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# For God & **+** Country

*A Journal for Seventh-day  
Adventists in Military and  
Public Service*





# THE UNIMAGINABLE BATTLES OCCURRING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

**By Edwin Mendoza, D.Min.**

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**D**omestic abuse is everything but domestic. The term domestic is used in many circumstances to identify elements that are adapted to home life. For instance, animals that are adjusted to the home environment are referred as domestic. Nonetheless, when domestic and abuse/violence are put together, it becomes one of the most horrific experiences any human being can endure. According to a 2019 post in domesticshelters.org, male combat veterans who suffer from PTSD are two to three times more likely to abuse female partners than veterans not suffering from PTSD. Among active duty females, 36 percent report having experienced intimate partner violence during their service.

Is it different among Christian military men and women? And if it's

happening, what should one do in order to prevent it or find help?

Santiago Valentino (not his real name), 62 years old, a veteran of two major war conflicts, and my lifetime friend, was a very active and typical teenager. I used to hang out with him until we were separated by our own different paths. He went to the military and I became a pastor. Following 42 years in the military, Santiago has been in prison for the last ten years. He almost killed his wife and was convicted of domestic violence with intent to kill. I have often wondered, what happened with my friend who was an active and normal young man?

As a pastor and friend of the family we all have been in prison with him. The shame, the pain, and the never-ending court appearances have kept

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us all on our toes, and the question is, what's next? As a matter of fact, his case is not an uncommon one.

Domestic abuse is present in the civilian world as well. However, there is a tendency for it to be more common with military individuals due to the nature of the work they are expected to perform. Military life is structured around two basic elements: orders and compliance. Why? Because one's life and the objective of the mission depends on those two vital components.

Leo Shane III writes, "Military spouses are often isolated, living far from friends or family and unfamiliar with local resources and that it is unfortunately easy to see how these conditions can make domestic violence possible, more dangerous, and persistent."<sup>2</sup>

The reality is that Soldiers/Sailors must perform daily under orders and compliance for months away from his/her family. Once you are in the military everything changes in life, even the way you walk.

Subsequently the military individual pictures his/her family from another perspective; and may ask, "What if I lead my family the same way?" "Is it possible that my spouse or my children could be better equipped in life if I was stricter?" "Should I be more aggressive to be able to protect them?"

So, with an intent of doing what is best for the family, the military service person might fall into the trap of applying the same military codes in conducting the family affairs.

Therefore, I suggest the following:

1. Acknowledge that God is the Creator and that every human being belongs to Him. Therefore, each family member is a child of God (Romans 8: 17).
2. Value your family. No one will value the individuals within your family to the extent you do (1 Corinthians 13: 4-8).
3. Practice patience. A lot of patience! Be patient with your own self and towards the rest of your loved ones. Patience is a vital element in any human relationship. One should use a cognitive approach. Be mentally and emotionally aware that empathy is critically important. It is vital and fosters a healthy functioning family.
4. Be responsible for your acts and behavior. Only you are accountable for your actions. Although, you might have many reasons to vent your frustration or anger, there is no reason to put your family in jeopardy by being verbally, emotionally, or physically abusive with them.
5. Last but not least, take one day at a time. There is professional help for you, and there is hope for you in the promise "...and surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" Matthew 28:20.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.domesticshelters.org/articles/statistics/the-facts-about-abuse-in-military-families>

<sup>2</sup> Shane, Leo III "Is military domestic violence a forgotten crisis?" <https://www.militarytimes.com>

**DO YOU NEED HELP? HELP IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY,  
7 DAYS A WEEK, 365 DAYS A YEAR BY CALLING 800-799-7233**

# WHEN **ABUSE** DOESN'T LEAVE BRUISES

by **Sarah McDugal, MSA-ID,**

Author, Speaker, Abuse Recovery Coach, Abuse Response Trainer



Everyone knows it's abusive to leave bruises. But far too often, we overlook the existence and impact of other forms of abuse, which can be equally damaging. This is especially true in tightly-knit closed cultures where public image is paramount, such as law enforcement, branches of the military, and faith communities.

Physical assault is only one of the twelve patterns of abusive behavior, which all revolve around a thirteenth pattern: a core attitude of entitlement and the right to take power over another person. All thirteen are considered Domestic Violence, regardless of whether they are physical. Emotional and verbal abuse is now understood to take a physical and psychological toll, meaning that non-violent abuse is still physical abuse — of the brain and organ tissues.

Before we delve deeper, it is important to acknowledge that every human has the capacity to be abusive, given the right circumstances. If we define abuse purely as a single action or one discrete occurrence, then every time you behave badly you are an abuser. But that is neither accurate nor helpful.

Abuse is defined as a system or pattern of behaviors in which someone with greater power uses their advantage to exploit or cause harm to someone with lesser power. DomesticViolence.org defines abuse as, “any behaviors that one person uses in a relationship to control another person in the relationship.”<sup>1</sup> When a system of persistent power exploitation exists, you are dealing with abuse.

It is common for those suffering abuse to struggle to clearly articulate what is happening. They may say, “You know, it's just really difficult. I don't think I'm in an abusive

relationship, but things aren't okay.”

You can respond: “In the middle of trauma fog, it can be very hard to make a complete list of what you've experienced because abuse has become your ‘normal.’ You may be in an abusive relationship and not even know it. Look at this list of Abuse Patterns<sup>2</sup>, watch this video explaining it<sup>3</sup>, and tally each aspect that applies or reminds you of something familiar.”

## CHILD ABUSE

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- threatening to harm children
- threatening children in order to keep you silent
- avoiding child support

Harming a child's mother is an often-overlooked aspect of child abuse, which causes trauma to the child. Lundy Bancroft explains, “The abusive man is focused on power and control, and may ignore the harm he causes the children in his desperate race to settle old scores...out of a lack of respect for the mother's humanity.”<sup>4</sup>

## CULTURAL ABUSE

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- using cultural norms as excuse for mistreatment
- isolating you through language barriers
- musing cultural expectations as a tool to keep you silent

Cultural abuse is especially likely in cross-cultural marriages or among those posted outside of their culture of origin, where it is easier to cause isolation and limitation.

## EMOTIONAL ABUSE

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- acting jealous (calling it protectiveness)
- saying “sorry” and promising to change, but not following through
- creating an emotional rollercoaster that fosters a state of hyper-vigilance

Victims may be conditioned by culture, family of origin, or their abuser to feel intense guilt, whether or not something was their responsibility. False guilt can be masterfully weaponized by a manipulative person.

## FINANCIAL ABUSE

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- limiting your access to money
- requiring an account of every penny
- creating unnecessary debt, or debt you didn't know about

Many abuse victims do not realize that controlling money, restricting access to the family budget, or incurring secret debt is a form of abuse. If victims are too broke to leave, then of course, they are less likely to find freedom.

