

Seventh-day Adventist® Church
CENTRAL JAMAICA CONFERENCE

EDUCATION WEEK 2025
MAY 4-10, 2025

"HOME, CHURCH, SCHOOL:
UNITED FOR ETERNITY"

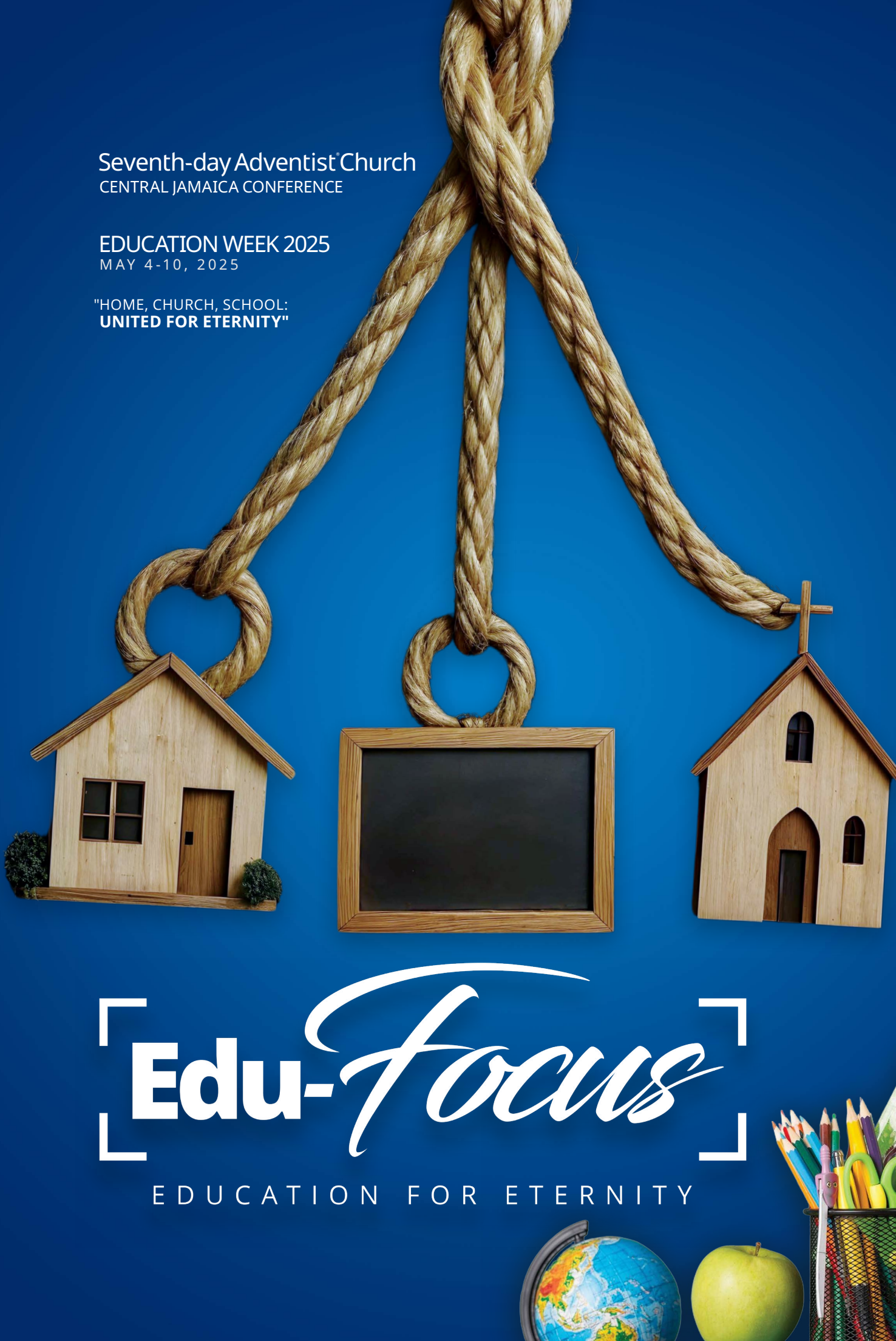




Table of Contents

3 • INTRODUCTION | NEVAIL D. BARRETT, MA, JP
United in Christian Education

4 • SUNDAY | DANIEL R. ALLIDA, PhD & VENCIE B. ALLIDA, PhD
The Hidden Curriculum: Unveiling the Secular
vs. Christian Education Agenda

6 • MONDAY | NICOLE MAUZARD, PhD
Challenges in Christian Education: Where Is Our Focus?

8 • TUESDAY | DR. PATRICIA HUDSON-HENRY, PSYD, ASDI
Embracing Neurodiversity with Love:
Understanding and Supporting Children with Autism

10 • WEDNESDAY | IKECHUKWU OLUIKPE, PhD
Praying for Our Children:
Inviting God's Power to Preserve Future Faith

12 • THURSDAY | DAMIAN R. CHAMBERS, ThM
Navigating the Digital World: Practical Strategies for
Parents and Teachers to Manage Media Usage

14 • FRIDAY | MARTIN HANNA, PhD
The Spiritual Gift of Scholarship

16 • SABBATH | ROX-ANNE MCKOY CHAMBERS, MA
The Threefold Cord of Education
Home, Church and School: United for Eternity

22 • FEATURE
Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Education Sponsors/Secretary

Willowdene High School in Spanish Town, Saint Catherine, Jamaica



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CENTRAL JAMAICA CONFERENCE

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INTRODUCTION

United in Christian Education

BY NEVAIL D. BARRETT, MA, JP

Graduands during the Willowdene High School graduation in Spanish Town, Saint Catherine, Jamaica

How do we get to keep our youth for time and for eternity? Does the burden belong to any one person or institution? Most of us agree that the training of our young population is shared responsibility - “*All hands on deck.*” McCallum (2021)¹ wrote that youth attrition is a two-way loss: the church loses great talent and skills, while the youth themselves give up their chance of real and eternal happiness. I’ll add that the home suffers severely when its investment in child-upbringing is squandered by unwise decisions of the offspring.

Much has been said about educating the young and how education is delivered and received. One controversial quote, attributed to both Mark Twain and Grant Allen, posits, “*Never let schooling interfere with education.*” In this statement, the point is made that human development cannot be one-directional but encompasses all aspects of growth and maturity, contributing to a citizen competent in both book and street smartness. While embracing the writer’s general outlook towards wholistic learning, I also propose that schooling and the experience gained from the dynamics of daily living can be repositioned to serve together, instead of the one being an interference to the other.

To achieve such repositioning, Seventh-day Adventist Christian Education calls for the alliance of home, church, and school in the training of our youth. These three major influencers are to harbor one purpose – the true object of education: to restore the image of God in the soul (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 595).³ Christian educators, amidst the conflicting values of

our world, seek to redirect and center affections and practices upon this chief goal. It is the project of a lifetime, and it is a group task.

