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For God & Country

*A Journal for
Military-related
Seventh-day Adventists*





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ADVENTIST and SINGLE

As someone who has been married nearly 49 years to the same spouse, I must confess knowing little about being single, let alone writing with any kind of authority on the subject. Yet, everyone starts the formative period of their lives single and dies alone, regardless of how many family or friends may be with us at the time. Although married, I am still a single human being, unique, alone, except for the commitment and love of another and the children our relationship has produced.

Supposedly, “single” denotes those who have never been married, yet the term “single parent” is a misnomer. Unless somebody has discovered how to have a baby without the union of a male sperm and female egg, there are two parents for every child. In too many cases, marriage turns out to be

disappointing, resulting in divorce and damaged emotions for both spouses and any children. Perhaps that explains why young adults tend to wait longer to marry than in my day. The median age of males was 28.2 and of females was 26.1 in 2010. Perhaps it is better to remain single than live in a marital mistake prompted by teen hormones!

Though relatively quiet on the subject, numbers of Biblical characters are single: the daughter of Jephthah (Judges 11), possibly Samson (Judges 14), the Apostles John and Paul (though uncertain, see 1 Corinthians 7:7-9) and, of course, Jesus. Others were single for extended periods in their lives. To be termed “single” should not imply that one’s whole life remain single, though no judgment condemns being single.

Singleness offers certain

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advantages. The Apostle Paul shares how a single person can devote themselves whole-heartedly to the Lord or profession/vocation without spousal obligations and responsibilities (1 Corinthians 8:32-35). Many singles are highly successful people in their chosen interests. Greater freedom in making choices exists. And one can live cheaper than two, though tax laws and pay scales have not always been fair to singles.

For every benefit, an equal disadvantage surfaces. Unless special effort is made to be outgoing, the single's world can shrink into self-absorption and selfishness without the balance of another intimate opinion from someone who knows you well (your strengths and weaknesses). Without help, the routines of life require time, energy, and money, so there is not as much as supposed to go around.

The military has expended much effort to prepare families for extended deployments and make re-bonding

of marital reunions as smooth and successful as possible. Singles also have special needs when deploying and returning home. Personal possessions and automobiles must be securely stored, then retrieved upon return. Who welcomes home the returning single service member? Singles must move into and set up a barracks room or apartment from bare floor and walls. Sometimes, singles are expected to simply carry-on the unit duties while the marrieds are given time for families. Singles can be tempted to "party-hardy" or go on binge spending with the savings accumulated during overseas duty. These compensations for emptiness and lack of recognition for duties well performed in a combat theater can produce lasting detrimental effects. Returning single service persons merit care for their needs.

Loneliness is a state of mind that can exist in marriage as well as the

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WHAT IS YOUR STORY?

Many Seventh-day Adventists have faithfully served God and country through military service. This is a legacy that should be shared with family, friends, and the church at large.

Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries is seeking stories about Adventists serving on Active Duty, in the Guard or Reserve, or from veterans about their service experiences. Please contact the editor at Deena.Bartel-Wagner@nad.adventist.org to learn how your story can be told.



LEARNING TO LOVE THE SINGLE

Life



By Adrienne Townsend
Lieutenant, CHC, U.S. Navy

I remember the first time I returned to homeport from a five-month deployment. It was a bright sunny morning. We were “manning the rails” as the ship pulled into homeport. “Manning the rails” is when the uniformed crew stands around the perimeter of the ship in the “at-ease position” looking straight ahead.

Prior to our return home, the command had a raffle for a sailor to win “the first kiss.” Daily, I heard my shipmates talk about their upcoming reunions with spouses and children. They discussed plans for romantic dates and catching-up activities. For some reason I had not paid much attention to the conversations or the thought of what it all meant before this moment.

As we pulled into port the sight that greeted us suddenly became overwhelming. Families stood on the pier with banners, signs, balloons,

and flowers. The excitement of the moment shot through everyone.

Suddenly, a thought hit me like a rock. *There is no one on the pier to greet me.* No banner proclaimed my name. There would be no first kiss or hug. No one would say, “Welcome back, Adrienne.” I forced the momentary stab of sadness down until I could process it later. I knew I would need to reflect on how alone I suddenly felt and what those feelings really meant.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SINGLES

Being a Christian single service member is great. Many options and opportunities allow singles to enjoy and live life to the fullest. Yet, there are those days and nights when being single does not feel like a gift. At times not having a specific significant other threatens your sense of life security, fulfillment, and peaceful resolve.

On that day, as our ship sailed

into port, I was far away from my support networks. I was arriving back home in Japan. In Japan...In Japan... The words almost seemed to taunt me. Anyone that could possibly be a support for me was in another country far away.

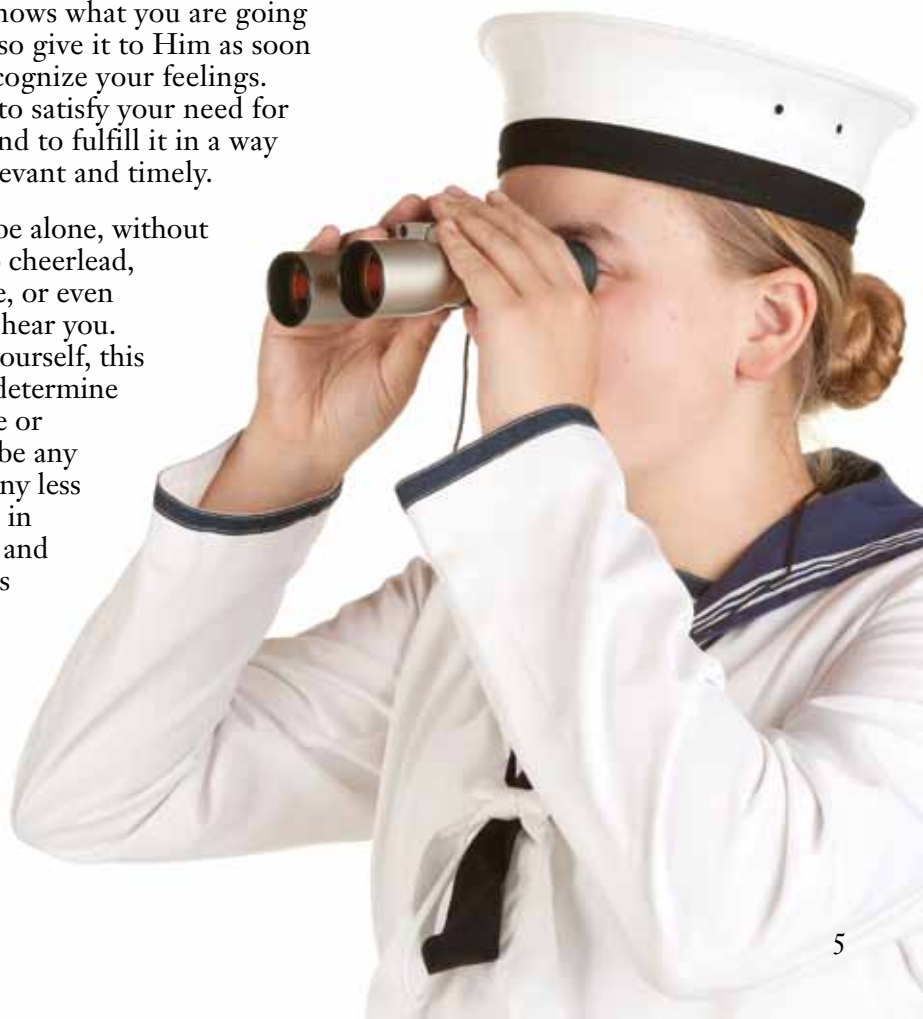
COPING WITHOUT SUPPORT

What do you do when you do not have a viable support network available?