## INTELLECTUAL ABUSE

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- manipulating information or facts
- playing mind games such as gaslighting and crazy-making
- expecting others to keep secrets and maintain a glossy public image regardless of reality

Double standards are common—abusers tend to be quick to judge

others for small mistakes, but give themselves grace for things that are actually moral failures. For example, the abuser might lie to a police officer when he gets pulled over for speeding, but berate the victim because she didn't load the dishwasher “correctly.” The minor issue is treated as a huge problem, while law-breaking is no big deal.

## PETS AND PROPERTY ABUSE

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- destroying or damaging property (often targeting your things, not theirs)
- hurting or killing pets, or threatening to do so
- keeping your ID, driver's license, or car keys

One military family was posted overseas and the wife couldn't speak or read the local language, leaving her dependent on GPS to run errands and buy groceries. Her husband blamed her if she didn't have fresh produce, but the GPS kept vanishing. One morning she overheard her daughter ask daddy why he was taking the GPS. “I'm teaching Mommy a lesson,” he replied.

## PHYSICAL ABUSE

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- driving recklessly, exhibiting road rage
- slapping, hitting, kicking, restraining, choking
- not controlling strength in “playful” situations or being indifferent to others' pain while “joking around”

“A study of 300 ‘choking’ cases by the Family Justice Center Alliance in San Diego and Institute on

Strangulation Prevention showed that a woman who is strangled even once is 750 percent more likely to be strangled again and 800 percent more likely to be killed later,”<sup>5</sup> writes Brian Bennett, instructor at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

- creating an environment of fear
- tracking, monitoring, or stalking (whether physical or cyberstalking)
- demonstrating inability to discern emotions or show empathy

Spiritual advisors often ask about physical abuse, but aren’t trained to ask other questions as well. The wife may answer, “He hasn’t hit me since I was pregnant with our first child.” The chaplain thinks, “Great, that’s not so bad!” But in reality, the abuser established his capability for violence early on. Since then, he has never needed to hit her. All he has to do is lift his shoulder in that threatening way—and she acquiesces in fear.

## SEXUAL ABUSE

- having or threatening to have an affair or one-night stand
- buying sexual services or using pornography (particularly as adultery within a marriage, or against the wishes/behind the back of the intimate partner)
- forcing or withholding sex

Pornography is not only fornication or adultery with the person on the screen, but the porn industry is inextricably tied to sex trafficking and exploitation.<sup>6</sup> In addition, porn use contributes

directly to disengagement and lack of intimacy in real-life relationships.<sup>7</sup>

## SOCIAL ABUSE

- isolating or triangulating you from friends or family
- monitoring your phone, emails, social media, tracking mileage
- controlling your freedom to work or get an education

Often, social abuse is covert and insidious, and may dovetail with spiritual abuse by using Scripture to justify keeping the victim at home or avoiding friends because the abuser does not approve of their influence.

## SPIRITUAL ABUSE

- twisting Scripture to gain power or manipulate you
- putting down your convictions or beliefs
- isolating you from church community

Refusing to discuss marital challenges with wise mentors or to get counseling from qualified professionals is a common form of spiritual abuse. Also, scriptural passages may be twisted to demand power-over rather than practicing servant leadership.

## VERBAL ABUSE

- using sarcasm to put you down
- joking about you in condescending ways
- cutting you off in conversation

One abusive pastor held small-group Bible studies in his home. He listened engagingly to guests but if his wife dared to join the conversation, he would motion for her to wrap it up in front of everyone, or verbally silence her.

## POWER AND ENTITLEMENT

All forms of abuse flow from a core sense of entitlement to power and control. Those who believe their identity (whether race, gender, culture, belief system) is superior to others, are likely to develop a mindset that they have the right to dominate those beneath them. Those obsessed with power over others may take personal offense when peers, children, or even the elderly don't show them "appropriate respect." Seeking to establish control over others is not only contrary to the servant-heartedness Christ illustrates in the Gospel, but results in abusive behaviors.

## BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION DOES NOT FIX THE PROBLEM

It is easy to hope that an abusive situation will be defused through counseling with a spiritual advisor, attending anger management, or setting up peer accountability. However, this mistaken assumption is based on a flawed understanding of what causes abuse. Contrary to popular thought, abusers do not suffer from anger management issues. They can control their anger perfectly well whenever someone important is watching. In fact, studies show that when abusers are sent to anger management classes, "wife abuse is not necessarily anger-driven, but more the consequence of a socially imposed 'need' to control women," and "batterers readily reduce anger control

to a set of gimmicks that enables them to get their way less violently while continuing their abuse."<sup>8</sup>

Psychological abusers possess a shocking willingness to commit to a lie. Against all evidence, they will still say, 'That's false.' The more pathological an abuser's entitlement has become, the more they will commit to a big, bold lie so passionately both victims and advocates begin to doubt their own sanity. Why? Because someone willing to use their power and strength to exploit someone weaker, is generally far more committed to their lie than others are to the truth.

## LOOKING PAST THE HALO EFFECT

When someone has an outstanding public reputation, people tend to think they must be all good. That's called *halo effect*, and assumes the pervasive goodness of a person based on one good part. When we apply the halo effect to those accused of abuse, we doubly abuse the victim. We cannot dismiss allegations simply because someone is high-ranking, or well-liked, or extraordinarily capable. A person may be popular, powerful, and beloved but still be capable of great evil.

All the perpetrator asks is for observers to look away, maintain status quo, and do nothing. But our biblical mandate is to "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly" (Micah 6:8, KJV), which means we have an obligation to educate ourselves on not only the forms of abuse that exist, but also the mindset that drives them.

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*Sarah McDugal is an author, speaker and abuse recovery coach. She trains churches and faith-based organizations to develop abuse responses that are both biblically redemptive and legally responsible. See more at <http://sarahmcdugal.com>.*

These are not a linear cycle. They may happen in any order or none. There is no “honeymoon” or season of “real love” — all apparently good acts are actually their own form of abuse, deceiving the victim to develop trust.

**BEG/BLAME**

Abuser knows they've gone "too far". They may apologize, cry, make promises. May also insinuate their behavior was your fault.

Makes you feel: obligated to forgive & selfish for wanting more.

**BUTTER UP**

Manipulative kindness. Helpfulness. Compliments. Gifts. Grand gestures. All the good stuff you love about them most.

Makes you feel: hopeful & loved.

**BURN**

The mood turns. You start to feel insecure (again). There's a sharp comment or a painful disclosure. Promises get broken.

Makes you feel: betrayed & heartbroken.

**BATTER**

Intensified forms of Blast. Aggressive physically or sexually. Threats of harm or suicide. Destructive acts. "Snaps" and lashes out.

Makes you feel: scared & small.

**BLAST**

Arguments. Frustration. Passive aggressive. You're walking on eggshells. Verbal lashing out. If you point out the Burn, it escalates.

Makes you feel: worthless & self-doubting.

# ABUSE VORTEX

Living in this environment feels like you are existing in a swirling vortex of hope, anguish, obligation, fear and self-doubt. Insecurity abounds and you never know what today will bring.



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<sup>1</sup> Betrayal Trauma Recovery, *Are Porn Users Abusive?*, <https://www.btr.org/are-porn-users-abusive/domesticviolence.org>

<sup>2</sup> For shareable infographics on patterns of abuse, see <http://sarahmcdugal.com/resources/>. To compare patterns of abuse with healthy patterns of love, see the Love and Honor Wheel.