Cooperative learning comes immediately to mind. In this setting, usually the classroom, students work together in groups to achieve shared learning goals.⁴ I’m happy to further encourage such collaboration in the dynamic spaces of home and church where teaching and learning are reinforced and life lessons reiterated. The Adventist home, church, and school: in each place, the instructive activities might differ, but the aim must be the same.

Jesus’ restorative pronouncement upon Peter was, “*Feed my lambs*” (John 21:15-17). This “*feeding*” was not to be a mere career calling. It is a love-motivated passion and mission. For indeed, it is “*the love of Christ [that] compels us*” (2 Corinthians 5:14), and God loves the entire world (John 3:16). Therefore, all must be fed.

The command is for all believers, wherever we find ourselves – parenting, tutoring, faith-sharing. And the feed is “*the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of the holy*” (Proverbs 9:10), the source of wisdom and understanding. This nourishing is meant to be life-long and eternal. To ensure heaven-bound results, we must employ every discipling opportunity. The home, church, and school are ready and recognizable agents.

United for eternity – let this be our norm, a process that involves spending time together, building relationships, and earnestly praying. The education begun in this life will be contin-

ued in the life to come (Christian Education, p.70).² Hence, our combined efforts towards our students’ physical, mental and moral development are not being spent in vain.

Let us give praise, honor, and glory to God Who gave to Earth His only Son, the Master Teacher. Because of this great sacrifice, we have the joy of co-laboring with Christ, teaching, healing, baptizing. Many of us are products and beneficiaries of Christian education: time tested and proven. Let us continue to find inspiration in the ministry of men and women thus trained who are an honor to God and a blessing to the world.

What a high and holy duty we have as parents, teachers, and church families to give godly instruction to our children. What amazing access we have to Holy Spirit power (Acts 1:8) and the endless assurance of Jesus Christ our Lord (Matthew 28:20)! How do we get to keep our youth for time and for eternity? By the grace of God, we shall do this ... together.

¹McCallum, A. G. (2021). *I Want to Stay: Help Me.*

²White, E. G. Christian Education, p.70; ³Patriarchs and Prophets, p.595

⁴Gillies, R. (2020). *An Introduction to Cooperative Learning.* The Education Hub.



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The Hidden Curriculum: Unveiling the Secular vs. Christian Education Agenda

BY DANIEL R. ALIDA, PhD & VENCIE B. ALLIDA, PhD

Hidden curriculum is an important concept in Christian education. According to Kennedy (1998), research had shown three important truths: that the hidden curriculum did have a powerful impact on pupils' values, perceptions, and behaviors; that the positive or negative effects of the hidden curriculum on learners depended largely upon the way it was used by teachers and administrators; and that the hidden curriculum could be used as a vehicle for transmitting positive as well as negative values. No matter what principle we may preach, the hidden curriculum of the school operates as the real curriculum for values education. It can become a curriculum for moral education and one that is more powerful than any formal curriculum we can name.

THE DEFINITION OF HIDDEN CURRICULUM

Glatthorn (as cited in Kennedy, 1998) defined the hidden curriculum as those aspects of schooling other than the intentional curriculum that seem to produce changes in student values, perceptions, and behaviors. It can include variables such as organizational – decision-making processes and policies, social systems – relationship patterns and cultural elements – belief systems, values, cognitive structures, and meaning. Kennedy pointed out that despite the proven negative influence of the hidden curriculum on pupil learning, its potential contribution to values education made it desirable from the viewpoint of one desiring optimal human development.

THE KEY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CURRICULUM

In the attainment of the aims and objectives of Christian education, both the formal and the hidden curriculum should be given attention to. Classroom instructions cannot attain all these objectives. Hidden curriculum – what happens outside of the classroom – the programs and activities and the relationships prevailing in the school environment matter a lot. Knight (2016) outlined the key aims and objectives of Christian curriculum:

1. They not only prepare students for life in this world academically, vocationally, and socially;

2. They not only introduce young people to Jesus as Lord and Savior and help them understand the Bible and its implications for all knowledge and life;

3. But they also inspire the coming generation with an understanding of God's end-time apocalyptic vision that leads them to dedicate their lives to that vision and the advent of their Lord.

Knight (2010) illustrates the aims and objectives below:

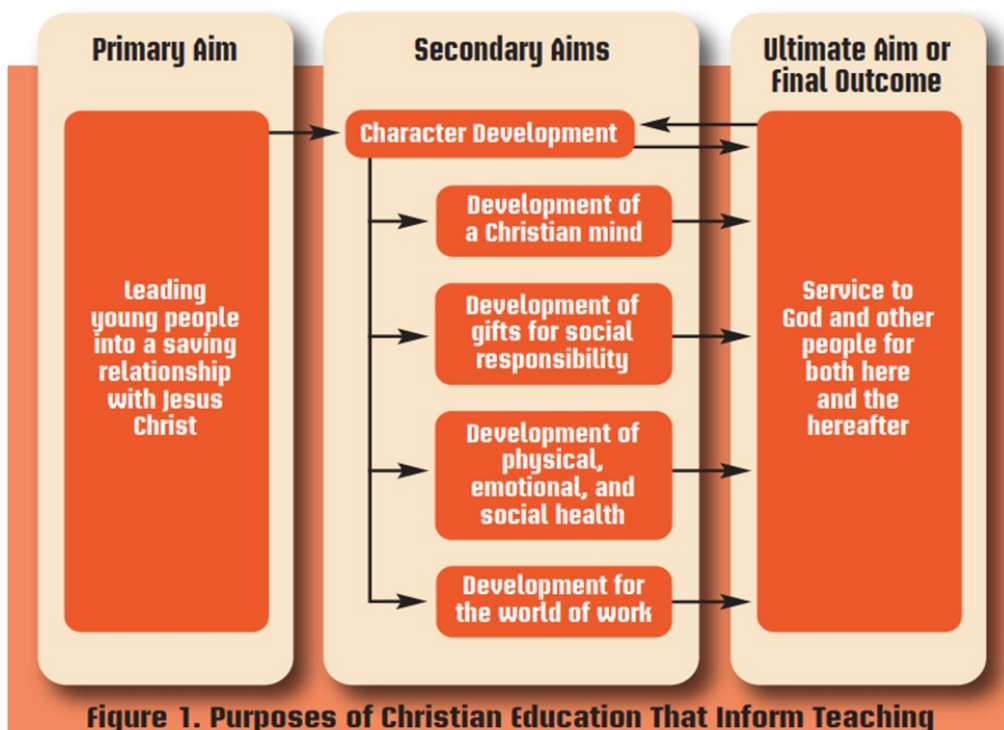


Figure 1. Purposes of Christian Education That Inform Teaching

Taylor (2022) emphasized the importance of harmonious development in the curriculum. He stated that:

"Students are to experience whole-person development at each educational level. As educators, we are to incorporate key spiritual, physical, and social goals throughout the program of studies in a balanced approach that further develops cognitive competencies. Missional experiences and service learning are to be hallmarks of Adventist education." (p. 20)

Figure 2 below describes the concept of wholistic development in the Christian curriculum.

human autonomy, etc. It will surely influence students' values and moral development in negative ways. It implies that when students follow these approaches of secular education, their beliefs, values, and behaviors will also be patterned by them. These worldly lifestyles and philosophies will lead students to live in this world without concern for spiritual matters and they will feel no need of God.

