and doctoral research. More about that experience later, but I was determined to follow in the Savior's footsteps in reaching people in the large cities. Matthew 9:35 points out that "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people." In *The Ministry of Healing*, Ellen White advised that: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'"<sup>4</sup>

This is the all-encompassing method of Christ who helped people physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually ... touching their lives in important ways and then inviting them to know Him and eternal life.

From that time in New York City, and since then elsewhere, I have come to see why this indeed is the approach to use in the cities of the world. I invite you, as a young professional, as a student in

a university probably located in a large city, to be a part of Mission to the Cities and God's comprehensive urban outreach. We read the following in *Medical Ministry* by Ellen G. White: "There is no change in the messages that God has sent in the past. The work in the cities is the essential work for this time. When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed."<sup>5</sup>

God is calling each of us to assist in the large urban areas of the world, since more than half of the world's population now live in the metropolitan regions of the world. The great universities of the world are also in cities. And Adventists in such universities are strategically positioned to work and witness there. God has given us instruction in the Spirit of Prophecy to use Heaven-inspired ideas of reaching the large cities in practical applications of portraying Christ's character.

We are to reach the world with the three angels' messages under the power of the Holy Spirit. There are so many ways to do this! These include personal evangelism, witnessing to classmates and friends, public campus ministry, and involvement in a variety of outreach initiatives such as One Year in Mission and the 1000 Missionary Movement. In addition, there is literature evangelism, small-group evangelistic outreach, medical-missionary work, Comprehensive Health Ministry, health lectures, vegetarian restaurants, health clinics, door-to-door missionary work, as well as community services and social work that

follow Christ's methods involving Adventist Community Services, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), integrated media evangelism and social media, counseling centers, reading rooms and Adventist Book Centers, Bible studies provided by every age group, evangelism involving all members and institutions and adapted to every context, outpost centers outside the cities providing homes for urban workers, training centers for urban missionaries, lifestyle health centers, and many more Holy Spirit-inspired methods. What a privilege to point people to Christ and His soon coming!

As mentioned earlier, it was during my work with Metropolitan Ministries in New York City that I became interested in furthering my education. I applied to NYU for a PhD in religious education. This program was organized for busy clergy who were in active work in the metropolitan area. Classes were held, to a large extent, in the late afternoons or evenings to accommodate full-time employees in religious activities. I was accepted into NYU's Department of Cultural Foundations, which was part of the large School of Education, Health, Nursing, and Art Professions. NYU is a world-class, private, secular university with many schools comprising about 40,000 students at that time and now more than 50,000 students.

I found the program director, Lee Belford, and the associate director, Norma H. Thompson, to be delightful mentors and nurturing educators. Since the PhD in religious education was a methodological



program rather than a specific content or topical program, that made for an easier experience in a secular graduate school, although I did face some challenging situations at times in class lectures.

A number of Seventh-day Adventists had gone through the PhD program in Religious Education at NYU, including the late Richard Leshner, former president of Andrews University, who had also been the director of the General Conference Biblical Research Institute and a former vice-president of the General Conference. Dr. Leshner gave me some important advice, which I pass on to each of you. He indicated that in my doctoral work, I would be required to read

widely and to confront many ideas through literature and presentations. He counseled me to spend as much time in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy as I was required to spend on my graduate reading assignments. This advice left a profound impression on me and, even though I was in a religious-education doctoral program, it helped me sift through the varied influences of a secular university setting.

The practical application of this important advice was a great blessing to me, and I hope it will be to you. It is vital that we spend time with the Lord in prayer, Bible study, and the study of the Spirit of Prophecy. This will give us a wonderful guard against ideas or

theories we may encounter that are not as helpful in our ultimate education according to God's will. This type of higher education is open to all wherever one might be.

I enjoyed my graduate work at NYU and found that many people respected me as a Seventh-day Adventist. In fact, some demonstrated more understanding and respect than we sometimes give one another within the church. It provided wonderful witnessing opportunities. I am grateful for the provisions made to attend this academic program and graduate in 1981 with a PhD in religious education. God protected and cared for me, and I am ever grateful to Him for His protection through His Word, the Spirit of Prophecy, and the leading of the Holy Spirit. May that be your experience in your university wherever it may be as you participate in being a missionary for the Lord on your public campus. Jesus is coming soon. Use Christ's method at your university, place yourself in God's hands, and He will work through you to touch the lives of many people!



*Ted N. C. Wilson (PhD, New York University, New York, U.S.A.) is the President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.*

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Statistics from the Department of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (December 31, 2019).
2. All Scripture references in this article are quoted from the *New King James Version* of the Bible.
3. Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1903), 14.
4. \_\_\_\_\_, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1905), 143.
5. \_\_\_\_\_, *Medical Ministry* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1932), 304.

There is no change in the messages that God has sent in the past. The work in the cities is the essential work for this time. When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed.



