

Complete Executive Summary

Telephone Interviews of
Seventh-day Adventist Pastors

Interview Dates:
August 14, 1998 –
September 10, 1998

*Conducted by Curtis Rittenour
Resource Development
AdventSource*

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Pastoral Interviews

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Interview Dates: **August 14, 1998 – September 10, 1998**
Number of Calls in this Report: **50**
Number of Conferences Represented: **15**

THE QUESTIONS

Question 1. *What outstanding books have you read in the last year?*

ADVENTIST: The two most frequently mentioned books were *Over and Over Again* edited by Ed Reid and Ron Knott and *Thirty Days to A More Powerful Prayer Life* by Joe Engelkemeir. Both were mentioned four times. Books mentioned three times include *Receiving the Word* by Samuel Pipim and *Sunday's Coming* by Ed Reid. The most frequently mentioned author was Ellen White (12 times).

A Biography of Ellen White by Arthur White.
(2) *Abandon Ship* by Ty Gibson.
Adventism in Conflict by Leroy Moore.
Beyond Belief Reviewed by Kevin Paulson.
Burned Out on Being Good by Steve Mosely.
Christ's Way of Reaching People by Philip Samaan.
Clifford Goldstein's books.
(2) *Desire of Ages* by Ellen White.
(2) *Education* by Ellen White.
End Time Prophecies by Hans LaRondelle.
From Exodus to... by Morris Venden.
God's Hand on My Life edited by Larry Geraty.
Hindsight by David Fiedler.
How to Bring Men to Christ, by R. A. Torrey.
Inspiration by Alden Thompson.
Lonnie Melashenko's book on the cross.
Messenger of the Lord by Herbert E. Douglass.
(2) *Ministry of Healing* by Ellen White.
My Gripe With God by George Knight.

(4) Over and Over Again edited by Ed Reid and Ron Knott.
 Patriarchs and Prophets by Ellen White.
 (3) Receiving the Word by Samuel Pipim.
 Resurrection book by Samuel Bacchiocci.
 Revolutionary Churches for the 21st Century by Russell Burrill.
 Russell Burrill's trilogy.
 Sabbath School Helps by Dorothy Watts.
 Secrets of the Lost Races by Rene Noorbergen.
 Small Groups for the End Times by Kurt Johnson.
 Sparks from the Anvil by E. E. Cleveland.
 Spirit of Prophecy books.
 Story of Redemption by Ellen White.
 (3) Sunday's Coming by Ed Reid.
 (2) Testimonies to the Church by Ellen White.
 The Clear Word by Jack Blanco.
 (2) The Incredible Power of Prayer by Roger Morneau.
 The Life of HMS Richards by Bob Edwards.
 The Remnant by Clifford Goldstein.
 The Richest Caveman by Doug Batchelor.
 The Sanctified Life by Ellen White.
 (2) The Shape of the Coming Crisis by Don Mansell.
 Things We Don't Talk About by Skip McCarty.
 (4) Thirty Days to A More Powerful Prayer Life by Joe Engelkemeir.
 Walking Through Your Bible by HMS Richards.
 When We Pray for Others by Carol Johnson Shewmake.
 Who's Afraid of the Old Testament God? by Alden Thompson.

NONADVENTIST: The two most frequently mentioned books were Purpose Driven Church by Rick Warren and What's So Amazing About Grace by Philip Yancey. They were both mentioned four times. One book was mentioned three times, My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers. Books mentioned twice include Developing the Leader Within You by John Maxwell and Don't Sweat the Small Stuff by Richard Carlson. The most frequently mentioned author is Philip Yancey (6 times), with three different books being referenced. Other frequently mentioned authors are Rick Warren, Stephen Covey, Oswald Chambers, Richard Carlson, Bill Hybels, and Phillip Johnson.

A Shepherd's Look at Psalm 23 by Philip Keller.
 Active Training: A Handbook of Techniques, Designs, Case Examples, and Tips by Melvin L. Silberman.
 After Mormonism, What? by Latayne C. Scott (Baker Book House).
 Awaken the Giant Within by Anthony Robbins.
 Christian Theology and Medical Ethics by James B. Tubbs, Jr.
 Community That is Christian: Handbook on Small Groups by Julie A. Gorman.
 Credos Contemporaneos by Daniel Scarone (Spanish).
 Darwin on Trial by Phillip Johnson.