To counteract these evil influences, our school curricula (formal and hidden) need to promote healthy living, simple adornment, and proper stewardship of gender identity, talents, treasure/money, and the environment. It should advance manual labor and allow students to

standing of their destiny. We need to protect them against false teachings such as postmodernism, individualism, competition, naturalism, etc. that are promoted in many secular schools. We are to shield our young people from immorality, vices, and crimes that abound in our society today. Our schools should be like the 'cities of refuge' where they can be safeguarded from the onslaught of the enemy of our souls who want us to be separated from God. We need to promote cooperation rather than competition in all our activities and programs. We need to provide a wholesome environment which discourages viewing vile/immoral shows/entertainment and creates a drug/alcohol free campus and safe place to stay. Relationships should be characterized by mutual respect and understanding and accepting each culture without any show of superiority or discrimination.

Figure 2. Dimensions of Whole-person Development



SECULAR EDUCATION AND THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

Vitz (as cited in KEM, 2021) mentioned that religion, traditional family values, and conservative political and economic positions have been reliably excluded from children's textbooks. He said that the real danger of secular education is not necessarily what it teaches but what it doesn't teach. According to Knight (2016), secular education leaves out the spiritual aspect. Secular curriculum promotes worldly lifestyles and philosophies that are not supported by the Scriptures such as LGBT, fashion, extravagance/consumerism, materialism,

participate in gardening and producing crops of their own and find gainful occupation through well-coordinated work education programs. Students should be encouraged to develop a healthy relationship with God by maintaining daily habits of Bible study, prayer, and service to others.

In our modern times, we are confronted with the great challenge of counteracting the grip of secular education among our young people. Johnson (2021) stressed that for the short, precious years in our schools, we need to guide thousands of young adults into a right under-

CONCLUSION AND APPEAL

It is important that parents, church leaders, and Christian educators make sure that they are providing their children and youth with a thoroughly biblical worldview and well-rounded education. This must begin in the home and carry over into the church and school that children will attend (KEM, 2021). We are advised to find creative ways to overcome the view that Adventist education simply mimics a secular curriculum with some spiritual stuff added on, such as religion classes, chapels, chaplains, and worship on Saturday. We need to stop doing anything that creates the impression that certain aspects of campus life are more spiritual than any other. Students need to see Christianity as part of everything being done in our schools (Johnson, 2021). If we want our children to be fully equipped to meet the challenges of our present day and to prepare for eternity, we need to support our Adventist schools in providing both formal and hidden curricula that meet our school's aims and objectives for young ones.



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MONDAY

Challenges in Christian Education:

Where is our *Focus?*

BY NICOLE MAUZARD, PhD

In John 5:1-14 the story is told of a man who was paralysed for 38 years and got a miraculous healing. Was he a student? No. Was he in a school? No. Nevertheless, the inferences to the subject of education are extremely strong. This paper will highlight several hidden messages that are critical for teachers who believe in the reformation of SDA Christian Education. I will closely examine the particularities and attitudes of the multitude in that story: those of the paralytic, those of Jesus, and those of the religious leaders. I will lastly make a connection to how this plays out in all schools, hopefully sounding a loud alarm and provoking an immediate spirit of reform in our schools.

To begin, let us do a quick review of a pattern in the New Testament. The following passages report the extremely successful healing ministry of Jesus:

Matthew 14:14, *"When He went ashore, He saw a large crowd and felt compassion for them and healed their sick."*

Matthew 14:36, *"...and they implored Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were cured."*

Matthew 15:30, *"And large crowds came to Him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, mute, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them."*

Matthew 21:14, *"And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them."*

Luke 4:40, *"While the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and laying His hands on*

each one of them, He was healing them."

Luke 5:17, *"One day He was teaching; and there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing."*

Luke 9:11, *"But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing."*

Matthew 9:35, *"Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."*

Matthew 19:2, *"and large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there."*

Luke 6:18, *"...who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured."*

In the passages mentioned above, there is a clear pattern of Jesus healing multitudes, and healing everyone who came to him for healing. The emphasis is on MULTITUDES, and on EVERYONE. Now let us attentively consider what happens in the story.

THE MULTITUDE

That multitude is conditioned to focus on a myth; thus, they do not realize the presence of the great healer, Jesus. They miss out on true healing, which is within their reach and available without struggle. They are, however, set

to do whatever it takes to get in the pool first through ruthless competition devoid of any sort of compassion. No one has a desire to help anyone but himself. They all are deceived to react/respond to a stimulus although there is just a fake prize that only one person is said to receive. All are conditioned although there is no real reward at the end.

THE PARALYTIC

The paralytic sees an ordinary man coming to him and fails to respond to His question. Instead, he casts blame on others, complains and displays Learned Helplessness. He intently contemplates the possibility that this man may/should help him compete. He is totally focused on the myth. Despite the mental paralysis added to his physical condition, he is able to hear Jesus long enough to muster a little faith, and the words of Jesus heal him immediately as they enter into his consciousness.

JESUS

Jesus sees everything that is going on at the pool but does not disturb the multitude. He goes only to the most needy/helpless and asks him a simple question to test his readiness. Jesus gets a complaint/hidden reproach as a response, looks beyond the poor man's words, sees his pain, frustration, and bondage and commands him to rise, take up his bed and walk anyway. Jesus has the highest expectations for the man and does not manipulate or deceive him with false hope. His mission accomplished, Jesus then walks back through the mystic water-focussed crowd of sick people and vanishes. The water of life came to the neediest undetected by the crowd.

Later, in the temple, Jesus admonishes the

Students should be taught to reason, and make sound decisions, not conned into fulfilling private agendas, and set up to believe that competing against others is the way to go about life.



man to not sin anymore for fear of getting a condition worse than his long paralysis.

THE JEWS/PASTORS/CHURCH AUTHORITIES/TEACHERS

The Jews/pastors/church authorities and teachers display no compassion for the down-trodden (slow-learners/divergent-thinkers/troubled/poor/suffering). They feel no happiness for the man's healing. In their book, the man was cured illegally. The focus is on the day this healing occurred, not on the healing itself (he had no right to be healed on the Sabbath). They display a spiritless/loveless adherence to the law. They are ready to slay the healer who dared to break the standards, regardless of the successful outcome.