<sup>3</sup> Sarah McDugal, *Systems of Abuse vs Love and Honor*, <http://sarahmcdugal.com/abuse-wheel/>.

<sup>4</sup> Lundy Bancroft, *Misconceptions About Family Courts*, <https://lundybancroft.com/child-custody-justice/misconceptions-about-the-family-courts/>.

<sup>5</sup> Brian K Bennett, *Subtle Signs of a Killer*, <https://www.officer.com/investigations/forensics/evidence-collection/article/20994964/nonfatal-strangulations-point-to-future-homicides>.

<sup>6</sup> Fight The New Drug, *How Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Blend In With Today's Violent Mainstream Porn*, <https://fightthenewdrug.org/how-porn-trafficking-and-exploitation-are-tied-together/>.

<sup>7</sup> Fight The New Drug, *Why Porn Leaves Consumers Lonely*, <https://fightthenewdrug.org/why-porn-leaves-consumers-lonely/#sthash.sQbh6YMH.dpbs>.

<sup>8</sup> Gandolf and Russel. *The Case Against Anger Management for Batterers*, accessed October 27, 2019.

## VERBAL

- Uses words to build you up
- Honors you in front of others
- Speaks honestly and openly
- Gives genuine compliments, not flattery
- Delights in your conversation
- Encourages you to speak truth to others
- Avoids raised voice or silent treatment

## CHILD

- Protects children physically and emotionally
- Treats children with kindness and patience
- Builds you up in front of your children
- Models honesty at home and in public
- Provides consistent financial stability

## SPIRITUAL

- Soul-enriching behaviors
- Accepts Scripture's call to servant leadership
- Refuses to seek power over you
- Encourages your spiritual connection
- Respects your choice of counselors
- Seeks shared spiritual growth without control

## SOCIAL

- Encourages your friendships
- Engages with your family connections
- Respects your right to privacy
- Appreciates your talents
- Supports your desires to work/study
- Ensures equal access to social activities

## LOVE & HONOR

- Acknowledges reality without evasion
- Admits past events transparently
- Accepts personal responsibility for actions
- Gives credit to those who have earned it
- Realizes own limitations and weaknesses
- Seeks mentorship and counseling
- Accepts accountability with humility
- Pursues recovery for any addictions
- Honors the value of others regardless of age, culture, gender, ethnicity
- Treats others with respect regardless of what they have to offer
- Seeks to serve others with selfless kindness
- Refuses to use power to exploit others

## SEXUAL

- Gives genuine intimacy
- Offers sexual affection without strings
- Refuses to view pornography
- Appreciates your body
- Remains sexually faithful
- Respects when you're not in the mood

## PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Admits own mistakes
- Keeps weapons locked up
- Does not threaten to harm self or others
- Honestly accepts reality
- Respects your identity
- Does not rewrite history

## PHYSICAL

- Drives safely and responsibly
- Treats your body with respect
- Touches you gently
- Protects you from pain
- Supports your right to free choice
- Offers non-sexual affection without strings

## PETS & PROPERTY

- Cares for pets kindly
- Treats property with respect
- Maintains your car
- Respects your belongings
- Does not interfere or touch things you own

## STATISTICS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE MILITARY

**2-3** Male combat veterans who suffer from PTSD are two to three times more likely to abuse their female partners than veterans not suffering from PTSD.

**1/3** About 33 percent of combat veterans with PTSD report having been aggressive with their intimate partner at least once in the previous year.

**9 in 10** About 91 percent of combat veterans with PTSD reported being psychologically aggressive with their intimate partner in the previous year.

**Up to 7 in 10** Between 30 and 70 percent of female veterans have experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime.

**>1/3** Among active duty females, 36 percent report having experienced intimate partner violence during their service.

**177%** While intimate partner violence declined among civilians between 2003 and 2010, it rose by a whopping 177 percent in the Army during the same period.

From: <https://www.domesticshelters.org/articles/statistics/the-facts-about-abuse-in-military-families>

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### CULTURE

- Embraces the best of both your cultures
- Uplifts what you love about your own culture
- Shows sensitivity to other cultural practices
- Supports your language learning and cultural adaptation

### EMOTIONAL

- Validates your feelings
- Communicates honestly
- Takes responsibility for own actions
- Extends trust and independence
- Offers affection and safety

### FINANCIAL

- Equal access to money
- Shared financial decisions and accounts
- No secret accounts, expenditures, or incomes
- Communicates with transparency about money
- Pays full child support on time

### INTELLECTUAL

Straightforward communication

- Supports your ideas
- Values your opinions
- Gives grace for your mistakes
- Appreciates your tastes
- Builds you up
- Trusts your judgment as a partner

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# ANYONE CAN BE A VICTIM

By LTC (CH) Dan Bray, U. S. Army, Retired MS, MDiv.  
Counseling Psychologist  
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Regarding the issue of domestic abuse and in particular where the male is the offender, one could easily list statistics indicating the overall toll it takes on the victims and families. Or, one could recite the reasons why men, in particular, choose to abuse the females in their lives.

Nearly anyone can be a victim of domestic violence. This criminal act is not limited to gender, race, language, religion, education, or financial status.

The focus of this article looks at men as the perpetrators and females as the victims. Please note that in some instances it is the wife or female and not the husband or male who is in the instigator of the abuse.

Multiple theories exist about what makes a batterer use abuse to those closest to them. Some batterers believe that as

men they are entitled to dominate in a calculated manner while others state their behavior is a product of some psychological or developmental defect.

Probably the most noted form of domestic abuse would be physical. But, there are other forms of control or abuse including verbal abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, spiritual abuse, economic, and social abuse.

I once heard of a military service member years ago at our installation who would take away his spouse's military identification card and checkbook whenever he would go on a field exercise. His explanation to his wife was "she needs me to go with her to make purchases."

There are actually very few resources available for batterers who wish to cease their behavior. Some states do not spend dollars on resources other than incarceration as a solution.

For the victims, the choice to get out of a bad situation is not as clear as it may seem. For some women, the threat of leaving an abusive relationship can often bring about greater violence. Or, they may just have no place to go.

If you know of someone who you suspect could potentially be going through domestic violence, look for these signs. Physically: look for bruised lips, swollen eyes, or sprained wrists. Emotionally: someone who

once was happy and who is now rather withdrawn and quiet could also be a victim. These victims might attempt to explain away behavior of the batterer. Additionally, victims could be feeling anxious, depressed, or even considering suicide.

To those who try to manipulate their loved ones, I would simply offer only one suggestion: "don't do it." If you feel the next move you are about to make is physical such as hitting, then you should seriously just walk away. Some men were raised with an "old-school notion" that as men they should never, ever, lay their hands on a female in spite of what the female may do to them.

Additionally, recognize you may have an anger management problem. Most therapists and counselors are equipped to assist you in this endeavor. Plus, they may be able to help you discover why this behavior is such an attractive option for you.