(2) Developing the Leader Within You by John Maxwell.
(2) Don't Sweat the Small Stuff by Richard Carlson
Don't Sweat the Small Stuff in Your Family by Richard Carlson.
Experiencing God by Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King.
First Things First by Steve Covey.
Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue by Edwin H. Friedman.
How to Be A Hero to Your Kids by Josh McDowell and Dick Day.
How to Be Organized In Spite of Yourself by Sonny Schlenger and Robert Roesch.
How To Become A Contagious Christian by Bill Hybels.
In His Steps by Charles Sheldon.
In the Eye of the Storm by Max Lucado.
In the Footsteps of Jesus by Bruce Marchiano.
Lay Driven Ministry by...
Mentoring by Bob Biehl.
Ministry Trend for 2000 by Kandhyun Oh (Korean).
(3) My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers.
NIV Application Commentary by David Garland.
Pastoral Grit (Pastor's Soul Series) by Craig Brian Larson.
(4) Purpose Driven Church by Rick Warren.
Reason in the Balance by Phillip Johnson.
Rediscovering Church by Bill Hybels.
Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey.
Seven Habits of the Highly Effective Family by Steve Covey.
Stock Market Miracles by Wade Cook.
Stories I Couldn't Tell While I Was a Pastor by Bruce McIver.
System Sensitive Leadership by Michael Armour and Don Browning.
Ten Great Ideas from Church History by Mark Shaw.
The Cross of Christ by John R. W. Stott.
The Issachar Factor: Understanding Trends That Confront Your Church and Designing a Strategy for Success by Glen S. Martin, Gary L. McIntosh.
The Jesus I Never Knew by Philip Yancey.
The Kingdom of the Cults by Walter Martin.
The Kneeling Christian by an unknown Christian.
The Life of St. Paul by James Stalker (Revell).
The Path by Laura Beth Jones
The Path to Holiness by John White.
The Road Less Traveled by Scott Peck.
Victory Over the Darkness by Neil Anderson.
Were You There by Tom Houston.
(4) What's So Amazing About Grace by Philip Yancey.
Where Is God When It Hurts by Philip Yancey.

Question 2. *Are you planning to be involved with Net '98? If yes, what is your greatest concern?*

Thirty five of 50 pastors (70%) indicated that at least one of their churches would be involved in Net '98. Concerns expressed can be grouped into three major areas. The first is the program itself. Several expressed concern over the Gen X focus. Some wondered if the music would be too contemporary for older members. Others hoped that 40-50+ community people who come out wouldn't be let down. Another said he hoped it wouldn't just be "splashy" but would be "spiritual." Several said, "Is it just focused for 20 something's? Along these same lines were the more general questions about whether satellite evangelism will "work" in "my" community.

The second grouping of concerns focused on materials and equipment. Several non-English pastors brought up questions about materials and broadcasts being available in other languages (Spanish and French). In fact, this group as a reason for not being involved frequently mentioned language barrier and lack of money. Another pastor wondered about the non-Caucasian representation in the program and materials. Along another line there were a few pastors who had trouble accessing material on the Website (couldn't find a password—interviewer gave it to him, and couldn't open the materials—needed the Acrobat program...). Another expressed that his children's leaders wanted the materials more quickly for their part and another ordered a "chip" that hadn't arrived for his equipment. One pastor felt the choice of the New King James Version was poor and also wished the local church could choose a "giveaway" book instead of Dwight's book being the choice. He used the phrase, "We felt co-opted."

A third grouping of concerns might be called internal. Many pastors had no concerns about the program, they were only concerned about their internal preparation. Some felt "behind" in getting everything ready. Others "hoped" the feed would come through OK and that they wouldn't have equipment problems. And others wished for more finances to do better advertising. Many asked, "Will this work" and "Will it be worth the dollar investment?" Also voiced was the question, "Will we get people to come out?" One pastor felt that satellite evangelism is "indirect" evangelism and can never replace "direct" evangelism, which is personal and one on one. He felt we need to be careful not to lead members into believing that the "dish" is a substitute for friendships—which is the most successful way of leading people to Jesus.