APPLICATION

Satan has had and still has control over minds for generations (38 years for this man). He has studied how people learn and respond to stimuli and uses this knowledge to control whosoever he wills and whosoever is not in Christ. Students are psychologically manipulated and mentally paralysed through effective conditioning, neurolinguistics, and other mind control techniques emanating from prominent academic fields. The masses'/students' focus is artfully redirected so that certain societal objectives are met. Ruthless competition is encouraged at school, as well as at home, and even at church for gain (awards/rewards, grades, medals, etc...). There is a 'Survival of the Fittest' (Darwinism/evolutionist) mindset in schools, at home, and at church. Unfavoured people learn to give up (Seligman 1972) even in the face of hope because of repetitive failed attempts to succeed at something that was never meant for all. There is often a cleverly disguised death decree pronounced on the divergent/dissident

teacher of truth and freedom giver. Authorities totally disregard the wellbeing of the disadvantaged when it is not convenient to their profiles.

Students are always told that a specific curriculum is presented to them "for their good." Multitudes of students are in schools, all waiting for the competition to begin (ruthless, focussed on myths). Like at the Pool of Bethesda, the first one gets the FAKE prize, regardless of the means employed to achieve it, even trampling on or ignoring others. The weakest are often left behind to fend for themselves or totally forgotten. Teachers who have compassion and offer better options to struggling students may be ostracized or dismissed for not strictly adhering to the curriculum or for not upholding the established standards. The curriculum and the standards are important, not the students.

The misuse and abuse of psychological and philosophical concepts learned in teacher training programmes such as Operant Conditioning (Skinner 1935), Classical Conditioning (Pavlov 1897), the Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow 1943), Evolution, Humanism and many others, can be a great hindrance to the free flow of the Holy Spirit's guidance, teachings, and healing in our schools. When teachers are trained to manipulate children's behaviour from basic school, there immediately opens a door for the entrance of evil. Students should be taught to reason, and make sound decisions, not conned into fulfilling private agendas, and set up to believe that competing against others is the way to go about life. The teacher of truth dismisses all manipulations, myths and other deceptive behaviours, and goes straight to the core of the matter asking his students to make sound decisions. Only TRUTH shall set us free. "Wilt thou be made Whole?" - that's the question.

Many questions are still troubling:

1. What are our students gazing at?
2. How are they manipulated to conform?
3. How is it that Jesus was there but only ONE man was healed?
4. Does Jesus visit our classes unnoticed?
5. Do we tell our students fables and promote mythical engagements in our classrooms?
6. Why didn't anyone else from the multitude that was at the pool notice that the paralytic was healed?
7. Do we notice when Jesus visits our class and heals one of our students?

Holy Bible, King James Version
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TUESDAY

Embracing Neurodiversity with *Love*

Understanding and Supporting Children with Autism and other Learning Differences at Home, Church and School

BY PATRICIA HUDSON-HENRY, PSYD, ASDI

In recent years, the term neurodiversity has been widely used yet often misunderstood. Like many mental health concepts, it has sometimes been misapplied or oversimplified. However, truly understanding neurodiversity is crucial if we are to meet the emotional, social, cognitive, and psychological needs of the growing number of individuals in our families,

churches, and schools. When we fail to recognize and support neurodivergent individuals, we unintentionally limit their ability to grow into the fullness of their God-given potential.

Jesus' words, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them" (Mark 10:14, KJV) remind us that inclusion is at the heart of

His ministry. Christ embraced all children, and as His followers, we are called to do the same. Neurodiversity is not a condition to be "fixed," or "cured" but rather a natural variation in how the human brain processes information. Without understanding, we risk reinforcing societal barriers that isolate neurodivergent individuals, depriving them of the love, attention, and

opportunities they rightfully deserve.

The term neurodiversity was introduced in the 1990s by sociologist Judy Singer, a neurodivergent individual who recognized the importance of understanding different cognitive styles. Neurodiversity encompasses conditions such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. They're not deficiencies, but variations in learning, communication, and engagement with the world. Every brain develops uniquely, and neurodivergence is simply a reflection of this natural diversity. While the identification of neurodiverse individuals is increasing, they remain a neurological minority—individuals who differ from the dominant neurotypical population.

In practical terms, neurodivergent individuals experience differences in social interaction, learning styles, attention, communication and sensory processing. Traditional education and social structures often struggle to accommodate these, leading to unnecessary challenges. While a diagnosis can help clinicians and educators with treatment planning and educational goals, it should not be seen as a limitation. Instead, they should guide us toward meaningful accommodations and a more inclusive approach in all aspects of life.

Understanding neurodiversity is a starting point, but true transformation comes when we actively advocate for change in our homes, churches, and schools. Creating inclusive environments requires more than awareness—it demands intentional action. As Adventist educators and believers, we are uniquely positioned to champion this cause, ensuring that all individuals—regardless of how their brains work—can flourish academically, socially, and emotionally.

Each child is a masterpiece of God's creation, "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14, KJV), with a divine purpose. By embracing neurodiversity with love, we fulfill a biblical mandate to nurture and uplift every individual, allowing them to shine as God intended. Here's how we can all provide support.

SUPPORTING NEURODIVERSE CHILDREN AT HOME

As Christian parents, we are entrusted with the sacred responsibility of nurturing our children with love, patience, and understanding. Raising a neurodiverse child comes with unique challenges, but fostering an environment of acceptance and support can help them flourish academically, socially, and spiritually.

- Establish Routines and Predictability: Many

neurodiverse children thrive on structure. Consistent routines provide security, reduce anxiety, and help children feel more in control.

- Celebrate Strengths Instead of Fixating on Weaknesses: Every child has God-given talents. Whether in music, art, technology, or memorization, identifying and nurturing these strengths builds confidence and self-worth. Parents should create opportunities for children to develop their gifts.

- Teach Social and Emotional Skills: Home is the first level of socialization. Parents must patiently teach social skills through role-playing, social stories, and direct instruction. When children feel understood, they gain the tools needed to build healthy relationships. PACERS Parenting provides a faith-based framework for nurturing kind, confident, and emotionally resilient children.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN SDA SCHOOLS

Adventist educators have a long-standing tradition of nurturing the whole child—mind, body, and spirit. To truly embrace neurodiverse students, schools must take intentional steps toward inclusivity.

- Differentiate Instruction: Every child learns differently. Teachers can use visual aids, hands-on activities, and interactive strategies to accommodate diverse learning styles.

- Provide Sensory-Sensitive Spaces: Some neurodiverse children are highly sensitive to light, sound, and touch. Schools should design quiet areas, flexible seating, or noise-reducing tools to create a supportive environment.