- 1.** Pray. This may seem simplistic, but this has to be your first course of action. Pray and give your feelings to God right away. This will protect you from negative thoughts that may try to consume you. Remember, God knows you better than you know yourself. He already knows what you are going through, so give it to Him as soon as you recognize your feelings. Ask God to satisfy your need for support and to fulfill it in a way that is relevant and timely.
- 2.** You may be alone, without anyone to cheerlead, encourage, or even simply to hear you. Remind yourself, this does not determine your value or ability to be any more or any less successful in your eyes and in the eyes of others.

- 3.** Celebrate the God-given you. Treat yourself to quality “me” time. Sometimes, this means going to sleep and resting. Other times, it is a trip to the spa or spending time relaxing in your favorite way. On other occasions, it may mean God taking you out of your comfort zone and having you reach out to others who are in the same lot in life.

MANY OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES ALLOW SINGLES TO ENJOY AND LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST.



4. Your duty station and billet will influence the ease with which you can keep in touch with family and friends. Currently, I am stationed overseas on a ship. Even as I write this we have lost our ability to communicate with the world via Internet. Communication to my loved ones now and for the foreseeable future via email or phone is non-existent. Circumstances such as these can cause significant challenges to stay connected with life, as you know it. Right now, I would love to just hear a familiar voice, but I cannot.

SEEK AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS GOD-FEARING AND WILL STAND BESIDE YOU IN SEEKING GOD FOR RESOLUTION.

LET ME HELP YOU UNDERSTAND

It is important to remember not everyone will understand your journey. Others outside of the military will not automatically know how to best support you. You must be willing to first keep in touch with your family and friends. Be patient and take the time to share with them what you need.

I have a very dear friend, Louise Albert, or Lou, for short. When I first moved to Japan, Lou told me that I could call her morning, noon, and night. I explained that I would not be able to call her often. I also told Lou I would not be able to tell her details about my job over the phone. We agreed to discuss my needs when I called. By doing this, Lou does not have to play a guessing game.

When I call, Lou will answer her phone if she can. Then I know I can talk and talk until I express everything I am feeling. I also know I can call Louise and say, “Lou, I don’t feel like talking much. I just need to pray.” There are other times when I say, “Lou, I just need to laugh right now.”

When we can’t talk by phone, Lou and I use email. We respond to each other as quickly as we can. Sometimes the responses are long and at other times they are short. Either way, it’s okay. I know that whether I hear from Lou or not, she is always a support network for me.

FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND PRAYER

I am blessed to have an amazing mother who is a huge support network for me. My mother routinely sends me care packages. Mom has become invested in what I am doing and sends care packages to the sailors on my ship. Her emails encourage and remind me that I am blessed and am always being taken care of by the Lord.

Mom has also organized prayer support through her friends, church family, and prayer group. Even when I can’t talk with Mom, I know that I am never alone. I believe that I have been the benefactor of many miracles because of the prayers of the righteous on my behalf.

DON’T GO IT ALONE

At times, it is hard to place yourself in a position of leaning on others for support. The military culture ingrains within



you the ability to be able to be in control and get it done. No one likes to feel weak or dependent on others. Yet, no one should have to do this alone. Jesus retreated and spent some time alone, but He also surrounded Himself with 12 disciples, who were His companions and friends.



There are times when you will encounter situations you have never had to face before. You may face moments when you do not trust yourself to make decisions. In the midst of seeking God, you will long for a human voice to help you process and work through your situation. Sometimes you will need a pat on the back or a shoulder to cry on.

When the worst has happened, ask God for wisdom in who to turn to. Seek an individual who is God-fearing and will stand beside you in seeking God for resolution. Seek one who is trustworthy. They will hold your confidence. Seek one who wants to see you be victorious. Seek someone who has your best interest at heart. Seek someone who will listen. Many people hear us, but you want someone who will *listen*. Seek someone who will stand by you, near or far. The best-case scenario will be someone trusted, tried, and true.

There may be times when you will need to turn to someone unexpected and brand new. Either way, trust God to provide you with the support and individuals you need at the right moment.

Pray and ask God to not allow the spirit of discouragement, loneliness, sadness, jealousy, or doubt fester in your mind and heart. It is easy to become bitter and reclusive very quickly.

The most phenomenal news I can share with single service members is that “God will never leave you nor forsake you.” Jesus is the greatest support network available. He will supply us with human support networks as we continue to seek and serve Him.

LONELY

By Fa'aosa Michael Fa'aosa
LTJG, CHC, USN

IN A CROWDED ROOM

On a crisp Monday morning I pulled into the main parking lot of my new command at NOSC Battle Creek, an Operational Support Center for Naval Sailors/Marines. The command itself was also new, the result of merging two former NOCS's. For several minutes I felt lost. I didn't know where the entrance was or how to enter the building. My feelings of loneliness were compounded because I had no prior military service, except four years of JROTC experience.

I spent time observing several sailors and Marines enter what appeared to be the main door. Even though my freshly ironed,



long-sleeved blue shirt, dark blue tie, black slacks, and black shiny tuxedo-type shoes gave me the appearance of confidence, I still experienced fear and trepidation. I looked professional... and felt scarred witless.

The feeling of loneliness suddenly had new meaning for me. Not knowing what to do, I proceeded to copy what I saw another sailor do before me when he came to the gate. He stopped, looked over his right shoulder, and pushed a certain button.

the main doors. The sailor on duty tried to hide his laughter. I'm sure he was trying not to be disrespectful to this 'poor' lost civilian, turned Navy chaplain, who was entering a world unlike anything he'd ever been used to before.

All the chaotic emotions I experienced seemed like a tidal wave crashing over me in that brief period before I was escorted to the main mustering area where 300 plus soldiers had gathered.

This allowed him to be buzzed in. At the main entrance door the sailor removed his hat, gave a salute to another sailor who stood behind what seemed like a "pulpit-like" structure. He then proceeded forward, only after having his salute returned.