If you find yourself in an abusive relationship either as the victim or instigator, please realize that all is not lost. You may have to terminate an unhealthy relationship. That decision can often be difficult to make especially if you have been involved in a relationship for many years. Yet, if someone loves another person, they do not express this love by abusing the other person.

#### **OTHER RESOURCES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)** or [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)

National Dating Abuse Helpline at **1-866-331-9474** or [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)

National Sexual Assault Hotline at **1-800-656-4673 (HOPE)** or [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

National Center for Victims of Crime at **1-202-467-8700** or [www.victimsofcrime.org](http://www.victimsofcrime.org)

# GRITTY, DIRTY, AND DEDICATED

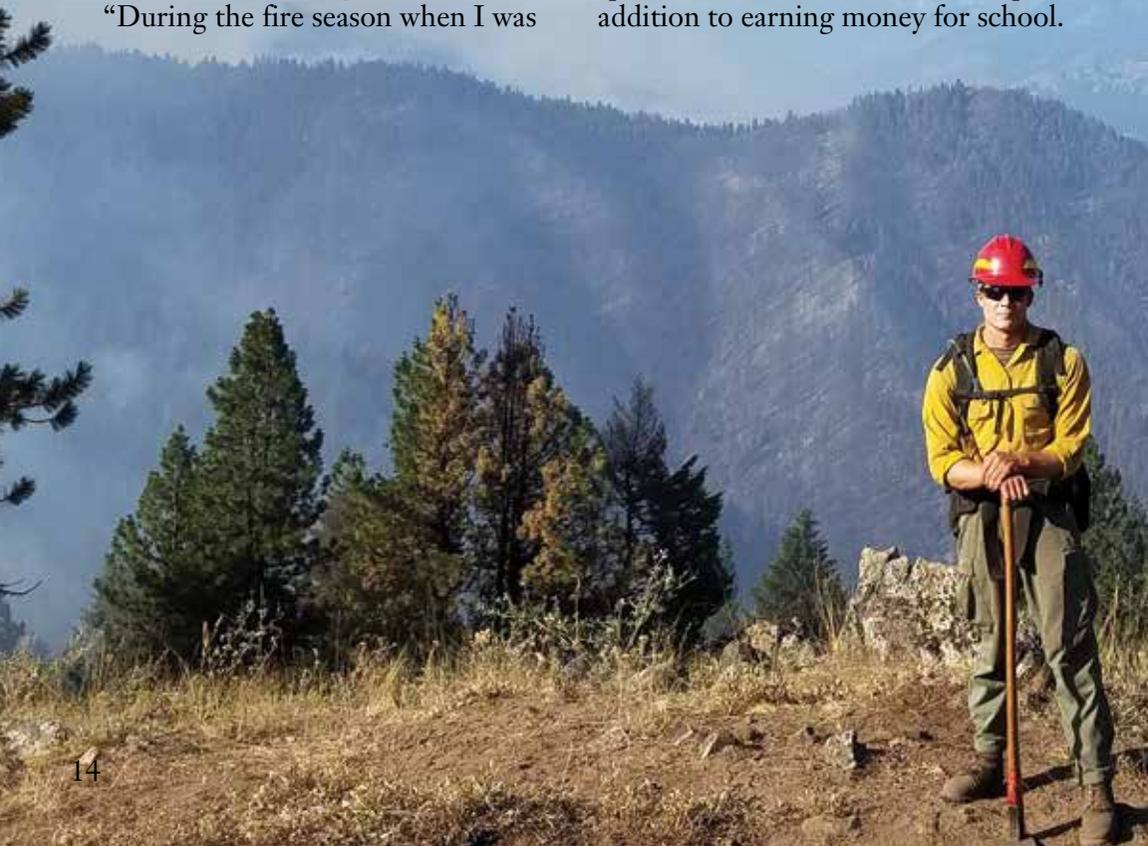
By Hans Sween, Wildland Firefighter 2, Lochsa Ranger District, North Central Idaho  
with Deena Bartel-Wagner, editor

**G**rowing up in the mountains and forests of northeast Idaho, Hans Sween developed a love for the outdoors. “I’ve always enjoyed physical activity and working with my hands,” says Hans. When he was 16 years old, a wildland fire piqued his interest in the work of wildland firefighters.

“During the fire season when I was

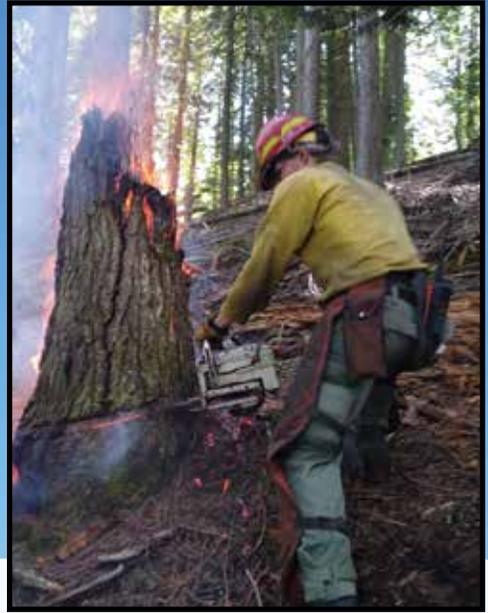
16, a wildfire burned near our home. I helped the local fire department fight that one,” says Hans. The work was hard, but Hans felt he’d contributed to the effort.

The summer he turned 19, Hans knew he needed a job but had some specific skills he wanted to develop, in addition to earning money for school.





Hans Sween is a wildland firefighter.



Hans is a Firefighter Type 2 and a certified sawyer.

“I wanted to work at something that had a purpose and that help other people,” says Hans. “I also was eager to develop leadership skills. Wildland firefighting seemed like a good fit for me. It required physical labor, tested my abilities, and I could be outdoors for the summer.”

## TRAIN AND LEARN

Wildfires are defined as an uncontrolled fire located in rural areas where combustible vegetation grows. They can be sub-classified as brush fires, forest fires, grass fires, and other designations. “Fires are classified by the way we respond to them,” says Hans. “A lightning strike is generally a fire that is an acre or less. Larger fires that consume thousands of acres are called campaign fires. The 2019 Swan Lake Fire in Alaska when 90 percent contained had burned over 167,000 acres.”

All wildland firefighter applicants

must pass a rigorous physical fitness test, including a 3-mile run carrying a 45-pound pack and finishing in less than 45 minutes.

“As a firefighter, you progress through the ranks from Firefighter Type 2 to Type 1 and then move on to become a squad boss and eventually move into leadership at the management level,” says Hans.

## TESTING THE LIMITS

Han’s first fire season became a test of endurance and sheer grit. “It wasn’t long after the season started, and our crew was assigned its first fire. We set out with the standard gear that we have to carry,” says Hans. “This includes a 45-pound pack, one and a half gallons of water, packaged meals, our gear, and saws. We generally hike into the site and then begin work.”