# ONE HUMANITY: THE BIBLICAL MANDATE TO REACH EVERYONE WITH THE GOSPEL\*

\* Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, "One Humanity: The Biblical Mandate to Reach Everyone with the Gospel," Reprinted with permission from *Dialogue* 33:1 (2021): 5-7.

*Affirmation of one humanity embracing every ethnicity, race, caste, color and tribe is a work in progress at the individual and corporate level. In that process a two-fold call is made on every believer: to relate to others according to the dignity of their shared humanity; and to lead all to worship the Creator who made them for that high and noble purpose.*

How should a follower of Christ relate to differences in race, caste, color, language, ethnicity, tribe, or nationality? How does one overcome the natural inclination to draw a circle tightly around one's own group, and exclude or discriminate against the other when it comes to resources and opportunities?

Exerting harmful dominance over another is as old as when Cain killed his brother (Genesis 4:8). The sickness of sin has marred all dimensions of human relations, yet they, too, are to be redeemed and restored by God. Each of us is called to do our part in God's redemptive mission to the world.

In 1995, before many *Dialogue* readers were born, the Seventh-day Adventist Church issued a statement titled *Human Relations*, which started with an unequivocal declaration that "Seventh-day Adventists deplore and seek to combat all forms of discrimination. ..."¹ The pressing social issue at that time was rebuilding society after the end of apartheid in South Africa.

Recently, in the United States, racial tensions have festered, exacerbated by current events, breaking out in demonstrations—some peaceful, others not. Because the Adventist Church has its world headquarters in the United States, what happens here affects its mission and image elsewhere. Moreover, since the denomination is global, with a presence in some 215 countries and territories, it is imperative that the worldwide mission and fellowship of the church embrace oneness and freedom from all forms of discrimination in its work, worship, and fellowship. Thus for reasons near and far, the General Conference appointed a group to review the 1995 statement on human relations to update it or to write a new statement as indicated by the current challenges in carrying out mission in multicultural contexts. The mission has not changed; we need to meet people where they are.

After months of prayerful study, review, discussion, and editing, *One Humanity: A Human Relations*

*Statement Addressing Racism, Casteism, Tribalism, and Ethnocentrism* was voted on September 15, 2020 [see sidebar]. For the most part, the statement was received positively. However, some critics thought it failed to apologize enough for specific wrongs and in calling for concrete action for equality, defined by them as everyone having exactly the same opportunities within the church and society. At the other extreme were those who viewed the statement as reactive theology promoting a social-justice narrative, ecumenism, and equality as a new religion. Others pointed out that it did not address discrimination based on differences in religion, class, and sex (see Galatians 3:28).

To those who viewed the statement as merely reacting to current events in the United States, note that it goes beyond race to include tribe, caste, ethnicity, and the problem of ethnocentrism. Admittedly, it is not an exhaustive statement directed to address every form of discrimination. To those who may be withholding their money or themselves because whatever the church says or does is "just not enough," to such, I would encourage you not to check out. Stay engaged! Ellen White states: "Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theater of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts. Someone must fulfill the commission of Christ; someone must carry on the work which He began to do on earth; and the church has been given this privilege. For this purpose it has been organized."<sup>2</sup>

This purpose comes from the three angels of Revelation 14, starting with the first who cried out

in a loud voice and had “the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people. ... [calling out,] ‘Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water’” (vss. 6, 7, NIV).<sup>3</sup> This and the subsequent messages explain why the church was raised up, and why it directs its witness to everyone, excluding no one.



Back to the statement. What has happened since it was voted on September 15, 2020? The needle has perceptively moved since the vote. Annual Council was held with global church representatives participating by videoconference during this year of Covid-19, and October 11 was devoted to the topic. The presentations about the issues around the world are still available for viewing online.<sup>4</sup> During its year-end meeting, on November 2, 2020, the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists discussed biblical justice in a world of social unrest.<sup>5</sup> On November 21, 2020 the issues were vigorously discussed by a panel of Adventist scholars as part of the annual Adventist Society for Religious Studies (ASRS) meeting.<sup>6</sup> The

statement is posted on the church’s website of official statements,<sup>7</sup> was published in the *Adventist Review*,<sup>8</sup> and you are reading about it here. These are just a few of the many ways the above conversation is moving forward in the Adventist Church.

Not all is clatter and debate. One example of harmony—literally—is a song performed in 14 different languages by 125 people of various ethnic groups from 21 countries, available on YouTube, affirming that the deserts and storms of life have taught us to seek refuge in God.<sup>9</sup> I’ve listened to it many times and am moved by its beauty and its message. Many more creative expressions are needed to carry out effectively the three angels’ messages to a diverse world. This is an area where young people, led by God’s Spirit, can excel as digital natives. The church and its mission need you.

Affirmation of one humanity and unpacking the statement on race, caste, tribe, and ethnocentrism is a work in progress at the individual and corporate levels. It calls on every believer to act within his or her own sphere of influence to treat others with the dignity and love befitting our shared humanity.