- Equip Educators with Special Education Training: Training in neurodivergent learning styles allows teachers to implement strategies that promote academic and emotional success.

- Encourage Peer Support and Inclusion: Teaching all students about neurodiversity fosters acceptance. Peer mentoring programs help neurodiverse students build friendships and feel valued. The Heart & Mind Connection, soon available through Advent Source, will help foster emotional intelligence and peer support.

NURTURING NEURODIVERSE CHILDREN IN CHURCH COMMUNITIES

The church MUST be a place where all families feel welcome and supported. Unfortunately, many neurodiverse families experience isolation due to misunderstandings or lack of accommodations. Churches can foster an environment where families feel they belong by:

- Educating the Congregation: Establish a ministry and train members how to support neurodiverse families. Sensory-friendly worship spaces can provide a comfortable experience for children who need a quieter setting.

- Adapting Sabbath School and Worship Services: Incorporating visuals, movement-based activities, and individualized instruction makes spiritual lessons more accessible and enjoyable.

- Offering Parent Support Groups: Raising a neurodiverse child can be physically, emotionally, and financially challenging. A supportive church community supports and strengthens families and keeps them engaged in faith-based activities.

As Adventist parents, educators, and church leaders, we are called to reflect Christ's love by embracing neurodiverse children in our communities. By fostering inclusion in our homes, schools, and churches, we affirm the inherent value of every child and fulfill the Biblical principle of loving one another.

Jesus welcomed all children with open arms, and we must do likewise. Let's take intentional steps to create environments where neurodiverse children not only receive an education but also experience the love, belonging, and support they deserve. Will you commit to making your church, school, or home a place where neurodiverse children feel valued and empowered?

For more information on introducing PACERS Parenting or Heart & Mind Connection to your church or school, contact Dr. Hudson-Henry at drpatricia@pacersparenting.com

Holy Bible, King James Version



Patricia Hudson-Henry, PsyD, ASDI, a Clinical Psychologist, has coached women across the Caribbean, Africa, England, and the USA. She creates safe, empowering spaces that inspire transformation in women worldwide.



WEDNESDAY

Praying for our Children

Inviting God's Power
to Preserve Future Faith

BY IKECHUKWU OLUIKPE, PhD

It's hard to even have a Bible club for interested students in the school." These words capture the emotions of a church sister I met in the United States in the year 2023, who was a teacher at a public high school in Pennsylvania State. As I listened to her share how the school authorities allowed students and teachers to form all kinds of other clubs except a club for Bible study, I felt sad and concerned for her students and how she could do ministry there.

I honestly appreciated the freedom I have as a teacher in an Adventist educational institution in Jamaica to share my faith with my students without fear of reprimand and restriction. This is one of the many blessings of Adventist Christian education. What a blessed privilege it is to be free to enjoy being able to read and discuss the Bible, sing Christian songs and pray in class, at prayer garden and anywhere on campus with and for others.

It is, indeed, a blessing to be part of an educational system where, in collaboration with the home and the church, the curriculum is designed to nurture biblical Adventist Christian values and ideals that enhance the spiritual growth in Christ in our children.

WHY PRAYING FOR OUR CHILDREN MATTERS

The Bible states that "children are a heritage from the Lord" (Psalm 127:3, NKJV). The word "heritage" or "inheritance" implies a legacy to be preserved from destruction for the future. Our children as a legacy from God are under attack by the archenemy, Satan, who "comes to steal, kill and destroy" (John 10:10a). Therefore it is vital for parents, teachers, pastors, church leaders and members to support Adventist Christian education as a means to preserve our children in Christ who gives abundant life (John 10:10b).

One key way in Adventist Christian education to preserve our children in biblical faith is through prayer for them. *"Prayer is acknowledging and experiencing the presence of God and inviting His presence into our lives and circumstances. It's seeking the presence of God and releasing the power of God which gives us the means to overcome any problem."* Therefore, "when we pray for our children, we are asking God to make His presence a part of their lives and work powerfully in their behalf. Like Job prayed for his children's salvation (Job 1:5) and God placed a hedge of protection around them (Job 1:10), we too must pray for God's divine covering over our children. *"By sincere, earnest prayer parents should make a hedge of protection about their children. They should pray with full*

faith that God will abide with them, and that holy angels will guard them and their children from Satan's cruel power."

There is no better way to work for and invest in the salvation of our children than to invite God's presence and power into their lives through prayer. It is not enough to say, "Oh, my children are in an Adventist home or attend an Adventist school or go to an Adventist church, so they are good." Proximity to Christianity does not guarantee eternity. The work for the salvation of our children must be done intentionally and collaboratively, and prayer for them is a chief way to begin and continue in this special work. Many Adventist Christians have treated intentional prayer for their children very casually and have taken for granted this very important spiritual investment. Consequently, we have children leaving Christian faith or remaining in church but not living biblically.

Therefore, "pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord. Lift your hands toward Him for the life of your children." (Lamentations 2:19) It is the privilege of every Adventist Christian parent, teacher, leader and member to pray for their children as an essential part of Adventist Christian education. Doing so is a vital part of preserving them in our homes, schools and churches as God's legacy to us for future faith.

PRAYING FOR OUR CHILDREN IN PRACTICAL WAYS

So how do we pray for our children? What are some practical things to do? The subsequent paragraphs will highlight a few main pointers to preserve God's children through prayer.

i) Pray consistently for guidance on how to pray for your children.

The spiritual war to destroy our children is real. Therefore, prayer as protection for our children should be intentional and not haphazard. Victory in this war involves consistent earnest continuous prayer (Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2). During and after personal devotional time, pray and ask God regularly to show and teach you how to pray for your children (cf. Psalm 25:4). Ask His guidance to lead you to resources that will help you pray effectively for the children. As you ask, listen and obey the promptings of the Holy Spirit in praying for your children.

ii) Claim the promises of God for your children.

Preserving our children as God's legacy in the great Controversy must include the effective use of "the sword of the Spirit, which is the

word of God" (Ephesians 6:17b). One important way to do this is to claim the promises of God when we pray for our children. The Bible is filled with a great number of promises made by God. There are promises for every need we have in life, including the life of our children. Here are a few of my favorite ones:

• "For I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children" (Isaiah 49:25).

• "All your children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of your children" (Isaiah 54:13).

• "Their descendants shall be known among the Gentiles and their offspring among the people. All who see them shall acknowledge them that they are the posterity whom the Lord has blessed" (Isaiah 61:9).

There are many other promises of God for our children and as we prayerfully search for them, we will find them. It is our privilege to claim God's promises in prayer for our children. This is because He keeps His promises: God does not lie (Numbers 23:23; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 13: 6). "God stands back of every promise He has made. With your Bible in your hands say, "I have done as Thou hast said. I present Thy promise, 'Ask and it shall be given you.'"