The first big fire that Hans responded to pushed him to his limits. “Our 20-man hand crew donned

their packs and hiked three miles into camp,” says Hans. “It was between 90 and 95 degrees that day, and we carried all our gear up a 1500 to 2000-foot elevation gain.” After the hike in, the crew went to work.

Hand crews are trained for operational assignments during fire season. Today, Hans is a certified sawyer and works in the Lochsa Ranger District in North Central Idaho. “My work is to clear trees and brush that are on the fire line and to mitigate any trees that could become involved in the blaze,” says Hans. Other crew members dig fire lines or remove any combustible materials. During a campaign fire, crews work 16-hour shifts with eight hours off to sleep in tents and eat their MRE’s that are stowed in their packs. It becomes a continual round of work, eat, sleep, repeat.

These crews always face the potential for a fire to turn and the danger it could cause them. “During my first fire season, we’d gotten on top of a fire,” says Hans. “That night, it burned over our line, and we had to run to keep ahead of it. Our adrenaline was pumping as we pushed our way down the mountain.”

Another time Hans and a crew were clearing out a timber patch when they got the call that they were needed an hour south of their location. “This was the Rattlesnake Creek Fire in the Salmon River Canyon,” says Hans. “It is the most impressive fire I’ve ever witnessed. In the first three days, between 3000-4000 acres were burned.”

It was also one of the most emotionally difficult fires Hans helped fight. “The fire was moving so fast that we were basically doing triage,” says Hans. “We were trying to protect

the structures we could, but there were times that no amount of work we did would be enough. It was tough knowing that we wrote someone’s home off because we couldn’t save it.”

## THERE'S STILL WORK TO DO

When the crews aren’t on the fire line, there is still work to do. “When we are on base, we perform equipment and vehicle checks,” says Hans. “We also do project work, such as timber thinning. On Sundays, we train, both physically and technically. We can also have district tasks such as checking on the lookout towers and performing resupply of resources.”

Life during fire season can be lonely. Firefighters spend months away from their families living in primitive conditions. It means they miss family events and milestones. “I missed out on a long-planned kayaking trip with my family during one season,” recalls Hans. “During the off-season, I am especially conscious of doing things together with my family.”

As a crew, developing trust in each other is critical. Each member depends on the others to have their back. “Everyone is dedicated and hardworking,” says Hans. “Working together as closely as we do makes us become like family to each other.”

## BALANCING WORK LIFE AND LIFE PRINCIPLES

But that tight-knit bond can be a challenge when you are a Christian. “I’ve learned that I need to be cautious in my behavior that I don’t become like others,” says Hans. “You can be surrounded daily by crude language, drinking, and smoking. There have been times when I’ve had to take stock of myself to make sure I wasn’t



Work on the fire line is dirty, gritty, and tests Hans' skills and physical endurance.



Hiking in to camp requires carrying a 45-pound pack, gear, water, and food.

slipping into those actions.”

Hans views his work with the fire crews as more than a job. “I have an amazing opportunity to be in a sub-culture that most people never even have access to,” says Hans. “I can talk shop and be able to relate to them. When someone says, ‘You don’t cuss all the time, what’s up with that dude,’ I’ve shared why I live my life the way I do.”

Sabbath on the fire line is another challenge. “When you are out there, there is no set schedule,” says Hans. “As we are working to save people’s property and perhaps even their lives, I carve out little pauses to have a talk with God.”

Despite the grueling work, the danger, the loneliness, there are benefits to the job. “There’s nothing quite like flying into Idaho’s backcountry or sleeping on a ridgetop under the Milky Way with no light pollution from town,” says Hans.

## LIFE BETWEEN FIRE SEASONS

In the off-season, Hans is enrolled in an engineering program and volunteers with the local fire department. Training for his third fire season is already underway. “Firefighters get used to the adrenaline rush they experience, so depression during the winter can become a big problem,” says Hans. “Exercise combats that and training to maintain my fitness level is important.”

Hans plans to train to become an EMT and is contemplating joining the Coast Guard. And during next year’s fire season, he’ll shoulder his pack, grab his saw, and head out into an unknown summer of fires and daily tests of his physical endurance. He’ll join the other gritty, dirty, and soot-covered members of his team as they dedicate their time. “It’s many little boys dream job to be a firefighter,” says Hans. “I’ve been lucky enough to grow up and get to do it.”

# THE

# VIETNAM EFFECT

By Phil Garver, Ed.D.

E-5, U.S. Army, with Deena Bartel-Wagner, editor

**M**y mother died in a tragic fire when I was 11 months old,” says Phil Garver. “Grandma opened her home to my brother, Dick, and me. She prayed for us and continued to long after I grew up.”

With the remarriage of his father, Phil’s life reeled again. “My stepmother showed no love or affection towards me,” says Phil. “I saw myself as stupid, ugly, slow, and fat. At school, I had no friends.”

This isolation drew Phil’s interest to working the three acres of land his family owned. By seventh grade, he’d established his own lawn mowing business.

A neighbor made a lifelong impression on Phil at this same time. “He taught physical education,” says Phil. “I didn’t know what that was, but I enjoyed his kindness towards me. I decided I wanted to be a physical teacher too.”

As an 8th grader, Phil applied for a janitorial job at his school. “The head janitor taught me an important concept,” says Phil. “He said, ‘Almost clean is still dirty. Almost right is still wrong.’ Those words guided me throughout my life.”

High school whizzed by in three

Phil with local Montagnard villagers near Pleiku, Vietnam.



years, and Phil enrolled in Southwest Junior College. He met Betty, a nursing student, and their courtship began. Although he studied hard, Phil finished his studies with a 1.9 GPA. “My poor grades meant I could only earn a certificate, rather than a diploma,” says Phil.

Betty’s clinical training took the couple to Denver, Colorado. Sacrifices became part of life. Phil sold his trombone and worked two eight-hour jobs daily to make ends meet.

## REPORT NOW

With the Vietnam War raging, Phil wasn't surprised when he received his draft notice. "Just after our second anniversary and my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, I reported for Basic Training at Fort Polk," says Phil. "I needed to request Sabbath off from my sergeant. On Thursday, I went to see him and explained. After reviewing my file, he told me to spend the day in the chapel."

On Monday, Phil boarded a bus to Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas, to train as a medic alongside other non-combatants.

"My Medical Cadet Corps training in academy paid off. I understood military discipline, marching, and how and who to salute." Phil made squad leader during basic. At the end of his training, he received the American Spirit Honor Medal, awarded to only one trainee in each basic training or station unit out of the graduating group. "This was the first recognition I'd ever received," says Phil.

After medic training, half of the class went to Vietnam. Phil went to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, for orthopedic training. Betty finished her nursing degree and joined him.

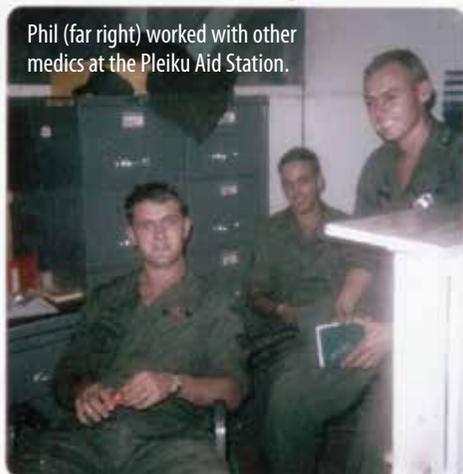
"Dr. Virgil Wood was the head of orthopedics and a Seventh-day Adventist," says Phil.