My entrance didn't go as smoothly as the sailor's who had gone before me. I must have pushed the button to the gated facility two or three times more than necessary. Soon I found myself stumbling—literally—through

I made it past the guard to the main hall packed full of military personnel in various uniforms.

Talk about loneliness in a sea of sailors and Marines. I felt sick to my stomach. I promptly asked for the "head" in case I needed to vomit. Having found my "sanctuary," I entered one of the available stalls and tried to regain my composure. I felt overwhelmed with loneliness, not knowing the "normal" day-to-day Naval protocol.



Following what seemed an eternity of tweeting/Facebooking/emailing and texting I finally mustered up the courage to leave my “sanctuary” in search of someone to help me.

I was greeted at what appeared to be the Office of Administration by a kind, smiling sailor. Displayed prominently on her desk were photos of her daughter. I used these as a topic of conversation to “break the ice.”

Before long the sailor helped me locate the correct personnel to transition into the system. My thankfulness for this assistance helped relieve some of my anxiety.

It became clear to me that the general populace felt the same emotions I had experienced.

Nothing prepared me for this experience. All the chaotic emotions I felt seemed like a tidal wave crashing over me in that brief period before I was escorted to the main mustering area where 300 plus soldiers had gathered.

There, I stood at the main doorway intently looking at the scene before me. I noticed another sailor, in civilian attire, who stood towards the back of the group. This sailor looked as lost as I felt. I quickly made my way to introduce myself to her.

I learned that Kathy* had prior military service experience. She had served in active duty and one would think she wouldn't have been nervous or felt lost. Actually just the opposite was true for her.

Kathy had previously

served for fifteen years. Although that amount of time in the military should have given Kathy confidence, it was just the opposite.

The Navy had gone through many changes while Kathy was living and working as a civilian. She shared that her previous experience seemed almost useless. She felt the depth of loneliness that I felt, and probably more so being female in what seemed like a sea of males in the gym. She was an enlisted service member who felt misplaced, misinformed, lonely, lost, and confused.

At that moment I began to see my role as chaplain at NOSC in Battle Creek. I determined to ensure that as long as I was stationed at NOSC, all new and transitioning civilians or soldiers would never feel unwelcome again.

After talking to many of the 300 sailors and Marines from NOSC-Battle Creek, it became clear to me that the general populace felt the same emotions I had experienced.

Added to the chaos, the turmoil in their own personal lives—their



* Kathy is a pseudonym.

families, the deaths of friends and kinsmen, wars they've experienced etc., all played an integral part in their current transitional experience. I wouldn't have understood any of this had I come in through a much smoother transitional time.

Each of us felt some kind of loneliness, yet we all dealt with it differently. A month after my arrival at NOCS, a couple with a two-month-old baby girl came to my office. The parents had dressed the baby in a mini version of our NWUs (Navy Working Uniforms). After spending time with them, I learned they experienced loneliness but in a different way. Their loneliness stemmed from a lack of understanding and emotional support from their fellow shipmates. It was just as heartbreaking to hear their stories.

All humans experience loneliness at one time or another in their lives. You have felt and known what its like to be alone. Serving in the military can add another type of loneliness. Loneliness is endemic, an epidemic of great proportion that needs to be addressed continuously. We all need and crave companionship, support, and love on one level or another. In the case of military service members, support from those both in higher or lower ranks is also important.

Although everyone can experience loneliness, you are the only person that can address and control your loneliness. It may not be easy to overcome, but through proactive choices there are ways to make loneliness less invasive in your life. If allowed, loneliness can begin to attack your body through physical pain, depression and even affect your health by suppressing your immune system.

BEING PROACTIVE

One of the best places to start in

copng with loneliness is to first assess your existing relationships and begin to strengthen them. Ask yourself if you've slacked off on spending time with friends and family. How can you strengthen those bonds and connections? Are you actively building and improving your support network?

Take care of yourself physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Are you getting regular exercise and plenty of sleep? How much time are you spending in the Word and building your relationship with Jesus through prayer and contemplation? Developing a new hobby can be a healing balm to loneliness. Not only are you learning something new, but also you can extend your network of friends.

One of the best cures for loneliness is to help someone else. Who in your circle of influence could you reach out to on a regular basis? Is there another person that might be just as lonely as you? How can you help ease their loneliness? Could you best spend some of your free time volunteering either at church or a community organization?

Do a check-up on your attitude. Are you allowing loneliness to make you unpleasant to be around? Be generous with sincere compliments to others. Create a positive mood and watch how it changes the atmosphere around you.

Don't become overly dependent on social networking for interaction. This can add to a sense of isolation and disconnectedness. Get out and meet people in real life. Build a circle of close, trusted friends as well as a larger circle of casual acquaintance.

We can all experience loneliness. We need to take responsibility upon ourselves to overcome it. In the process, we may be helping others to do the same.

IF YOU WANT TO EXPERIENCE LONELINESS, GET MARRIED



by Bob Davidson, M.Div., M.Ed., LMFT, CSAT
Director, Family Institute, P.C.

If you want to experience loneliness, get married.” I was speaking at a church in Vancouver, Washington about 12 years ago when I said those words. All the teenagers pretending they weren’t listening immediately looked at me. I had their attention.

It was further reinforced when several older people throughout the congregation spoke up and gave a hearty “Amen.” Many were surprised with the responses.

The message was about marriage, dating, and relationships. Why is that statement so true? Wikipedia lacks luster in defining loneliness as “an unpleasant feeling in which a person feels a strong sense of emptiness and solitude resulting from inadequate levels of social relationships.”

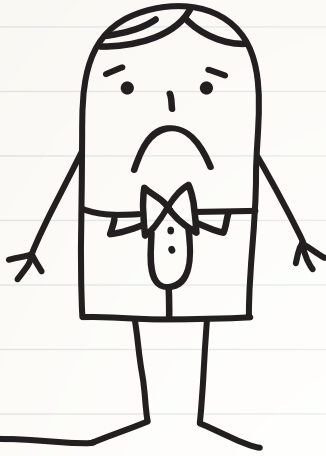
Have you ever experienced loneliness in a family, maybe a large family, in a group, at church or a party? If you marry your spouse only to rid yourself of loneliness, you *will* experience profound loneliness throughout your marriage. Why?

It’s because of the lack of, or inability to, differentiate (leave/launch from your family in a

healthy way). Common signs of undifferentiation are: spending more time reading someone else’s mind than you read your own; keeping the peace at all costs; taking things personally; getting emotionally hooked or easily upset by a comment, gesture, look, or lack of a response by your spouse. You set yourself up for expectations to be met within the relationship and are easily disappointed. This brings profound loneliness.

If you haven’t done healthy differentiation (healthy individuation), you will have problems and experience profound loneliness within a companion relationship. Let me explain.

Humans are wired for companionship. When you connect with a companion and are not living for yourself, you then become more vulnerable to feeling the pain of loneliness. The words of the song, “I Never Knew Lonely” by Vince Gill come to mind. The chorus says:



“I never knew lonely could be so blue.