So prayerfully seek God's promises for your children. Then open your Bible and pray them back to God.

iii) Pray for and with your children in their hearing.

The Lord, through Paul, commands us to "pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" (Ephesians 6:18, NIV). "All the Lord's people" includes our children. While praying regularly for our children in our personal devotional time or prayer meetings is great, we are also to pray for and with them in their hearing with every opportunity and in every setting possible. Praying for them during and outside family worship is needed.

Another practical way to pray for children in class is to create a class or church prayer calendar. Place the name of each child on each day of the month and pray for them when their date get to be prayed for by the class on their special day. This can be done publicly in the class as the students pray for their classmates privately and the teacher prays to wrap it all up. I have

done this several times for my classes, and it has been a blessing when students hear their names mentioned for special prayer and the whole class is praying a blessing on them for the day. "To neglect the duty of praying with our children is to lose one of the greatest blessings within our reach, one of the greatest helps amid perplexities, cares and burdens of our lifework."

PRAYING FOR FAITHFUL POSTERITY PRESERVED FOR GOD'S ETERNITY

The Bible is clear that God is committed to save the children He has entrusted to us as legacy. Are we committed to working with Him through intentional, purposeful prayer for our children? Through intentional prayer and living a Christ-like life in the process of Adventist Christian education, we can raise a generation of youth that will remain faithful to God in every generation, like the Rechabites (Jeremiah 35:1-16). Through prayerful Christ-like lives that invite God's presence and power into the lives of our children, a legacy of genuine Adventist Christians will be preserved to make a difference for the Lord in the world, through the spreading of the present truth of the everlasting gospel of Revelation 14:6-12.

The greatest goal and reward of Adventist Christian educators in the home, school and church is to see our youth in heaven where they will live with Jesus for all eternity. May this be our experience because we lived an exemplary Christ-like life of intentional and continual praying for our children.

The spiritual war to destroy our children is real.

¹Stormie Omartian, The Power of a Praying Parent (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House, 1995), p. 18.

²Omartian, p. 19.

³E. G. White, Prayer (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2002), p. 194.4.

⁴E. G. White, Christ's Object Lessons (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1941), p. 147.2.

⁵White, Prayer, p. 196.4



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NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL WORLD:

Practical Strategies for Parents and Teachers to Manage Children's Media Usage

BY DAMIAN R. CHAMBERS, ThM

Parenting has always been a difficult job. And the onset of the digital age has made it even more difficult. How? In the digital age, children and teenagers are exposed to global information and experiences more than ever before. As such keeping children safe involves more than keeping them inside the home or the school. The responsibility is greater since the use of the Internet and electronic devices is an important part of their lives. In fact, neither is the unplugging of the internet or the devices enough to keep them safe. This is because children need to use the internet for assignments, entertainment and communication. Therefore, as the digital age advances, parents and teachers must be proactive in educating themselves about how to supervise their children and students' use of the Internet and mobile devices.

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC, 2024) reported the following statistics on online harm and abuse affecting children:

19% of children, aged 10-15-years-old, exchanged messages with someone online who they never met before in the last year. Over 9,000 child sexual abuse offences involved an online element in 2022/23. Around a sixth of people that experienced online harassment offences were under 18-years-old. Under 18-year-olds were the subject of around a quarter of reported offences of online blackmail in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. (para. 4)

In this article, I will share seven (7) things that parents can do to improve their ability to supervise their children in the digital space. Though the article is directed towards parents, teachers can also benefit from the education.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

The first duty that parents have towards their children's online safety is to take responsibility for parenting your child's online presence. The Internet is not child's play. The online world is just as real as the face-to-face world. Therefore, do not ignore the heightened responsibility that you have towards parenting your child's online activities. Using the Internet-enabled devices as babysitter or burying your head in the sand regarding your child's use of the Internet is not a responsible approach. Some parents also excuse their neglect on the basis that they are not "tech savvy". This should not be. Parents should care about their child's online presence and usage, especially as Christian parents. Parenting your child's online presence is part of the duty to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6, KJV).

BE AWARE OF THE DANGERS

The second step is to educate yourself about the potential dangers that children face online. There are many dangers that children can face while surfing the internet but I am going to focus on those relating to your job your duty as a Christian parent. One of the imminent dangers is the loss of privacy. When your child gives up too much personal information, he or she is

giving away information that may haunt them later as well as making him or herself vulnerable to predators. So, it is important to help them to protect their privacy. The second danger that children can face online is unwholesome content. This includes pornography, violence, solicitation from variant groups and ideologies (LGBTQ, Radical), fake news, gambling, etc. Children can also fall prey to scamming and scammers online. Another danger is addictive online games or general screen addiction. These can lead to mental and other health issues, such as depression and suicidal ideation. Finally, online usage exposes children to solicitation from occult and extremist groups and cyber-bullying.

EDUCATE YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT THE DANGERS

After educating yourself about the dangers of the online world, the next step is to educate your child on the dangers as well. Discuss with them about the dangers and their implications. Help them understand that whatever rules you implement it is for their own safety. You should inculcate them by letting them know what to expect and how to confront bad information.

IMPLEMENT AGE-APPROPRIATE RESTRICTIONS

Besides educating your child, you also need to implement age-appropriate restrictions and rules on the use of Internet connected devices. First, there are some general rules for all ages. These include: 1) *not agreeing to meet with*



Parents should care about their child's online presence and usage. Especially as Christian parents.

anyone in person who you met online; 2) always inform your parents about people that you interact with online; 3) do not share personally identifiable information with strangers or with anyone online without your parent's permission; and 4) inform your parents if interaction with anyone online makes you feel uncomfortable.

Besides these general rules, there are some age-appropriate rules as well. For children below the age of 10, you oversee all their online interaction. Their use of these Internet connected devices should be done under parental supervision. A policy that could apply here, is that you do not allow them to own a device. That way, they will always need to use their parents' device. For children ages 11 – 13, they can have a little more freedom, but the general rules apply, and an online safety app is used to manage their online usage. For teenagers above the age of 15, the approach is to educate them on the dangers and hold them accountable for the content they consume and time spent on device.

MONITOR YOUR CHILD'S ONLINE USAGE AND CONTACTS

Besides setting rules, you will need to monitor your child's online usage and contacts to ensure the enforcement of those rules. One of the best ways to do that is to create family safety accounts for your child's device and Internet usage. Microsoft, Google, Apple, and other major software companies provide software

and features for parents to create accounts for children and allow for monitoring and managing your child's Internet and device usage. These apps can help you with restricting screen time and content type. The Google Family Link App, for example, allows you to not only set time limits on the device and app usage, but also to monitor those usages, including the installation of new apps. If the child wants to go beyond those set limits, they will need the parent to give permission through a notification to the parent's device.