One day, Dr. Wood told Phil he should go to medical school after Vietnam and he'd cover all expenses, without any repayment required. Phil didn't know what to say.

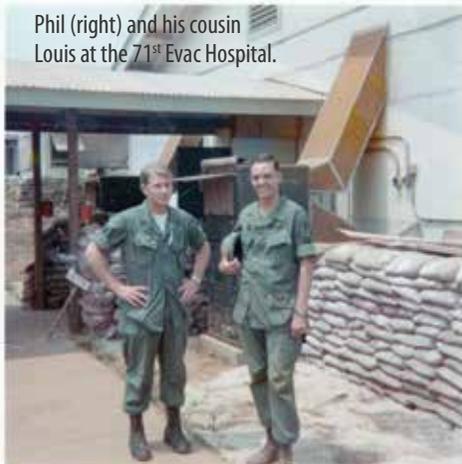
"Two weeks later, I received new orders. We packed all our possessions and left Missouri for Texas," says Phil. "Betty would stay with her parents while I was in Vietnam."

During the trip, Phil asked Betty to check his orders for his report date. Much to their surprise, Phil had 45

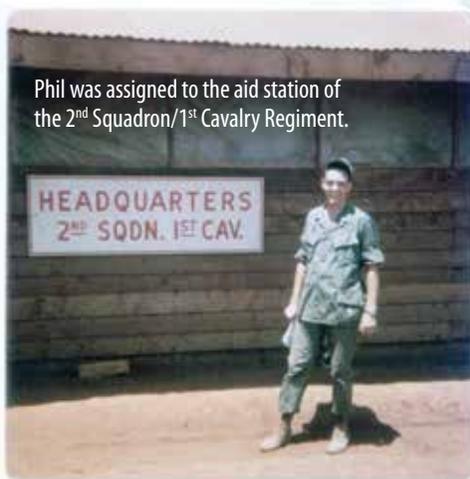
Phil (far right) worked with other medics at the Pleiku Aid Station.



Phil (right) and his cousin Louis at the 71<sup>st</sup> Evac Hospital.



Phil was assigned to the aid station of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron/1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Regiment.



days of leave rather than the typical 30 days. They didn't know it then, but this was God's appointed time. "I spent those 45 days preparing to die," says Phil.

## AT WAR

Arriving in Vietnam, Phil reported to the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Headquarters and then was assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry.

"I was the only non-combatant among the 36 medics in the squadron. When the 1st Sergeant learned this, he blew up and told me I had to qualify with an M16 and a 45 mm handgun," says Phil. "I told him that I couldn't. It was against my beliefs."

A standoff seemed in the making when the sergeant suddenly asked if Phil had a military driver's license and if he could type. Phil quickly said yes. This information pacified the sergeant.

The 71<sup>st</sup> Evac Hospital was 18 miles away. As part of his work assignment, Phil delivered mail to the wounded from his unit on Sabbath and met with other Adventists stationed there for worship and lunch. "Louie, my first cousin, was there, so we spent Sabbaths together," says Phil.

Sabbaths provided welcome breaks until the day the sergeant came looking for Phil. "The on-duty medic told him I'd gone to church," says Phil. "If he'd said I was delivering the mail, it wouldn't have been a problem. The sergeant was furious and said he'd have me court-martialed."

Again, God intervened. The squadron physician, who occasionally came into camp from a Forward Operating Base, heard about the sergeant's anger. After learning what the sergeant planned, the doctor gave him a direct order to "leave Specialist Garver alone, or the sergeant would

be court-martialed." That ended the harassment.

## MAKING THE DREAM COME TRUE

When Phil completed his military service, he'd obtained the rank of E-5 or Sergeant. Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University) accepted his application, and he began studies for a bachelor degree.

Following college, Phil taught at Mount Vernon Academy for six years and then returned to Southern and taught there for 37 years.

In one of the last classes of his doctoral program, Phil learned something that made many of the puzzle pieces of his life finally fit together. "I took a counseling class to equip me in helping students," says Phil. "In the final session, the instructor outlined the characteristics of dyslexia. The more he wrote on the board, the heavier my heart became. I exhibited every single characteristic." When the professor added that dyslexia isn't a sign of a lack of intelligence, it made all the difference in how Phil approached life.

Phil beat the odds, earning a Master of Science in Physical Education and a Doctor of Education in Health Education. Professional highlights included appointment to Dean of Southern's School of Physical Education, Health, and Wellness and the construction of a Health and Wellness center on the campus.

Under his leadership, a Veterans Memorial Park was constructed that serves as a centerpiece of the Collegedale, Tennessee community.

Honors from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge (the George Washington Honor Medal); the United Way Hero Award; and the American Red Cross Hero Award

recognize his contributions to his community. He is a member of both his hometown's local VFW and American Legion posts.

This man who's contributed so much continues to work as a building contractor, a wellness consultant, a commissioner for the City of Collegedale. He's written a couple of college textbooks and today, he's writing his memoirs.

### I'LL SEE YOU IN HEAVEN

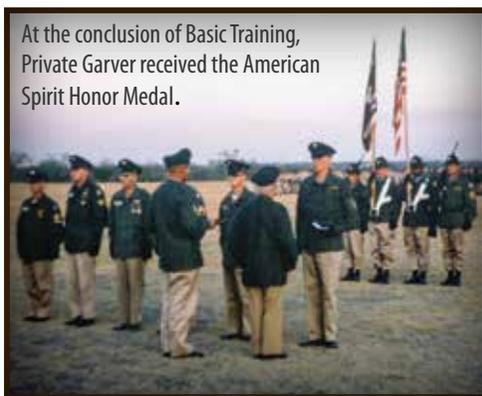
"I'd never forgiven my stepmother for her unloving treatment of me," says Phil. "During a visit with my great aunt Florence, she told me my mother's last words were her desire to meet my brother and me in Heaven. I knew if I didn't forgive my stepmother, I'd never see my mother."

After this revelation, it took three to four years of working through feelings and hurts. "The day came when I forgave her in person," says Phil.