Question 3. *What do you perceive to be three key factors to a healthy youth ministry?*

Four areas surfaced in this question: Involvement, Leadership, Programs, and Ministry to Youth. The most frequently mentioned comment among these pastors was, "We need to involve our youth in the life of the church." That meant in areas of church life (planning programs, involving them in worship services, church offices, evangelism and outreach, etc.). One pastor said, "We need an 'integrated' approach to ministering to youth, not a 'segregated' approach."

Leadership was also mentioned as a key factor. Most spoke of having someone (other than the pastor) dedicated and committed to ministering to youth. Other words used to describe leadership include charismatic, relevant, someone who 'owns' the program, involved, etc. A few pastors wished for more youth pastors available (and funding). Another spoke of the need for ongoing training of youth leaders. And a few also spoke of the need to train youth to be leaders themselves.

Programming was another key area. Many pastors spoke of 'discipling' and 'Bible teaching' and 'gospel-oriented materials' as a part of the development of youth into followers of Jesus. While socials and fellowshiping was frequently referenced, several quickly added that it be in the context of good, solid, Bible teaching. "We need to teach the distinctives of Adventism" and "We need to be careful not to just entertain them" and "Let's not water down the gospel in order to be relevant", etc. One spoke of the importance of having a hospitable place to meet. Another talked about worship that provided for their preferences. One interesting point came from many small church pastors (who often said, "I wish we had some youth!"), and that is the need for area wide youth gatherings. Not so much conference events (on a once or twice a year basis), but more local gatherings (perhaps once a month). Many small church youth feel very isolated.

A final key spoken of was in personally ministering to youth. "I think we need to listen to youth" and "Let's show them appreciation" and "An occasional hug is important", etc. Pastors talked about "just sitting around and listening" and "doing things with them" and "asking questions." Several pastors emphasized the support of the rest of the church as being crucial. They stated that the church at large needed to show interest in the youth. "The church needs an open attitude" and "We need to say, 'You are valuable'" and "We wouldn't have a church if we didn't have youth", etc.

Question 4. Does your church have a small group ministry? Where have you found the most helpful materials for training and/or curriculum?

This question was difficult, initially, to report on. The interviewer at first tracked churches that had "any" groups, but then part way through the 50 pastors, began pushing for more details on a "formal ministry" of training, nurturing, and maintaining small groups. Approximately 60% of the pastors spoke of having small groups. Only about 25% of the pastors would fall into the category of having a "ministry".

Training materials mentioned include books by Craig Dossman, Kurt Johnson, Clarence Schilt, Roberta Hestenes, NAV handbook on small groups, Willow Creek, Paul Yonggi Cho; video seminars by Carl George, Lyman Coleman, Roberta Hestenes; seminars by Garrie Williams, Jose Esposito, Samuel Monnier, Willow Creek, someone from N.J. conference named Cortez. And another has an elder in his church who received a D. Min.

from Fuller and wrote an excellent paper on small groups. His primary professor was Peter Wagner.

Curriculum used in small groups mentioned include a pre-marriage video series by Norm Wright, Kurt Johnson book, Windows on John and Revelation (Oregon Conference), Randy Maxwell's book on prayer, Willow Creek's Interaction series, Ellen White books, Serendipity guides, Garrie Williams book on the Holy Spirit, Purpose Driven Church, Blackaby's Experiencing God book, 27 Fundamental Beliefs book. Two pastors write their own material for their groups. One pastor referred to help from a Judith Hamblin (not sure if it was a book, video, etc.).

Several pastors spoke of "trying" small groups and reported "It didn't work for me." One female pastor from Canada has successfully planted a French church based on small groups. Another pastor requested, "We need material on small groups that addresses the political structure of many of our churches, which makes it difficult to begin small groups." Another pastor finished reading a book (Ministry Trend 2000) by a Korean (not Adventist) pastor from Garden Grove, California who planted a successful church based on small groups. And another pastor described a small group prayer meeting that is a flexible small group format that has several nonAdventists coming.