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One humanity: A Human Relations statement addressing Racism, Casteism, Tribalism and Ethnocentrism

The moral duty of declaring biblical principles in the treatment of fellow human beings has become paramount as the world increasingly recognizes the lingering scourge of racial injustice, tribal conflicts, and caste system bigotry suffered by millions of persons in every society and world region. God “has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:26) and Jesus teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt 22:39). The Seventh-day Adventist Church acknowledges the important responsibility of making its commitments and compassion clear to a world expecting both words and deeds in harmony with the teachings of Jesus. Our commitment flows from our mission to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to “every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev 14:6) in our troubled world as we recognize only Christ can change the human heart.

Seventh-day Adventists are committed to the unchanging biblical truths which reveal that human beings are made in the image of God (Gen 1:27). Based on the creation account in the book of Genesis, we believe in the God-given and immutable equality of all persons in all times, all places, and all circumstances. We are all descended from Adam and Eve, our original ancestors, who make all humanity one family (Gen 3:20). Even the tragic results of human choice to rebel against God have not erased the enduring relationships between all human beings. Distinctions of race, ethnicity, caste, and tribe are used to sinfully segment and divide the fundamental

unity God intended all human beings to experience with Himself and each other.

We maintain our allegiance to the biblical principles of equality and dignity of all human beings in the face of historic and continuing attempts to use skin color, place of origin, caste, or perceived lineage as a pretext for oppressive and dominating behavior. These attempts are a denial of our shared humanity and we deplore all such aggression and prejudice as an offense to God. Still, we acknowledge that many members of our worldwide Church fail to uphold this biblical truth about the equality of all persons. Contrary to the teachings and example of Jesus, many believers and church organizations have absorbed sinful, dehumanizing ideas about racial, tribal, caste, and ethnic valuing that have led to practices injuring and wounding the human family. These ways of thinking, and the practices resulting from them, undermine the very truths we have pledged ourselves to live and teach. We apologize where in the past we may not have spoken or acted boldly enough on these matters.

Seventh-day Adventists are members of a diverse, global Church and are committed to being agents of peace and reconciliation in society by modeling and advocating for the biblical truth about our shared ancestry. “For the love of Christ compels us” to regard people from His point of view and to be His “ambassadors” in this divided world with the “word of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:14, 19, 20). We will support and nurture those marginalized and mistreated because of their color, caste, tribe, or ethnicity (Matt 25:40). We believe those who abuse and mistreat others should, in accordance with biblical principles,



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be appropriately brought to justice and will ultimately face divine judgment (Eccl 12:14; Heb 9:27). We will teach and urge that God's truth about human origins and equality as taught in the Bible is the wisest foundation for all human relationships.

God places a special responsibility upon those who have responded to His gracious salvation for all (Gal 3:28) to demonstrate our commitment to equality, fairness, and accountability in all human relations. God created each person unique, and His powerful influence in our lives results in a celebration of differences that respectfully values each person's human heritage and culture. We recognize the ultimate solution to the sins of racism, casteism, tribalism, and ethnocentrism is the transformation of individual lives and relationships through Christ and His saving power. We accept and embrace our Christian commitment to live, through the power of the Holy Spirit, as a Church that is just, caring, and loving, grounded on biblical principles.

God invites everyone, everywhere to join the remnant Church described in Bible prophecy (Rev 12:17) in proclaiming the everlasting gospel which focuses on the righteousness of Jesus Christ encapsulated in the three angels' messages (Rev 14:6-12). These messages are to be given to "every nation, tribe, tongue, and people" culminating with Christ's soon return (Rev 14:6, 14). We look forward to a new heaven and a new earth when "there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Rev 21:4).

This statement was voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee in Silver Spring, Maryland, on September 15, 2020.



Lisa Beardsley-Hardy PhD (University of Hawai'i at Manoa, U.S.A.) is Director of Education, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A., and is the Editor-in-Chief of Dialogue.

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1. "Human Relations": <https://www.adventist.org/articles/human-relations/>.
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3. Scripture texts in this article credited from NIV are from the *New International Version* of the Bible.
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## PUBLIC CAMPUS MINISTRIES CARAVAN IN THE INTER- AMERICAN DIVISION

**P**ublic Campus Ministries (PCM) was established by the General Conference to offer Adventist students studying on public campuses the following:

- Spiritual nurture.
- Equipping students with tools and skills to model an exemplary Christian lifestyle.
- To train students to defend their faith in a hostile environment.
- To offer leadership training to students that will equip them for service in this world and the church.



Whenever we are requested to support PCM work around the world, we intentionally endeavor to highlight the objectives of PCM in order to give a clear direction of what we envision and hope to achieve. When I was invited to visit the Inter-American Division (IAD) in February 2023, I purposed not to deviate from the norm.

I travelled to Mexico to attend and present at the several PCM meetings my colleague, Pastor Hiram Ruiz, the PCM director for the IAD, had organized. This PCM caravan took place on February 2-13, 2023, in the Southern part of Mexico.