MANAGE YOUR CHILD'S SCREEN TIME

You will also need to manage your child's screen time. Excessive screen time does not only lead to device and screen addiction but also make them more vulnerable to the dangers discussed above. Managing your child's screen time involves more than setting limits on the device as well. It involves teaching your child how to manage their time overall and making provision of for them to be involved in other (non-screen time) activities. Some practical things you can do include establishing a schedule/routine for them to follow. Take time to play outdoors with them or have designated outdoor playing time. This will help to alleviate the need to be on their devices constantly. Other activities you can include in their schedule are, reading time, creative time, learning time, worship time, duty time, and bedtime. The family apps mentioned above can help you to keep a tab on screen time.

TALK WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT THEIR ONLINE EXPERIENCES

Finally, it is important for you to have regular conversations with your child about their online experience. This will allow them to share any uncomfortable experiences that they might have had. Sometimes, they might feel guilty about something that happened or might be struggling with it and may be unwilling to share, or they may have simply forgotten about it. Engaging them in conversation can help to bring these things to light.

CONCLUSION

Supervising your child's online usage is part of parenting. You may feel intimidated because you do not possess the technical skills required. If you do not possess these skills, it is time to start the process of acquiring them, because the consequence of neglecting, it is too great.

Holy Bible, King James Version
National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. (2024). Online harm and abuse: statistics briefing.
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/statistics-briefings/online-harm-abuse>



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FRIDAY

The Spiritual Gift of Scholarship

BY MARTIN HANNA, PhD

Christians are sometimes schizophrenic about scholarship. On the one hand, we agree with Francis Bacon that knowledge is power, so we use it to defend and proclaim gospel truth. On the other hand, scholarship can undermine some of our preferred perspectives, leading to a question. How can we welcome knowledge when it undermines what we thought was true? The answer to this question is the spiritual gift of scholarship. Christians may safely use this gift to correct and deepen faith without compromising truth. In fact, this Bible-based and Christ-centered spiritual gift empowers a church growth and mission that is cosmic in scope.

BIBLE-BASED

One reason why the spiritual gift of scholarship is needed is because some parts of the Bible

are difficult to understand. Peter writes that *“our beloved brother Paul” “has written” “some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do the rest of the Scriptures”* (2 Pet 3:15-16).

Bible-based spiritual gifts help the church distinguish between true and false scholarship. Paul warns Christians to: *“Beware lest anyone deceive you through philosophy and empty deceit according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ”* (Col 2:8).

The Old Testament drama of Daniel and his friends illustrates how God is the source of true scholarship. *“God gave them knowledge and skill”* (Dan 1:17) so that they were “gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to

understand” (1:4). Also, in the New Testament, this spiritual gift is indicated in Paul’s statement that God “appointed” “teachers” “in the church” (1 Cor 12:28; cf. Eph 4:11) along with “wisdom” and “knowledge” (1 Cor 12:8).

CHRIST-CENTERED

The God who assisted the Hebrew youth in the university of Babylon (Dan 1:4, 17) is revealed through Christ who saved them from the fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar said: *“I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire and they are not hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God”* (3:25). This Jesus is the Master Teacher.

Paul teaches concerning *“Christ in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”* (Col 2:2-3). Jesus instructed His disciples on

The end time explosion of knowledge involves the spiritual gift of scholarship and supports the growth of the church.

the spiritual gift of scholarship when he said that “the Holy Spirit” “will teach you all things” since “He will testify of Me” (Jn 14:26; 15:26). Also, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth” (16:7, 12-13).

CHURCH GROWTH

While we wait for the return of Christ, we should use the spiritual gift of scholarship to stimulate church growth. In this way, we can become wiser than Daniel who wrote: “Although I heard I did not understand” (Dan 12:8). We can be wiser because he was told to “shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end” when “knowledge shall increase” (12:4). In the end-time, this prophecy is to be fulfilled in the church since “none of the wicked shall understand” the increase of knowledge (12:10).

The end time explosion of knowledge involves the spiritual gift of scholarship and supports the growth of the church. “When He ascended,” Christ “gave gifts” (Eph 4:8) to the church “for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for edifying the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God,” “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” “to grow up in all things into Him” (4:12-13, 15).

INTERNATIONAL MISSION

The church is called to an international mission. “Christ” is “the mystery” “revealed to His saints” which “God willed to make known” “among the Gentiles,” that is, among the nations

(Col 1:26-27). This mission includes the gift of scholarship because “we preach” by “teaching” everyone “in all wisdom” “in Christ Jesus” (1:28). Daniel describes our destiny in this way: “Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever” (Dan 12:3).

According to Ellen White, “Every church member should feel an interest in all that concerns the human brotherhood as well as the brotherhood in Christ.” “We are all woven together in the web of humanity.” “Let us bear in mind that Christ is the great central heart from which the life-blood flows to every part of the great body of humanity. He is the head from which extend the nerves that reach even to the most minute and most remote parts of the body [of humanity].” While no one person can master every area of scholarship, each Christian is called to exercise their part of the gift “for the profit of all” (1 Cor 12:7).

COSMIC SCOPE

Christian scholarship is as comprehensive as the cosmos because: by Christ “all things were created,” “and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Col 1:16-17) and are reconciled (1:20). Christ “is the head of all principality and power” (2:10). As Bruce Norman points out, “Paul used some of the common cosmological terminology” of his time and infused it “with a different meaning” whereby “Christ” is “the beginning and the end of cosmology.”

Inspired by the Spirit of this cosmic Christ,

Ellen White writes that: “The book of nature and the written word do not disagree; each sheds light on the other. Rightly understood they make us acquainted with God and His character by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which he works. We are thus led to adore his name and to have an intelligent trust in his word.”

CONCLUSION

A Bible-based and Christ-centered spiritual gift of scholarship empowers a church growth and an international mission that is cosmic in scope. With such a gift from God, we must dare to be like Daniel and his friends. “As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding of visions and dreams” (Dan 1:17). “In all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better” than everyone else (1:20).

Therefore, Ellen White’s appeal at the Battle Creek College in 1883 is still relevant today. “Dear youth, what is the aim and purpose of your life? Are you ambitious for education that you may have a name and position in the world? Have you thoughts that you dare not express, that you may one day stand upon the summit of intellectual greatness; that you may sit in deliberative and legislative councils, and help to enact laws for the nation? There is nothing wrong in these aspirations. You may every one of you make your mark. You should be content with no mean attainments. Aim high, and spare no pains to reach the standard.”

¹George E. Rice, “Spiritual Gifts,” *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald), 610-650.

²John D. Moores, *Wrestling With Rationality in Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

³Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1989).

⁴All Bible texts are quoted from The New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982).

⁵Robert A. Harris, *The Integration of Faith and Learning* (Eugene OR: Cascade, 2004).

⁶Ellen White, *Testimonies for the Church*, (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1962), 7:292.

⁷Ellen White, *Temperance* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1949), 208.