I never knew lonely could tear you in two.

I never loved someone like I love you.

I never knew lonely til you.”

You must be able to deal with loneliness in healthy ways before marriage or you will have difficulty dealing with the pain of loneliness within the marital relationship. Remember that there is a difference. You can be alone but not lonely. This is easier for an introvert to do than an extrovert. You can also be with large groups of people and be terribly lonely. Even extrovert's can feel this pain.

The foundational solution is Jesus. When Adam was with Jesus in the Garden of Eden, he didn't experience loneliness. Neither do we when we walk (read Scripture... His talking with us) and talk with Him (prayer). He provides a peace and focus in our life that is calming.

God said to Adam that we aren't meant to be alone. In dealing with

loneliness having a companionship with Jesus is the place to begin. When I was drafted, I realized that serious dating was risky. If I went to Vietnam and was killed, it would negatively impact a serious friendship. So, I dated and socialized casually and had some great friends. I thought I had everything together.

When I received orders for Vietnam I felt scared and profoundly lonely. During one weekend with some friends, I became very serious in a relationship that wasn't a good fit. I didn't know what hit me. I was “in love.”

It took eight weeks to realize I wasn't healthy and needed to end the serious relationship. That is when I realized that “I didn't have it together” and needed to turn things over to God. I did. That is when I experienced peace.

Matthew 6:33,34 says, “But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of it's own.” This scripture is key to living, but it also is key to help with loneliness.

I personally believe in this powerful quotation: “And now there must be perfect reliance upon His (Christ) merit and grace; there must be distrust of self, and living faith in Him.” (*Signs of the Times*, November 24, 1890).

You can and will find healthy friendships and families to associate with. After being drafted, I was stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina before going to Vietnam. I had an adoptive family and called them “Mom and Pop Johnson.” In Vietnam I adopted “Mom and Pop Gouge.” I could hang out anytime and we had some great times together. They were family to me.

RESOURCES

FOR THE SINGLE LIFE

READING MATERIAL

His Rules: God's Practical Road Map for Becoming and Attracting Mr. or Mrs. Right by Christopher Burge and Pamela Toussaint – Some worldly “experts” may sound sexy but don’t offer the spiritual tools you need to address the real-life pains, temptations, and fears associated with the dating experience. Quickie solutions won’t cut it, and neither will a wait-and-see approach. You want God’s views—His rules for becoming and attracting a lifelong mate. This book offers the answers you’ve been seeking.

The Sacred Romance: Drawing Closer to the Heart of God by Brent Curtis and John Eldredge – Our God is not distant deity, but a passionate, loving Father. Because of His love He has often wooed us with a life filled with unparalleled beauty, intriguing relationship and wonderful adventure. But we often reject His advances in order to pursue our careers, find self-fulfillment and seek after any number of lovers who are far less wild. In *The Sacred Romance* John Eldredge and Brent Curtis challenge us to let go of these “less-wild lovers” so that we can begin the journey back to the passionate lover of our souls. Don’t miss this opportunity to return to the intimacy, beauty and adventure of life with God.

The Five Love Languages, Singles Edition by Gary Chapman – Whether you’re widowed, divorced, separated, or never married, your deepest emotional need is to feel loved—and your greatest successes will be obtained by loving others. Chapman shows you how to do both effectively in situations unique to single adults—dating; roommates, classmates, and co-workers; family connections; and single parenting.

They Were Single Too: 8 Biblical Role Models by David M. Hoffeditz – In this thorough examination of singleness in Scripture, singles will discover, as the author did, spiritual freedom in the midst of living single.

Singled Out: Why Celibacy Must Be Reinvented in Today's Church by Christine A. Colon and Bonnie E. Field – Colon and Field explore a deeper understanding of celibacy that affirms singles’ decision to be sexually pure, acknowledges their struggles, and recognizes their importance in the church community. Thoughtful and compelling, *Singled Out* combines references to popular culture, theology, history, literature, and anecdotes from the authors’ lives.

BOOKS BY ELISABETH ELLIOTT

Discipline: The Glad Surrender – What it means to accept the lordship of Christ in one’s body, mind, and emotions.

Passion and Purity – A true love story, illustrating principles by which to preserve “the gift you give once”: virginity.

Quest for Love – Using her own life as an example, Elisabeth Elliot guides singles of both genders and of any age on how to put their love lives under the authority of Jesus Christ.

RESOURCES ON THE WEB

Boundless Webzine—Encouragement and advice for navigating relationships, career, culture, faith and more. Boundless helps you mature in Christ as a foundation for marriage and family. That requires living intentionally with purpose by bringing your gifts, talents and Christian worldview to bear on your whole life. www.boundless.org

Focus on the Family Singles—www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_singles.aspx

Love and Grace Media—A blog for Christian Singles
www.loveandgracemedia.com

Crosswalk—The Intersection of Faith and Life
www.crosswalk.com/family/singles

Streams in the Wilderness—Hudson Russell Davis writes about singleness, his spiritual journey and living life in the moment.
www.streamsinthewilderness.com

The Christian Single Woman:

This website provides valuable information to help develop the whole woman to successfully navigate this Christian journey called life. www.christian-single-woman.com/index.html

Girls Gone Wise—Designed to help young ladies “in a world gone wild” in their quest to gain “spiritual smarts in womanhood, regarding life and love. www.girlsgonewise.com

Purposeful Singleness: Provides inspiration, encouragement, and support for Christian singles who may or may not feel called to singleness, but who desire to live purposeful lives for Jesus Christ. www.singleness.org

Adventist Single Adult Ministries
www.adventistsingleadultministries.org

Adventist Online
www.adventistonline.com/group/adventistsingles

ADVENTIST SINGLES RELATIONSHIP FORUMS

Adventist Match
www.adventistmatch.com

Adventist Singles
www.adventistsingles.org

Adventist Singles Connection
www.adventistsinglesconnection.com

The Single Adventist
www.thesingleadventist.com

Adventist Contact
www.adventistcontact.com



COMING BACK HOME



After being away for extended periods, a reunion with families and friends can vary widely and be filled with mixed feelings. Time has moved on, so have the people. Surprises may be waiting a returnee. How do you prepare for and manage the moment of coming back, especially when things seem to have changed beyond expectations? Suddenly, you appear a stranger in what used to be home. Are there lessons to be learned from Joseph's experience?

Joseph was nicknamed "dreamer" because of the visions God gave him regarding his future. He made enemies with his brothers by sharing his vision with them. The road to realization of the dreams was long, through paths Joseph never imagined—hate, slavery, imprisonment, etc. It was his own brothers who wanted Joseph eliminated; and finally sold their own brother to Arab merchants.