We were graciously hosted by the Union director, Pastor Victor Martinez. Our itinerary was tight and grueling, but it was fulfilling as well. We visited churches to educate them about the importance of supporting our students on public campuses. PCM will not achieve its objectives without the support of the churches, pastors and leaders. We challenged the churches to read and implement the counsels from the *Church Manual* which state that churches should elect PCM coordinators who will serve as a link between the church and the public campus.

We also had an opportunity to address students at various student conventions that were organized by the conferences. We were thrilled to see administrators at some of these meetings. We need their support because when they are aware of the objectives and goals of PCM, they help us to publicize the same to their constituencies and leaders.

I have already stated that PCM prepares students for leadership and service. This means mission is our core business. We praise God that wherever I had an opportunity to challenge the students to be baptized, have a close connection with Jesus and to be active participants in the mission of the church; the response was good. In two separate meetings, 11 students decided to be baptized. Besides those decisions, I had a privilege of baptizing 2 young men who were ready for baptism.

The PCM caravan came to an end, but the PCM work continues in the IAD. We praise God for what He is doing through the division leaders, union leaders, the local churches and the students who are relentless in their resolve to make PCM a formidable program that will lead many young people to Jesus.



I conclude by requesting the world church to rally around our students on those public and secular campuses. They need our prayers and support!



By Busi Khumalo  
GC Youth Director



2014 - 2015



**GILBERT CANGY, DMin**  
DIRECTOR



**JIWAN MOON, DMin**  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

2015 - 2020



**MARIO CEBALLOS, DMin**  
DIRECTOR



**JIWAN MOON, DMin**  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

2020 - 2022



**GARY BLANCHARD, MDiv**  
DIRECTOR



**PAKO MOKGWANE, PhD**  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

2022 - CURRENT



**BUSI KHUMALO, MA**  
DIRECTOR



**PAKO MOKGWANE, PhD**  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

# PCM Anniversary

2014 - 2024



## CURRENT AND PAST PCM LEADERS.



Adventist Youth Ministries  
GENERAL CONFERENCE



## A SOWER WENT OUT TO SOW\*

\* John Wesley Taylor V, "A sower went out to sow," Reprinted with permission from *Dialogue* 35:1 (2023): 9-13.

*Jesus went out of the house where He was staying and sat beside the lake of Galilee. In no time, an eager, expectant crowd gathered around Him, causing Him to get into a boat. He sat down in the boat and taught while the throng stood at the water's edge. Then He told them many things in parables.<sup>1</sup>*

**T**he parable of the sower and the seed that Jesus told is particularly important.<sup>2</sup> It is one of the longest that Jesus told, one of the few recorded in each of the first three Gospels,<sup>3</sup> and one for which He provided an explanation. Furthermore, the parable receives premier placement, headlining the rest of the kingdom parables.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps most significant is the fact that when the disciples asked about the meaning, Jesus replied, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?" (Mark 4:13, NIV).<sup>5</sup> This does not mean that this parable is the most easily understood, but rather that it is foundational. It is the gateway parable, the key that unlocks the kingdom.<sup>6</sup>

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## THE SOWER AND THE SEED

*“Listen carefully,” Jesus said. “A farmer went out to scatter seed in a field.”*<sup>7</sup>

Jesus called it the “parable of the sower” (Matthew 13:18). Is the sower important? Certainly! Harvest depends on sowing.

Who is the sower? Clearly, Christ is the sower. “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man” (Matthew 13:37).<sup>8</sup> We, however, are also sowers. “The sower is the Son of God, or the one to whom He delegates His work, for by cooperating with Christ, we are to become laborers together with God.”<sup>9</sup> The farmer, then, is Jesus, and, by extension, all who plant kingdom seeds.

What is the seed? We aren’t told what type of grain was being scattered, but what does it represent? “The seed,” Jesus said, “is the word of God” (Luke 8:11). Here are some insights about seeds.

1. **Seeds are miraculous!** A seed is alive. Under the right conditions, a seed can lay dormant for years. But after being combined with soil and water, and exposed to sunlight, it will germinate and grow.<sup>10</sup>
2. **Seeds are essential.** When God created the world, one of the first things He made was seeds. In fact, human beings were not put on the earth until there were “plants bearing seed” (Genesis 1:12).
3. **Don’t refine the seed!** A kernel of grain contains various parts—bran, endosperm,

and germ. Sometimes the germ or the bran is removed to make the grain more palatable, as is done to make white rice. If you remove the germ or the bran, however, the seed will not sprout.

Finally, we come to the soil. What is the soil? Soil represents the hearts of people. Everyone’s heart. Four types of soil mentioned in the parable are four responses to the seed, four conditions of our hearts.

## THE FOOTPATH: SEEDS IN JEOPARDY

*As the farmer was scattering the seed, some seeds fell on the beaten path. Soon the seed was trampled, and birds swooped down and devoured it.*<sup>11</sup>

The path would typically be along the edge of the field. Sometimes, however, a path would cut right through the field. How was the path created? The hardened path was once soft loam like the rest of the field. Over the course of years, however, it became beaten down by traffic—the passing of feet, hooves, and carts.