### THE VIETNAM EFFECT

Vietnam saved Phil Garver's life. It was there God became real to him. Phil fingers the pocket Bible he'd received from the National Service Organization before going to Vietnam and reflects on Philippians 4:13. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

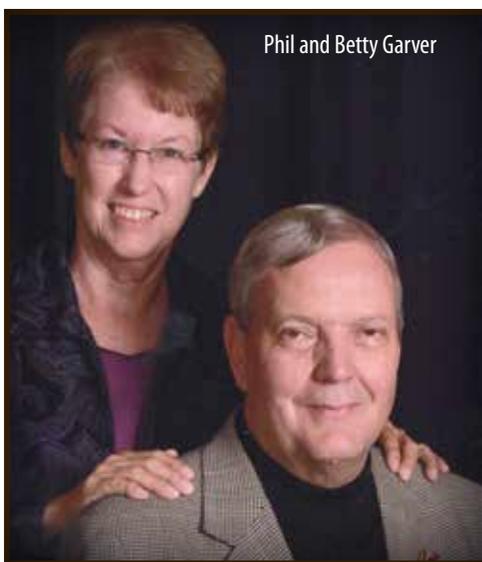
"I went into the Army, a hard-working, happily married kid of 21," says Phil. "I went to church but didn't know, love, or depend on God. I left the Army knowing Christ personally, having seen Him work miracles on my behalf. I left the Army, a new man, motivated, successful, trusted, and empowered with an 'I can' attitude. I felt ready and able to meet and conquer my future. I trusted God and my future with Him."



At the conclusion of Basic Training, Private Garver received the American Spirit Honor Medal.



Standing at the Vietnam Veterans Wall is a solemn moment for Phil. There are too many names of people he knew engraved there.



Phil and Betty Garver

*You can help  
your church save  
a life today!*

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and actions.

1 Corinthians 16:14, The Voice





## ENDURANCE

Recently a friend of mine who is a septuagenarian completed the Marine Corps Marathon for the fifth time. I was regaling him with my admiration when he told me a riveting truth.

David said that anyone who is willing to endure the discipline, sacrifice, and discomfort to achieve that goal can complete a marathon.

He went on to say that the most important trait of the three is endurance. Many people start marathons. Fewer finish. Many people start diets and exercise routines. Fewer stick with them. The same is true of college, careers, and entrepreneurial endeavors. Endurance is pivotal.

I pondered his words. They struck a chord that resonated in my being. I Googled the word and found that it is defined as the act, quality, or power of withstanding hardship or stress. The definition differentiated endurance from survival.

Survival is to endurance what existence is to living. One is necessary for the other to take place, but there is a quantitative and a qualitative difference between the two. Those who confuse the one with the other are deceived. Those who settle for mere survival when they should endure, and who settle for mere existence over life are deprived. And, those who settle for less are both deceived and deprived.

Endurance is something that will get you through when everything that is supposed to work on your behalf does not. Endurance is something that will get you through when all else fails. Endurance is staying power. It is what you do when you can do nothing and have nothing with which to do it and nothing works. You endure.

Endurance is reflected when a person refuses to be defined by their

circumstance, but rallies to define the circumstance. Endurance is reflected when you don't give up, give out, or lose heart.

The world needs leaders. People who are as true to duty as the needle to the pole. Those who rise to the level of leader will more than likely be people who have among others the characteristic of endurance. Completing a marathon, a demanding process, or a career are certainly crescent moments of excellence, heroism, and perseverance in uncommon moments. Endurance is found and prized most among people who regard in their daily life, the routine, the ordinary, the mundane, as the place in which they mean to do ordinary things extraordinarily well. That is endurance.

As you review and reflect on 2019, look for the moments when endurance was demanded. Mine those memories for the nuggets and pearls of value. As you plan for 2020, make some plans to test, push, and motivate yourself to new goals that will require not only the intervention of God but the execution of endurance. In so doing you will perceive new mercies every day. You will grow in your experiences, expectations, and contributions to life, family, work, church, and community.

Set goals personally, physically, financially, and academically. How many books will you read in 2020? How many days of vacation will you take? Where do you want to go that you have never been? Weight? Health? Flexibility? Spirituality in practice and developing new talents and gifts requires endurance. Whatever you choose and plan, take with you the following little ditty by Maltie Babcock Davenport.

### BE STRONG!

We are not here to play, to dream to drift;  
We have hard work to do and loads to lift;  
Shun not the struggle! Face it! Tis God's gift:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul A. Patterson". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the motivational text.

# 2020 A NEW DECADE, A RE-ENERGIZED SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT

The World Service Organization—North American Division (WSO–NAD), a functional chapter of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (ACM), provides complimentary subscriptions of Seventh-day Adventist church publications to active duty military church members. This service has been available for more than 50 years. As always, your comments and suggestions on ways we can provide timely support of religious materials for your personal use are welcomed.

## THE COMPLIMENTARY SUBSCRIPTIONS INCLUDE:

- *Adventist Review*
- *Adult Bible Study Guide*
- *For God and Country*

## TWO JOURNALS OF CHOICE FROM THE FOLLOWING:

- *Guide*
- *Liberty*
- *Message*
- *Our Little Friend*
- *Primary Treasure*
- *Signs of the Times*
- *Vibrant Life*

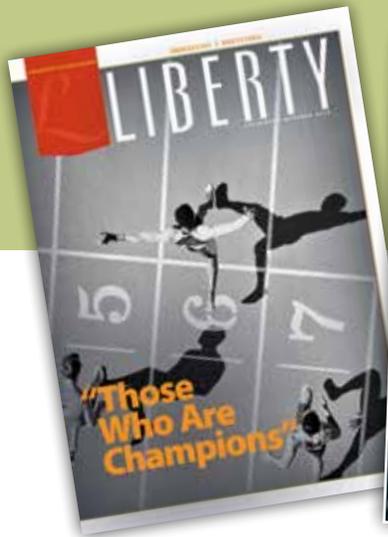
WSO–NAD seeks to be good stewards and needs your help. Keeping mailing lists current and ensuring that magazines are delivered is a part of that stewardship. Your understanding and cooperation will greatly assist WSO to provide effective support for you while you are representing your church and serving your country.

## 2020 ORDER FORM INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Fill out the personal information section on page 30.
2. Select the free devotional book. You may contact ACM if you would like to purchase others.
3. Select two free magazines.
4. Mail form (and check, if you are purchasing any items, made payable to World Service Organization/ACM) to:  
  
Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries  
9705 Patuxent Woods Drive  
Columbia, MD 21046-1565, USA

You may also scan the order form and email it to Dina Muldoon at [DinaMuldoon@nadadventist.org](mailto:DinaMuldoon@nadadventist.org). Put the words “Subscription Request” in the subject line.

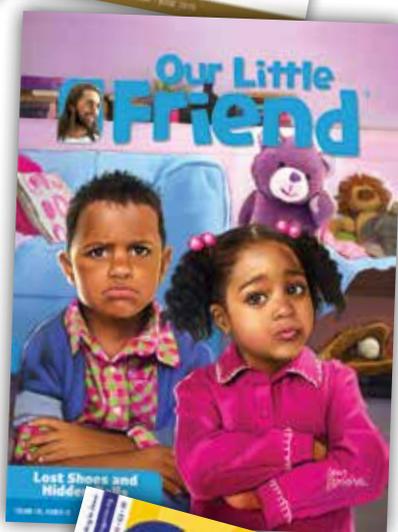
SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOT PERPETUAL. YOU MUST RENEW ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.