Joseph found himself a slave in Potiphar's house and then in prison. But from the prison Joseph proceeded to assume a key leadership role in a foreign country. Though well-placed, Joseph must have repeatedly thought about home—his younger brother Benjamin, his parents, and his homeland. He was alone and yet his singleness did not keep Joseph from remaining true to his beliefs and trusting God for a plan for his life.

Joseph's dramatic reunion with his brothers and family has lessons for us today.

HE WAS PROACTIVE

The moment of reunion presented itself when Joseph's brothers came to Egypt in search of food. Joseph captured it and was determined to sustain the moment and lead. He did not allow for the opportunity to slip by. "If you are honest men," Joseph

told his brothers, “let one of your brothers stay here.” Gen 42:18. He did everything possible for them to come back again. Joseph carefully facilitated the reunion, leading it step-by-step.

He did not stoop low to make it a moment of revenge, but one of forgiveness. Joseph did not hate them or allow negativity to possess him and spoil the opportunity before him. Love, forgiveness, and mending broken relationships were the best approach. He did not become pre-occupied with blame, condemnation, and bitterness. He did not choose to be a spectator or backbencher, but humbly assumed a leadership role. Joseph’s energies were expended in making the reunion successful.

Joseph was the first to recognize his brothers. The fact that the very ones who sold him had forgotten and could not recognize him did not deter Joseph’s efforts towards a positive reunion experience.

HE WAS SUPPORTIVE

Joseph assisted his brothers by giving hints that would facilitate the moment. He inquired closely about the entire family. He gave them food free of charge. He even asked for one of them to remain until they returned safely with the younger brother, Benjamin. Joseph took up this task even at the risk of being misunderstood by his brothers, who thought “Surely we are being punished because of our brother...” Gen 42:21-23.

When the brothers were made to sit around the table in the order of their birth, from first-born to the last without asking anyone of them, they were amazed (Gen. 43:33). Joseph gradually prepared them for a great moment of realization that he actually

was their brother whom they sold years ago.

HE MANAGED EMOTIONS OF THE ENCOUNTER

Joseph, like any other human being, was at times overwhelmed by emotions associated with realities of the reunion moment. But he managed them appropriately. He cried privately and recomposed himself to meet his brothers and led the process intelligently. He controlled his anger, and avoided hastiness. He exercised patience, allowing everyone involved moments to digest what was going on.

HE READILY OFFERED FORGIVENESS

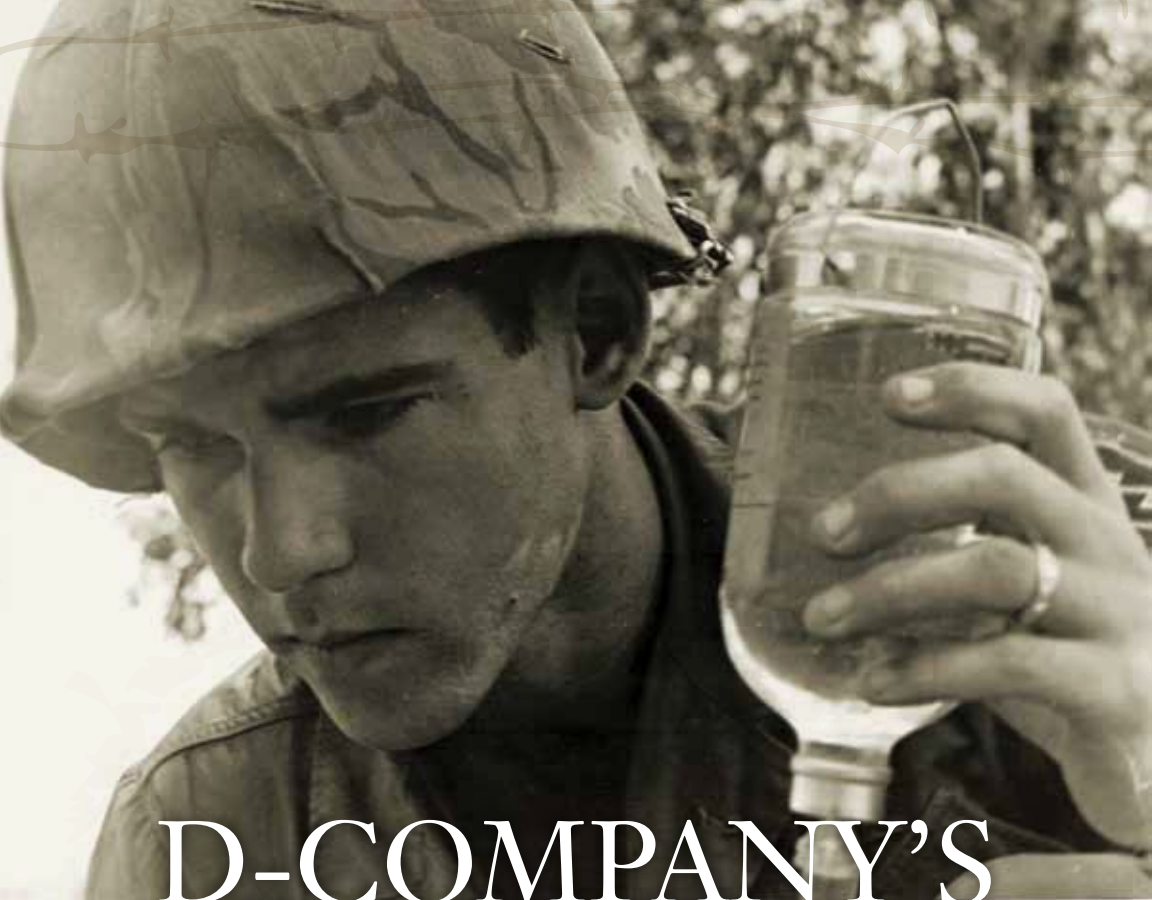
When Joseph finally revealed himself as the brother they sold, he knew that it would hit them hard. He proceeded to pronounce forgiveness even before they asked for it. Joseph engaged the encounter with deliberate effort to reconcile.

HE CELEBRATED THE MOMENT

The reunion matured when Joseph finally pulled his brothers together after a feast he had prepared for them and declared, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt.” He embraced and kissed each of his brothers. He announced this to his workers and to Pharaoh. Finally he urged his brothers, “Now hurry back to my father and say to him...Come down to me; don’t delay.” (Gen 45:3, 4 9).



By Geoffrey Mbwana
*General Vice-President,
General Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists
Chairman, General Conference
Adventist Chaplaincy
Ministries Committee.*



D-COMPANY'S DOC STILL SERVES OTHERS

During his childhood Ken Blakely was the quintessential boy who played army and soldiers with his playmates. Little did he understand that someday he would be a soldier in the United States Army, in the jungles and battlefields of Vietnam.

“Although my father didn’t serve in World War II, I had great admiration for my uncles who had been in the military, along with other veterans who I knew,” says Ken.