What does the path represent? Jesus said that the footpath is “anyone [who] hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it” (Matthew 13:19). Why don’t they understand? Because they are not paying attention. “The seed sown by the wayside represents the word of God as it falls upon the heart of an inattentive hearer.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, they merely listen but don’t take God’s Word seriously.

Luke adds a significant detail. “As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; [and] it was trampled on” (8:5). When the soil is soft, a footstep



will bury the seed, covering and protecting it. But when the ground is hardened into a path, the seed is trampled. What does “trampled” mean? It simply means that there is too much traffic in our life, that our heart has become a crowded thoroughfare.

Then the birds swooped in. “As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up” (Matthew 13:4). Who are the birds? “The evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart” (Matthew 13:19). Notice that it is not one bird, but many! The devil has countless helpers. It may be a so-called friend who scoffs and ridicules God’s kingdom. “This is irrelevant!” he says, and suddenly the seed is devoured. “That is so ridiculous!” she mocks, and another seed is gone.

Why were the birds able to gobble up the seed? Because the seed remained on the surface. It had not been internalized. There is great danger, in fact, in not integrating God’s Word into our lives. While it lays exposed, birds devour it.

The real problem, of course, is the hardened path. What is the remedy? “Plow up the hard ground of your hearts, for now is the time to seek the LORD” (Hosea 10:12, NLT). Hard soil can be broken up if we seek God with an open heart, with a desire to understand His Word. Then, once the soil has been broken up, set boundaries around your vulnerable spots. Some old associations may need to be severed; some old hangouts, abandoned.

Protect the soil of your heart!

### STONY GROUND: SEEDS ON THE ROCKS

*Other seeds fell on rocky ground where there wasn’t much topsoil. They germinated and quickly started growing, since the soil was shallow.<sup>13</sup>*

The rocky ground Jesus was referencing was not just topsoil with gravel mixed in. Plants can grow quite well in that type of soil. Rather, Jesus was talking about a section of ground consisting of a thin layer of



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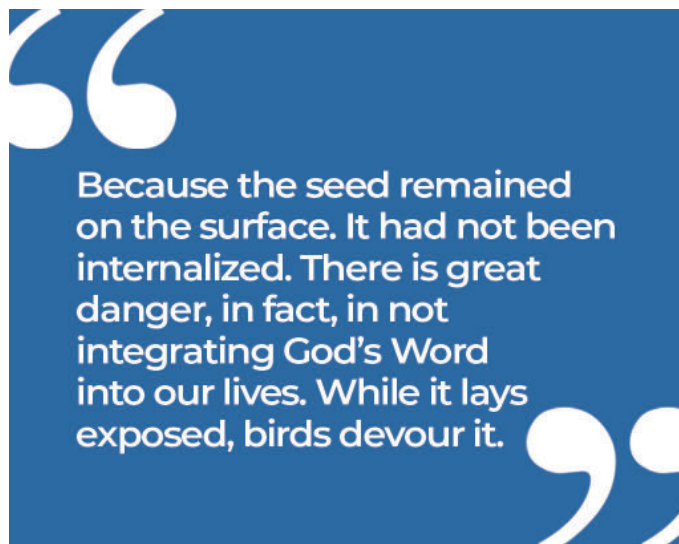
soil atop a substrate of rock.<sup>14</sup> The soil appears to be good, but it is superficial.

Jesus observed that when seed falls on this type of soil, there is spontaneous germination. “It sprang up quickly,” He said, “because the soil was shallow” (Mark 4:5). Why does shallow soil cause the seed to quickly sprout? When seed is planted in the spring, the soil is still cool, and it takes time for the seed to germinate. However, when there is rock just below the surface and the sun shines, the rock absorbs the heat. The soil becomes warm, and the seed sprouts quickly.

What does “quick sprouting” mean? “When they first hear the Word, they respond with great enthusiasm” (Mark 4:16, *The Message*). The problem is not with enthusiasm. Sudden conversions have endured, like Saul of Tarsus, or Matthew, who immediately “left everything and followed [Jesus]” (Luke 5:28). The main concern, though, is not to grow fast but to stand fast.

Perhaps you have seen it happen. People join the church. They love the worship services, the music, the fellowship. They jump full in, singing in the choir, volunteering for Sabbath school, and never missing a service. A few months pass. Adversity strikes. Life hits them in the face. Suddenly these passionate believers are scarce—their seat empty, their role unfulfilled.<sup>15</sup> Wonder why? The answer is: no roots.