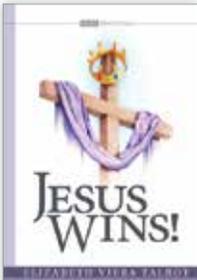


## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To be eligible for WSO-paid subscriptions you must be a Seventh-day Adventist Church member in an Adventist church in the North American Division and in one of the following military-related categories:

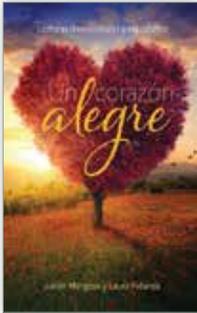
- All Adventist active-duty military personnel
- DoD civilian employee of the military services stationed overseas
- DoDEA teacher or principal stationed overseas
- Military exchanges (AAFES, NEX, etc.) worker overseas
- Government contractor overseas
- Spouse living overseas with their non-Adventist military spouse





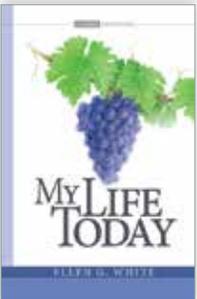
## **ADULT** *Jesus Wins!*

Revisit the stories of Jesus in this life-changing daily devotional. Appreciate His beautiful character. Hear His profound truths in His simple messages. See His tender, loving care for those around Him. No element of His life is too small to provide insight. These insights will revitalize your life!



## **ADULTOS** *Un corazón alegre*

Un corazón alegre presenta meditaciones diarias, divididas por temas, para fortalecer tu autoestima y tus relaciones familiares, así como para alcanzar tus valores. Además, incluye mensajes que te ayudarán a hacer frente a la ansiedad, la depresión y a vivir con la certeza de la salvación por la gracia de Dios, entre otros.



## **ADULT EVENING** *My Life Today*

In these devotionals, a constant call to duty is combined with the assurance of pardon and the promise of joy. You will experience the beauty of holiness, learn the secret of Christian victory, and savor the future destiny of the saints. Best of all, each precious page contains practical suggestions to help you strive for a closer walk with God.



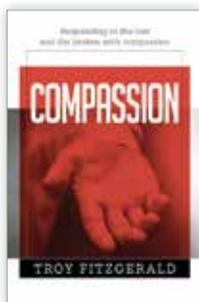
## **WOMEN** *I Am Loved*

Do you crave frequent reminders that Someone treasures you above all else? Does your heart need to hear a love song? Then spend a few moments each day reading the stories in this devotional book. They not only highlight God's multifaceted love but also bring the blessed assurance that His undying love is focused on you. Yes, you are loved!



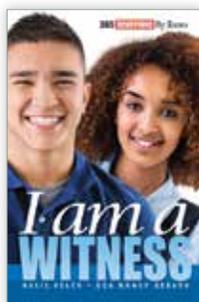
## **MUJER** *Un día a la vez*

Cada día nos llega con sus bendiciones y sus dificultades. Para saber entender y aceptar plenamente unas y otras hace falta sabiduría; esa sabiduría que viene de lo alto y de la cual encontramos las claves en la Biblia. Un día a la vez intenta poner a tu alcance, en pequeñas dosis diarias, esas gemas de sabiduría que Dios nos ha dejado en su Palabra.



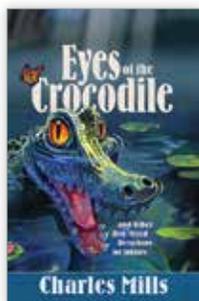
## **YOUNG ADULT** *Compassion*

The parables of Jesus highlight compassion in order to teach us how to reflect His compassion to others. These great truths are worthy of the vehicle of a story to make them memorable and transferable. Every great story has a context. By paying attention to the clues surrounding a story you will get greater insight into the ideas involved.



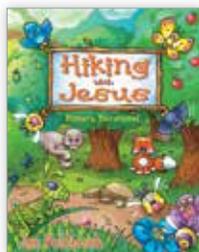
## **TEEN** *I am a Witness*

This devotional is a journey through the Gospels—and some chapters in the book of Acts—as seen through the eyes of the students and staff of Georgia-Cumberland Academy in Calhoun, Georgia. It will help you get to know Jesus more fully as you connect with Him through the reading of Scripture, prayer, and the testimonies of other Christians.



## **JUNIOR** *Eyes of the Crocodile*

Learn about things high and low, near and far, that will give you a handle on life. Each day of the week has a different flavor. For instance, Sunday is Gracelink day, relating to the Sabbath School lesson for that week. Monday is Let's Go Retro, which features some of *Guide's* greatest hits. On Sabbath you'll learn more about the life of Jesus.



## **PRIMARY** *Hiking with Jesus*

Take a “nature hike” through the Bible and discover all the wild and wonderful things that God made for our happiness. Through the eyes of each inspired author you'll learn about nature's great God. And whenever you see a piece of nature in the real world, you'll remember the deeper meaning.



## **PRESCHOOL** *Hugs From Jesus*

These simple object lessons will arouse your child's imagination with a wide variety of hands-on experiences. Most of them involving easy five-minute craft projects that engage all the senses, stimulating your child's growing intellect.

# DEVOTIONAL BOOKS

Adventist active-duty military personnel are eligible to receive a free devotional book, courtesy of World Service Organization/Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries. Guidelines for eligibility are noted on page 27. Single service members, as well as the other employee categories listed on page 27 may choose one (1) free devotional. Married service members may choose two (2) devotionals.

If you would like to purchase additional books, contact WSO for pricing.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ADULT</b> <i>Jesus Wins!</i>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>YOUNG ADULT</b> <i>Compassion</i>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ADULTOS</b> <i>Un corazón alegre</i>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>TEEN</b> <i>I am a Witness</i>          |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>WOMEN</b> <i>I Am Loved</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PRIMARY</b> <i>Hiking with Jesus</i>    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>MUJER</b> <i>Un día a la vez</i>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PRESCHOOL</b> <i>Hugs From Jesus</i>    |

# MAGAZINES

Each year, WSO will send Adventist active-duty member and select government employees who meet the eligibility guidelines a one-year subscription to two magazines from the following list. Please check the appropriate boxes. When you place your subscription request, you will also automatically receive a free subscription to *Adventist Review, For God and Country, and the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Guide</i>             | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Primary Treasure</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Liberty</i>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Signs of the Times</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Message</i>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Vibrant Life</i>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Our Little Friend</i> |  |

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City: State: Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you on active duty now? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Are you in military-related service overseas? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Where are you serving? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Seventh-day Adventist Church member? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Local conference holding membership? \_\_\_\_\_



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To be added to the mailing list, e-mail the editor or call 301-680-6785. Comments and/or articles are welcome and should be sent to the editor at [acmeditor@gc.adventist.org](mailto:acmeditor@gc.adventist.org). Include your full name, complete mailing address, telephone, e-mail address, and current digital photos with all submissions. Items submitted by mail will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped return envelope.

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The National Service Organization is the official military-relations office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its primary mission is to provide pastoral care and religious resources to support the spiritual well-being of Seventh-day Adventist military-related personnel.

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Cultivate that which is noblest in  
yourselves, and be quick to recognize  
the good qualities in each other.

– Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 10



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