During his teen years Ken moved from a boy who played soldier to an

active member of a Medical Cadet Corps (MCC) during his academy years. It was here that Ken learned the intricacies of marching and drilling, how the hierarchy in the military works, the self-discipline it takes to be a soldier, and medical training that would open doors for him later. “I never dreamed how invaluable the things I learned in MCC would be to me in just a few short years,” says Ken. “The leadership and training of men like Harry Garlick, Larry Wolf, and Charles Martin helped me to adapt to

the Army when I was inducted.”

Ken had received a deferment because he was a full-time student with a family. “I needed to work more hours to help support my family,” says Ken. “I made the decision to drop one class and unwittingly lost my deferment.” Although he would have been able to have it reinstated, Ken remembered his uncles who had served their country. He made the decision to do the same and trained at Fort Sam Houston as a combat medic. “I knew there was a high probability that I would be going to Vietnam,” says Ken. “I was at peace with that.” During the process of making my decision to not reinstate my deferment I prayed, *God, wherever You want me to go and do, I’ll do it. I just need You to lead me.*

For a twenty-year-old, the steamy jungles of Vietnam were a different world from his home in California. “I



I knew there was a high probability that I would be going to Vietnam. I was at peace with that.

didn’t arrive in Vietnam with a unit,” says Ken. “I was assigned to Delta Company. I soon learned that I was going to have to prove myself to the other guys in my unit.”

Ken had between 100-140 men under his care through some of the most heavy fighting of late 1967 and early 1968. “My first introduction to the war was the battle at Loc Minh,” says Ken.

During one battle, Ken went in to rescue a forward observer who had been shot in the head. “I lost my aid bag during that rescue,” says Ken. “Six weeks later when we were engaged in another fight to take over a base camp inside Cambodia, I found my aid bag.” As remarkable as that discovery was, Ken had no opportunity to process the unlikelihood of this find. There were always more wounded to be treated and Ken had a job to do.



“Those early battles were only a taste of what we would face a few weeks later when the Tet Offensive began,” says Ken.

The Tet Offensive took place during what had been declared a cease-fire during the Tet Lunar New Year celebrations. Instead, the Viet Cong forces launched a campaign of surprise attacks against both military and civilian targets throughout what was then South Vietnam. Massive casualties were incurred as the communist troops attacked in waves throughout more than 100 towns and cities.

“No one in the States really understood what we were going through during Tet,” says Ken. “I did what many soldiers on the battlefield have done. I made so many promises to God during that time.”

In early February, D Company was dropped at a landing zone near Cu Chi. “We came under immediate, heavy

fire from automatic weapons and rocket launchers,” says Ken. “This was the beginning of a six day battle when we would lose 11 men.” The fight was made more difficult because of spiderholes and tunnels that the enemy had constructed in the area.

On April 17, 1968, Ken and his unit were involved in another fierce firefight. Ken moved from position to position, rendering aid to his wounded men and carrying them to safety. “I heard a cry for help outside the perimeter that we had hastily formed,” says Ken. I knew that whatever it took on my part, I had to get to that soldier, and was able to bring him to safety.” Ken’s actions that day were recognized when he was awarded a Silver Star.

Returning home was different than Ken had imagined. “I remembered hearing stories of the World War II vets coming home to tickertape parades and being welcomed by their country,”



says Ken. "I thought we would receive the same welcome." Instead, Ken was advised not to wear his Class A uniform in public. "I thought to myself, *Are you kidding me?*"

When he returned to college, Ken faced resentment there. "I was taking a class that I was doing well in," says Ken. "In fact, I had an A, until I wrote an essay about Vietnam. The teacher told me to remain after class." It was then that he was told not to write about Vietnam because the teacher was an anti-war activist and didn't want hear what Ken had to say.

With his return stateside, Ken didn't talk much about his war experiences. "The war took a toll on my personal relationships," says Ken. "I was also struggling with the promises I had made on the battlefield and knew they weren't being kept."

The years passed with Ken using work as his escape. "I buried my thoughts and feelings," says Ken. "Then during a move my wife RoseMary discovered some of my medals and other memorabilia. She encouraged me to talk about my experiences."

With RoseMary's encouragement, Ken began to locate former army buddies. "I knew that God had been with me in Vietnam," says Ken. "One day when I was just about as low as I could get, I asked God to give me something to lift my spirits. I was listening to Armed Forces Radio and just after I whispered that prayer, the song "How Great Thou Art" came on. I wept because I knew that God was reassuring me that He knew where I was."

Today, Ken has reconnected with over a hundred of his men and talks with and writes to them daily, giving words of encouragement.

"I serve as an unofficial veterans affairs advocate in my community," says Ken. "I help veterans sort out



Ken Blakely fulfilled a long-time promise when he met Getrude Hunter, the mother of Ken's best friend Willie Hunter, to share Willie's Vietnam experience with her. Ken was with Willie when he died in Vietnam.

their VA medical care. Some have never received the medals that they were awarded. I work on making sure that happens."

Ken prays with and for his brothers-in-arms. An important path for his own healing was to return to Vietnam with several of his buddies. "We went back to those sites where we fought and lost friends," says Ken. The trip to Hoc Mon village was cathartic for Ken. "Hoc Mon was a battle site where most of our men were either wounded or killed, including my best friend, Willie Hunter."

A visit to a former firebase location gave Ken insight into his former enemy's point of view. Ken's wife, RoseMary works with a woman named Kim, who came from the village where the firebase was located. Her mother was married to a GI, who was later killed in the war.

During that visit, Ken met with Kim's extended family. "One of the greatest moments was when I met a former commander of the Viet Cong," says Ken. "The major told me that as soldiers, the Viet Cong did what they were ordered to do. We weren't so different after all. As American soldiers, that's what we did too."

The image features two hands reaching towards each other. The top hand is positioned in the upper left, with fingers slightly curled. The bottom hand is in the lower right, with fingers spread wide. The background is a soft, ethereal glow of light rays in shades of blue and green, creating a sense of hope and connection.

*Don't look out
only for your
own interests,
but take an
interest in
others too.*

—Philippians 2:4 NLT



The Seventh-day Adventist Church has long promoted a message of healthful living. *Adventists InStep for Life* is an opportunity to live and share this message in a broader context and make a positive impact for Christ.

“More than ever the time has come for God’s message of healing and restoration to be heard. *Adventists InStep for Life* is the Adventist response to the childhood and adult epidemic of obesity, and is a wonderful opportunity to make a positive impact for Christ in our communities,” says Katia Reinert, North American Division Health Ministries Director.

The North American Division has set the following four annual goals for *Adventists InStep for Life*:

FOCUS ON NUTRITION AND INCREASED FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SERVINGS BY:

1. Launching 100 summer feeding sites (at least one church and one school site per conference)
2. Starting 100 new vegetable gardens or farmer’s markets (at least

one church and one school garden or market per conference)

INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BY:

3. Accumulating 2 million physical activity miles through walking and other physical activities
4. Sixty percent of Adventist students achieving the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (United States only) or NAD Active Lifestyle Award.