Mark describes well the problem: They “have no root in themselves” (Mark 4:17, NKJV). Sometimes we depend on our parents for our spiritual life. And we praise God for godly parents. But when we are



away from home, or when our parents pass away, we suddenly wither. Our root was in our parents. Sometimes we depend on a God-fearing boss or work associate, or a good friend who loves God. But once we change jobs, or someone buys the business, or our friend moves away, we begin to fade. We did not have root ourselves. Sometimes we depend on the pastor. If our beloved pastor is there to nurture and encourage us, all is well. But when the pastor is called to sow another field, we fall away.<sup>16</sup>

*When the days grew hot, the young plants were scorched. Since they lacked deep roots, they shriveled up and died.<sup>17</sup>*

The cause of the problem is not the sun. Sunshine is necessary for a plant to grow. What proves to be a source of strength to the deeply grounded plant is devastating to the plant with shallow roots.<sup>18</sup> Where there is no depth, there is no lasting power. The plants

wilt and die. When this occurs with believers, they are full of hope, but they are not faithful. And a faith that cannot be tested, cannot be trusted.

How, then, do believers grow roots? It is not overly complicated.

- **Read your Bible and pray.** With communication, there is meaningful relationship.
- **Take every opportunity for corporate worship.** We need to hear God's Word proclaimed.
- **Participate in a small group.** We need to experience biblical community.
- **Pay attention to what and why you believe.** Avoid secondhand spirituality.
- **Put into practice what you already know.** If we don't live what we know, why should God teach us something new?

### THORNY GROUND: SEEDS IN THE WEEDS

*Some seeds fell where thorn bushes grew; and the weeds came up and choked the good plants, so that they did not yield a crop.<sup>19</sup>*

The thorny ground is good soil. If ground can grow prolific weeds, it can surely grow grain. To look at it another way, soil activates seed. The same soil that causes wheat to grow can also trigger thistles to germinate.

What are the weeds? Matthew says that they are the worries of this life and the lure of wealth (13:22, NLT). Luke adds, "life's worries, riches and pleasures"

(8:14), and Mark mentions "the desires for other things" (4:19). So, it seems that there are at least four types of thorny plants:

**Worries of life.** No one is free from the weeds of worry. The fear of want brings perplexity to the poor. The fear of loss brings anxiety to the rich. In essence, all are preoccupied with the cares of life, overwhelmed with what they must do and all that they want to get.<sup>20</sup> This stress strangles the seed and distracts from true kingdom living. What makes you worried?

**Lure of wealth.** We see what others have, and we focus on what we don't have. Before long, we're telling ourselves how wretched our lives are and how vastly improved they would be if we only had \_\_\_\_ (you can fill in the blank). Matthew calls this "the deceitfulness of riches" (13:22, NKJV). That is, riches deceive people. "If I had more money, my problems would be gone." "Money will make me happy." "Beware!" Jesus said "Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own" (Luke 12:15, NLT).<sup>21</sup> That empty feeling when the newness wears off or when the toy breaks is a clear indication that nothing but a relationship with Jesus can truly satisfy us.

**Pleasures of life.** Recreation has its proper place. But it becomes a thorn when the focus of life is on having fun, or when our calling is downgraded into providing resources for pleasure. As Ellen White noted, "Those who learn to love amusement for its own sake open the door to a flood of temptations. ... Their religious aspirations are chilled; their spiritual life is darkened."<sup>22</sup>

**Desires for other things.** Satan has configured a world packed with sensations and attractions, all to compete for our time and saturate our life. What are these “other things”? Simply, anything that becomes more important to us than God. If we focus our life on anything, however good, short of “the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31), thorns creep in. And thorns are painful. “Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs” (1 Timothy 6:10). It all seemed quite innocent at first. The good seed fell into the ground and began to grow. The weeds also sprouted and began to grow. In fact, the weeds seemed to help the young plants by shading them. But then the thorns declared war! You see, there is only a certain amount of nourishment, moisture, and sunlight reaching the ground. If the weeds take it, the wheat must go without.<sup>23</sup>

The result is that the good plant “becomes unfruitful” (Matthew 13:22, NKJV). Notice, at an early stage, the plant showed promise of fruitfulness. But it never advanced to maturity. Its spiritual life became so overshadowed by a thicket of worldly priorities that it came to nothing.

### THE FERTILE GROUND: SEEDS THAT YIELD A HARVEST

*But some of the seeds fell into fertile ground and produced a great harvest.<sup>24</sup>*

Certainly, good soil is properly fertilized and balanced with the right amount of nutrients. But Jesus did not say that some soil lacked certain essential elements that would need to be added to make it good.

“The good seed fell into the ground and began to grow. The weeds also sprouted and began to grow.”

Rather, in the parable, the good soil does not have *more*. It has *less*—less hardness, fewer rocks, fewer thorns; less cares, less worries, less distractions.<sup>25</sup>

What does good soil represent? “The good soil are the ones who hear the Word... and welcome it” (Mark 4:20, Amplified Bible). It is a process:

1. **Hear God’s Word.** “Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” (Romans 10:17). We must spend time with God’s Word.
2. **Welcome the Word.** We must believe God’s Word, and wholeheartedly embrace God’s plan for our lives.
3. **Understand the Word.** We must get the Word off the page and into our understanding by memorizing Scripture and reflecting on it.<sup>26</sup>
4. **Remain faithful to the Word.** “The seed on good soil stands for those ... who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce

a crop” (Luke 8:15). Spiritual development takes time. Don’t despair when results are not immediate. Have patience. Be faithful.

Jesus said that the seed that fell in the fertile ground produced a good crop. Some yielded 30 times, some 60 times, and some even 100 times as much as had been sown (Mark 4:8). Ancient two-row barley yields 25 to 30 grains per plant, while early wheat varieties, such as spelt or einkorn, produce a single head with 20 to 30 kernels.<sup>27</sup> Consequently, a seed that yielded 30 times would be a bountiful harvest. A yield of 60 times would have been amazing! And a seed that gave 100 times would be a harvest beyond the farmer’s wildest dreams!

What does the harvest represent? It means that the result of hearing, welcoming, understanding, and remaining faithful to God’s Word will be tangible in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit will be evident.<sup>28</sup> But there is a second application. When we share God’s Word with others, cross-pollination occurs, and seed begins to be reproduced in others. When that occurs, more seed is produced, seed that the sower can plant.

## WRAP-UP

What is the purpose of Jesus’ story? It is not to start categorizing those around us: “He’s rocky soil!” “I know some people just like the hardened path.” “Let’s pray for the folks stuck in the thorny ground.” Sometimes, each of us may have something of the four soils within us. The parable, then, is for self-diagnosis: What is the condition of my heart? Can the seeds of God’s Word survive and bear fruit in my life?

God says, “I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart” (Ezekiel 36:26, NLT). What we do with the knowledge of the kingdom comes down to the choices we make each day. The choice is ours!



*John Wesley Taylor V (PhD, Andrews University, Michigan, U.S.A.; EdD, University of Virginia, Virginia, U.S.A.) is President of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, U.S.A. At the time of writing this article he was an Associate Director of Education at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A. He is also a committed gardener, who looks forward to the harvest. E-mail: JohnWesleyTaylorV@gmail.com.*

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Author’s paraphrase of Matthew 13:1 to 3, integrating parallel passages from Mark 4 and Luke 8.
2. This article is based on Matthew 13:1 to 9, 18 to 23; Mark 4:1 to 20; and Luke 8:4 to 15. Insights from: David Brickner, *Christ in the Feast of Tabernacles* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2006); J. Camarin (2013), *Sower of the Seed*, JCblog.net. ISBN-13: 978-0615841540; Charles Spurgeon, *A Sower Went Out to Sow: Sermons on the Parable of the Sower*; compiled by Roger McReynolds (Amazon Digital Services LLC, 2017); Michael D. Stover, *Jesus and Dirt: A Fresh Look at the Parable of the Sower* (Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017); and Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1900), hereafter referenced as COL.

3. The Gospel of John does not record any parables.
4. Seven parables in which Jesus describes the “kingdom of God” and teaches kingdom principles are recorded in Matthew 13—the sower, weeds, mustard seed, yeast, hidden treasure, pearl, and net.
5. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture passages in this article are quoted from the *New International Version* of the Bible. Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.  
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Texts credited to Amplified are quoted from *Amplified Bible* (Classic). Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation, La Habra, CA 90631. All rights reserved.
6. As Ellen White noted, “The great controversy between Christ, the prince of light, and Satan, the prince of darkness, is presented before us in the parable of the sower” (*From the Heart* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald 2010), 107). Hereafter referenced as FH.
7. Author’s paraphrase of Matthew 13:3, integrating parallel passages from Mark and Luke.
8. “Christ had come, not as a king, but as a sower; not for the overthrow of kingdoms, but for the scattering of seed; not to point His followers to earthly triumphs and national greatness, but to a harvest to be gathered after patient toil” (COL 35).
9. FH 107.
10. “Every seed has in itself a germinating principle. In it the life of the plant is enfolded. So there is life in God’s word. ... He who by faith receives the word is receiving the very life and character of God” (COL 38).
11. Author’s paraphrase of Matthew 13:4, integrating parallel passages from Mark and Luke.
12. COL 44.
13. Author’s paraphrase of Matthew 13:5, integrating parallel passages from Mark and Luke.
14. “Many who make a profession of religion are stony-ground hearers. Like the rock underlying the layer of earth, the selfishness of the natural heart underlies the soil of their good desires and aspirations. ... This class may be easily convinced, and appear to be bright converts, but they have only a superficial religion” (COL 46).
15. Adapted from Stover, *Jesus and Dirt: A Fresh Look at the Parable of the Sower*, 10.
16. Adapted from Spurgeon, *A Sower Went Out to Sow: Sermons on the Parable of the Sower*, 90, 91.
17. Author’s paraphrase of Matthew 13:6, integrating parallel passages from Mark and Luke.
18. Adapted from Stover, *Jesus and Dirt: A Fresh Look at the Parable of the Sower*, 12.
19. Author’s paraphrase of Matthew 13:7, integrating parallel passages from Mark and Luke.
20. Matthew 6:25–34.
21. See also Proverbs 23:4, 5 and Matthew 6:24.
22. COL 54.
23. Adapted from Spurgeon, *A Sower Went Out to Sow: Sermons on the Parable of the Sower*, 107.
24. Author’s paraphrase of Matthew 13:8, integrating parallel passages from Mark and Luke.
25. Adapted from Camarin, *Sower of the Seed*, 42.
26. “The seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it” (Matthew 13:23). “Merely to hear or to read the word is not enough. He who desires to be profited by the Scriptures must meditate upon the truth that has been presented to him. By earnest attention and prayerful thought, he must learn the meaning of the words of truth” (COL 59).
27. <https://www.yara.co.uk/crop-nutrition/barley/barley-categorisation/>; <https://weizen.uni-hohenheim.de/en/organization/publication/comparative-study-of-hulled-einkorn-emmer-and-spelt-and-naked-wheats-durum-and-bread-wheat-agronomic-performance-and-quality-traits>.
28. Galatians 5:22.