“This is our time! As a church we have long talked about the importance of not just healthy minds and hearts but also healthy bodies. Our culture is coming to grips with its health crises and we have a message for the times. *Adventists InStep for Life* is a wonderful means for advancing our emphasis on health among kids and families. I see this as a program that all 1.1 million Adventists in the North American Division can take part in and encourage their community to embrace,” says Dan Jackson, North American Division President.

YOU CAN PARTICIPATE AND HELP CONTRIBUTE

to the two million physical activity miles by logging in to the *Adventists InStep for Life* website and logging your daily PT or other physical activity. A phone app, available for iPhone and Android users, allows you to report your physical activity while on the go.

To report your activities, simply register at <http://www.adventistsinstepforlife.org/>.

The registration information is located in the right-hand column of the website. Explore the website to learn more about *Adventists InStep for Life*.

ARMING FOR 2013

SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN

For more than 50 years the National Service Organization, a functional chapter of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (ACM), has provided active duty military church members complimentary subscriptions to the *Adventist Review*, *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, *For God and Country*, and two journals of their choice. Funding for these gifts comes, in part, from a shared offering taken every year in the churches of North America.

Recent trends have prompted a need to reassess subscriptions. Many magazines are returned due to address changes. Military personnel leave



the military and do not inform ACM or the publisher. The costs of the journals and postage continue to rise.

To help ease delays in delivery, ACM has been sending bulk mailings of some journals to Adventist chaplains and/or Distinctive Faith

NOTE: All current subscriptions will end on 31 December 2013. If you desire to receive any of the church journals listed, you must inform ACM as soon as possible to either reinstate and continue a subscription or start a new subscription for 2013. The subscriptions will be paid by ACM for only one year. If you desire the subscriptions to continue or wish to change which journals you receive, you must send ACM a written request for those subscriptions of church journals you wish to receive in 2013 and each succeeding year thereafter—no request, no journals.

ACM is offering to send the *Adventist Review* and *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* to any eligible church member plus up to two free subscriptions of their choice from the list below:

Guide
Insight
Message
Our Little Friend
Primary Treasure
Signs of the Times
Vibrant Life



Group Leaders (DFGLs) overseas. These individuals have been asked to make the magazines available to attendees of the Adventist Military Chapel Worship Groups (AMCWGs). This method has helped get the magazines into the hands of readers.

Individuals will need to request desired subscriptions annually. The only exception to this is for subscriptions to *For God and Country*. Subscription requests can be done via e-mail to deena.bartel-wagner@nad.adventist.org, or acm@gc.adventist.org, or by using the form on page 28. Subscriptions are not perpetual. Because you have requested a journal once, please do not assume that it will continue being sent to you for as long as you are in the military. Your requested subscriptions are valid for only one year and need to be renewed by your written request.

To be eligible for ACM 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 active-duty military stationed anywhere (overseas or stateside)
- 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 husband or wife

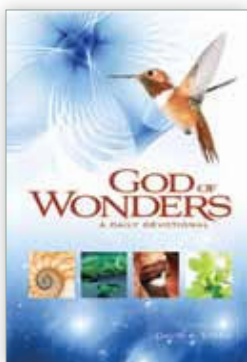
ACM will continue to send bulk mailings of the *Adult Bible Study Guide*, *Insight*, *Guide*, *Primary Treasure*, *Our Little Friend*, and the *Adventist Review* to the AMCWGs meeting overseas. If you are regularly attending one of these groups, you can obtain your Sabbath School journals from them. DFGLs, remember to order the journals needed for your group as far in advance as possible. The publishing houses require four to six weeks' notice before changes in address or numbers take effect.

Your understanding and cooperation will greatly assist ACM to provide effective support for you while you are representing your church and serving your country. As always, ACM is open to your comments and suggestions on ways we can provide timely support of religious materials for your use.

ADULT

God of Wonders

David A. Steen



Explore the wonders of creation with biologist David A. Steen. God's creative genius will take your breath away as you discover the complexity of things you once took for granted

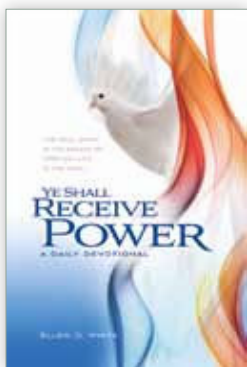
such as taste, gravity, skin and even bacteria.

Hardcover. 978-0-8280-2511-9.

ADULT EVENING

Ye Shall Receive Power

Ellen G. White



These excerpts from Ellen G. White's writings reveal the work of the Holy Spirit, the complete transformation that He brings about in a believer's life, and just how desperately we

need Him.

Hardcover. 978-0-8280-2669-7.

The adult and evening devotionals are available in an attractive, boxed gift set.

WOMENS

Blessed

Ardis Dick Stenbakken



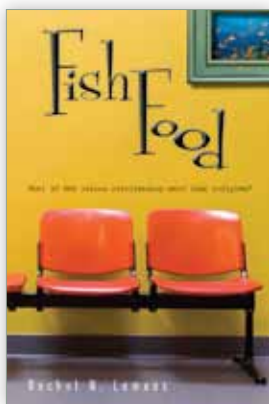
Women from around the world share experiences that remind us that we are always showered in God's blessings. Even during those times when life is not good, we can see that God is.

Hardcover. 978-0-8280-2654-3.

YOUNG ADULT

Fish Food

Rachel N. Lemons



Jonah was fish food so God could save his life . . . and the Ninevites. By looking at the lives of Jonah and other biblical characters, we see how God can take a bad day and use it

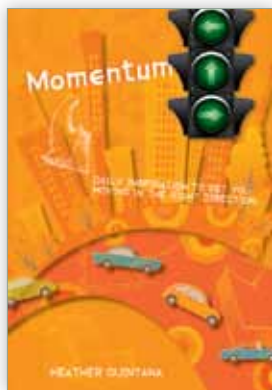
to prepare us for great things.

978-0-8280-2539-3.

TEEN

Momentum

Heather Quintana



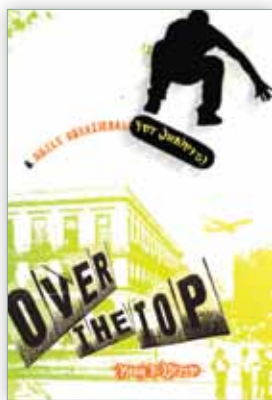
This devotional is jam-packed with Bible adventures, funny stories, weird news, and crazy facts that will help get teens moving in the right direction for the rest of their lives.

978-0-8280-2593-5.

JUNIOR

Over the Top!

Kay D. Rizzo



Ready for more adventure than you ever thought possible? Take the plunge and let Jesus call the shots this year. You'll be amazed by what God has in mind for you!

Hardcover. 978-0-8280-2598-0.

PRIMARY

Heroes in Training

Vicki Redden



Read about heroes from Bible times to modern times: boys, girls, cats, dogs, horses—even a pig named Priscilla. And with each fun-delicious story

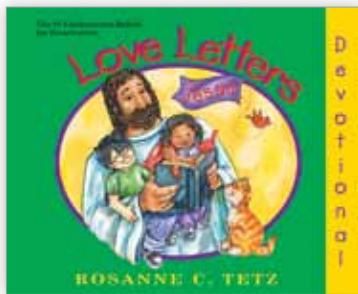
you'll learn something new from each of God's heroes, and how you can be one too.

Hardcover, Daily Devotional.
978-0-8280-1843-2.

PRESCHOOL

Love Letters From Jesus

RosAnne Tetz



Enjoy more than 180 devotional readings for preschoolers, using simple object lessons that your child can touch, smell, squish, color, and laugh over.

Hardcover. 978-0-8280-1516-5.

DEVOTIONAL BOOKS

Adventist active-duty military personnel are eligible to receive a free devotional book, courtesy of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries. Guidelines for eligibility are noted on page 25. Single service members, as well as the other employee categories listed on page 25 may choose one free devotional. Married service member may choose two devotionals books.

- ADULT – *God of Wonders*
- EVENING – *Ye Shall Receive Power*
- WOMEN – *Blessed*
- YOUNG ADULT – *Fish Food*
- TEEN – *Momentum*
- JUNIOR – *Over the Top*
- PRIMARY – *Heroes in Training*
- PRESCHOOL – *Love Letters From Jesus*

MAGAZINES

Each year NSO will send Adventist active-duty members 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 subscription to *Adventist Review* and the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*.

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

2013 ORDER FORM INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Fill out the personal information section.
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 NSO) to Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries at the address below. You may also scan the order form and email it to Dina Muldoon at Dina.Muldoon@nad.adventist.org.

Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Are you on active duty now? No Yes

Are you in military-related service overseas? No Yes

Where are you serving? _____

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

Local conference holding membership? _____

Mail this form to the address listed below or e-mail dina.muldoon@nad.adventist.org. Put the words "Subscription Request" in the subject line. Subscriptions are not perpetual. You must renew on an annual basis.



National Service Organization • Adventist World Headquarters
12501 Old Columbia Pike • Silver Spring, MD 20904

VETERANS HONORED AT OREGON CONFERENCE CAMPMEETING

More than 40 veterans along with family and friends were honored at the Oregon Conference Camp Meeting with an Ice Cream Feed. “The Oregon Conference National Service Organization (NSO) Advisory team coordinated the event,” says Tracy Woods, Associate Youth Director and National Service Organization (NSO) Chairman. Members of the committee include three retired chaplains—Del Griebel, Bob Davidson, and Larry Roth, and Bob Ulloa, a Whitecoat veteran.

“Our desire was to recognize our younger veterans who are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan,” says Woods. “We want them to know the church takes their service seriously. It was an opportunity for the corporate church to recognize the contributions of these young adults.”

In previous years, the NSO Committee has sponsored events that put together care packages called *Love Boxes*. These were sent to troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. This project will continue with the local Pathfinder clubs participating. The NSO Committee is already discussing plans for the 2nd Annual Ice Cream Feed for Veterans at Campmeeting 2013.

“It was rewarding to see the younger vets visiting with veterans from the Vietnam and Korean War eras,” says Larry Roth, Assistant ACM Director for Northwest NAD. “This was an opportunity to recognize the service and sacrifice of those who have been willing to serve their country.



Tracy Wood, Associate Director, Youth /NSO (center) speaks with friends and family members during a recent event to honor veterans at the Oregon Conference Campmeeting



Bob Davidson, CH (Lt Col) US Army, retired, a member of the Oregon Conference NSO Advisory Board and *For God and Country* columnist, visits with guests.



A Korean War veteran, far right, shared memories of his military service with his family members.



NAD MILITARY CHURCH

Charter Membership

If you are assigned overseas for six months or longer in some type of official government or military-related service for Canada or the United States (active duty in the armed forces, civilian employee, teacher, AAFES worker, contractor, or family member), then you are eligible to join the NAD Military Church. To request a transfer of your membership, visit <http://nad.AdventistChaplains.org>. Click on the link “NAD Military Church.”

Membership transfer request forms are available under “Membership.”

Your NAD Military Church staff and board look forward to serving you!

Online Giving

Honoring God through faithful stewardship is encouraged of all Seventh-day Adventists. In the Bible rich blessings are promised to those who return an honest tithe and are generous with offerings to support God’s work.

In response to requests from Adventist members in the United States military, the NSO has made arrangements for members in the U.S. Armed Forces serving outside the United States to be able to send tithes and offerings through the North American Division, and thus qualify for a receipt for tax-exempt contributions.

For your convenience go to www.nad.adventistchaplains.org and use the drop-down menu to make your contribution online.

Chaplains and members are encouraged to support ACM/NSO as their “conference” that provides pastoral care and religious materials for their spiritual well-being. Also, please remember to support your base chapel program. Military members serving in countries in other world divisions should contact their conference/union leadership or the division ACM director for further guidance in this area.



**RICH BLESSINGS
ARE PROMISED
TO THOSE WHO
RETURN AN
HONEST TITHE.**

single person. Married couples who fail to communicate can be very lonely and often seek ways to fill the void. Relationships need not always carry a sexual connotation or lead to immoral trysts. God's commands to live morally pure lives apply to marrieds and singles alike. When clear boundaries are drawn and followed, encounters and relationships with the opposite sex can occur safely. In fact, life would be rather dull without such friends.

Adventism exalts marriage and family relationships and values, and rightly so. However, the downside of that emphasis is a not-so-subtle prejudice toward singles. Even worse, out of benign ignorance, we ignore them. When I was deployed overseas in my younger years, we had three small children. My wife, Joyce, quickly discovered that she no longer "fit" in the church where I had just served as pastor. The marrieds rejected her as a "single mom" threat, and the singles knew she was married and did not include her in their circle. In essence, she became *persona non grata* until I returned home and resumed my role as pastor. Any prejudicial stigma about singleness must not be tolerated among Christians. Individuals should be treated with respectful care regardless of their status.

We all exist in our individual world of sensual perceptions, perceived experience, learning, multiple relationships, and dreams. In that sense, we are all unique, alone, and single. Only as we reach out to share with others do our lives and world expand. When we do, in reality, we all become linked in many relationships; yet, if we so choose, can still remain single and fulfilled.

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If you would like to be added to the mailing list, e-mail ACM or call 301-680-6780. Comments and/or articles are welcome and should be sent to the editor at Deena.Bartel-Wagner@nad.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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301-680-6783; e-mail acm@gc.adventist.org;
URL: <http://nad.AdventistChaplains.org>.

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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“By trying to grab fulfillment
everywhere, we find it nowhere.”

Elisabeth Elliot, Passion and Purity



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