# GETTING INVOLVED IN PUBLIC CAMPUS MINISTRIES: BRIDGING HEAVEN AND EARTH FOR GOD'S KINGDOM

**I**n our walk with Christ, we are often reminded of the delicate balance between our heavenly aspirations and our earthly responsibilities. This balance is particularly poignant when we consider the phrase, “so good for heaven that they are no good for earth.” This concept challenges us to reflect on how we live out our faith, ensuring that our spiritual devotion translates into practical action that furthers God’s kingdom here on earth.

## **THE HEAVENLY-MINDED CHRISTIAN**

As Christians, we are called to set our minds on things above (Colossians 3:2), yet we are also called to be the salt and light

of the earth (Matthew 5:13-16). Being too heavenly-minded can sometimes lead to neglecting the earthly mission God has given us. Our faith is not meant to be an escape from the world, but a catalyst for change within it.

## THE MISSION OF PUBLIC CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Public Campus Ministries (PCM) provide a unique avenue for Christians to embody this balance. PCMs are a vital ministry that not only nurtures spiritual growth but also encourages practical, impactful engagement in the world. By getting involved in PCM, students can live out their faith in ways that make a tangible difference in their communities.

## ANSWERING THE CALL

- 1. Faith in Action:** James 2:17 reminds us that faith without works is dead. PCM offers opportunities to put faith into action through service projects, community outreach, and social justice initiatives. These acts of service are not just good deeds; they are expressions of God's love and grace to the world.
- 2. Holistic Discipleship:** Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52). PCM encourages this holistic growth, helping students develop spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. This well-rounded development prepares students to be effective ambassadors for Christ in all areas of life.
- 3. Building Godly Community:** Involvement in PCM helps foster a sense of belonging and fellowship. Hebrews 10:24-25 urges us to encourage



one another and spur each other on toward love and good deeds. PCM creates a supportive environment where students can build lasting, Christ-centered relationships.

- 4. Living Testimonies:** Our lives are the greatest testimony of God's work. Matthew 5:16 calls us to let our light shine before others. By participating in PCM, students can show that Christianity is not just a set of beliefs but a way of life that seeks to reflect Christ's love and truth.

## EMBRACING THE MISSION

- 1. Serve with Love:** Jesus said, "By this everyone

will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35, NIV). Let love be the driving force behind every service project and outreach effort. Whether it’s volunteering at a local shelter or organizing a campus clean-up, let the love of Christ shine through. Ellen White reminds us, “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

**2. Engage in Meaningful Dialogue:** Be prepared to give a reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15, NIV). Create spaces for open dialogue where students can discuss their faith and contemporary issues. This not only strengthens their understanding but also equips them to share the gospel effectively. Ellen White emphasizes the importance of dialogue and engagement, stating, “Every follower of Jesus has a work to do as a missionary for Christ, in the family, in the neighborhood, in the town or city where he lives” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 105).

**3. Mentorship and Discipleship:** Follow the example of Paul and Timothy. Older, more experienced students can mentor younger ones, providing guidance and support in their spiritual journey. This discipleship fosters spiritual maturity and a deeper commitment to Christ. White’s counsel reinforces this, as she wrote, “We need to be constantly learning, and to part with every wrong habit and practice, to be meek and lowly of heart, to be governed by the Holy Spirit”

(*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 249).

**4. Leadership with Humility:** Jesus taught that true leadership is about serving others (Mark 10:45). Offer leadership training that emphasizes servant leadership, encouraging students to lead with humility and a heart for service.

Getting involved in Public Campus Ministries is more than an extracurricular activity; it’s a divine calling to be Christ’s hands and feet in the world. By balancing our heavenly focus with earthly action, we fulfill the Great Commission and reflect God’s kingdom here on earth. Let us strive to be Christians who are good for both heaven and earth, living out our faith in ways that bring glory to God and transform our communities. In doing so, we bridge the gap between heaven and earth, advancing God’s kingdom in every corner of our lives.



By: Dr. Ivan H. Omaña  
DMin, BCC

Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good.





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