⁸Ellen White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, October 16, 1894.

⁹Martin Hanna, *The Cosmic Christ of Scripture* (Berrien Springs, MI: Cosmic Christ Connections, 2006).

¹⁰Bruce Norman, “Pauline Cosmology: Relic or Relevant?” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 3:2 (autumn 1992), 131-132; John Collins, “New Testament Cosmology,” in *Cosmology and Theology*, eds., David Tracy and Nicholas Lash (New York: Seabury, 1983), 3-7.

¹¹Signs of the Times, March 20, 1884; Martin Hanna, *The Use of Science in Theology: Case Studies of Langdon B. Gilkey and Thomas F. Torrance* (PhD Dissertation, Andrews University, 200).

¹²Ellen White, *Messages to Young People* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1958), 36.

¹³Holy Bible, King James Version



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SABBATH

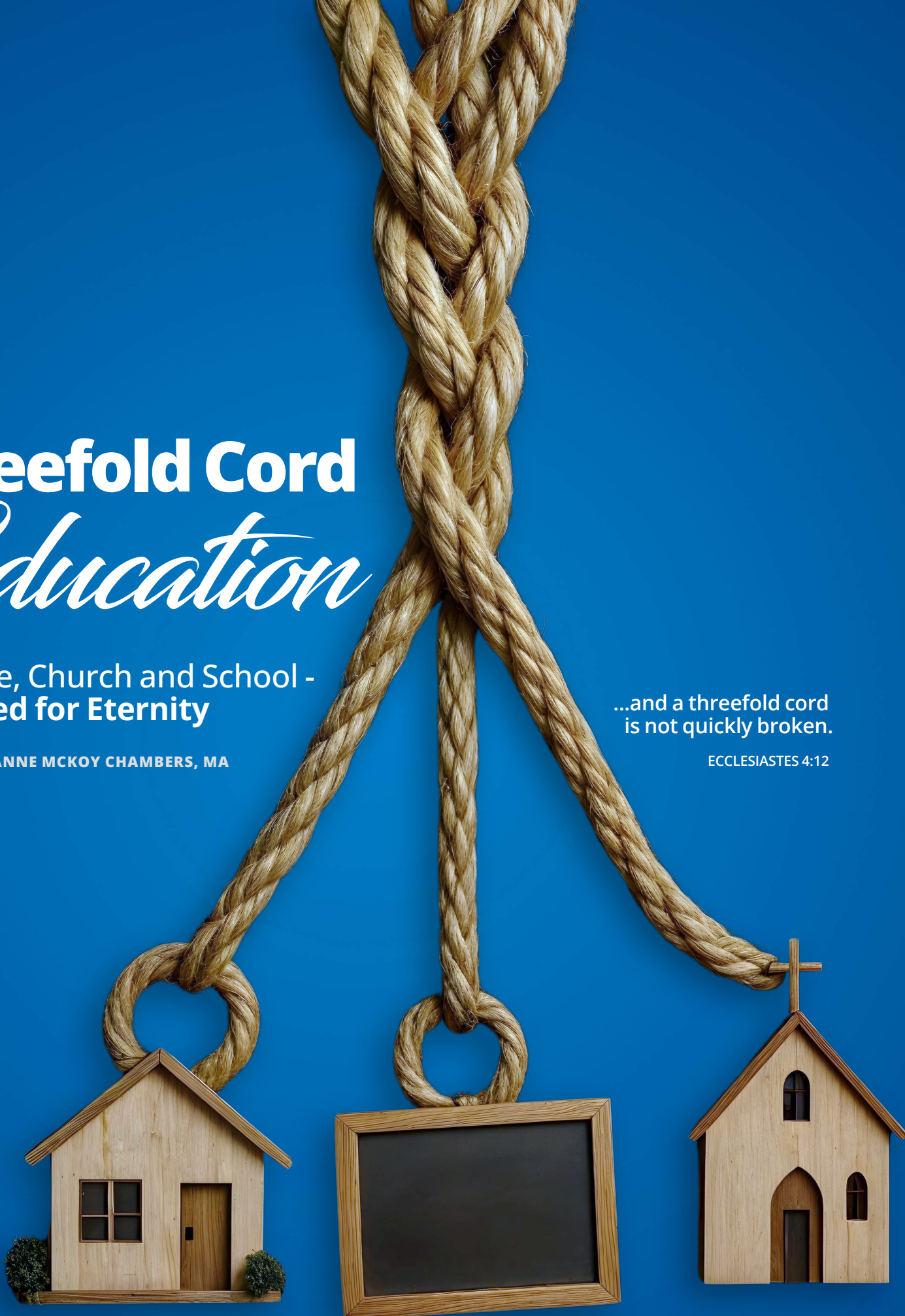
The **Threefold Cord** *of Education*

Home, Church and School -
United for Eternity

BY ROX-ANNE MCKOY CHAMBERS, MA

...and a threefold cord
is not quickly broken.

ECCLESIASTES 4:12



Mark Finley, former host and director of *It Is Written* (1991–2004) and a retired vice president for the Seventh-day Adventist world church, shares a fascinating story about a monastery located high on a cliff, where the only means of transportation was by a bucket suspended from a rope. One day, a tourist was making an uncertain journey in the bucket when he noticed something unsettling—the rope was old, frayed, and tattered. With concern, he asked the tour guide operating the pulley, “How often do you replace the rope?” The tour guide calmly replied, “Every time it breaks.”

Now, think about that for a moment. How many of us live the same way? Like the tour guide we wait until something is broken before we fix it. We wait until we’re overweight and facing a life-altering diagnosis before we start eating healthy or exercising. We wait until our marriage is crumbling before we begin nurturing our relationship. We wait until a crisis hits before we build a meaningful prayer life. We simply wait, wait until it breaks before we fix it!

If we take a moment to apply this story to the process of education, we can envision a tour guide as more than just someone leading a group. This guide could be a parent, teacher, guardian, elder, pastor, or anyone entrusted with shaping the minds of our children. The rope represents the principles, values, and methods we use to guide them through life, preparing them not only for success in this world but also for eternity. The bucket symbolizes the environment we place them in—one that influences their growth, development, and ultimate destination. Now, consider this question: How strong is your rope? What are its strands made of?

A strong, reliable rope is essential for steady and secure guidance. One of the oldest and most widely used rope structures consists of three strands twisted together (McKenna et al., 2004). The strength of the rope lies in the unity of these strands. When unbraided, unwoven, or separated, it weakens, losing its effectiveness and resilience (Original Strength, 2018). This is why the Bible reminds us, “*A threefold cord is not quickly broken*” (Ecclesiastes 4:12, KJV). In this reading, I present to you the threefold cord of education: home, church and school a reflection of God’s ideal plan for education.

First, we will explore the purpose of God’s system of education. Next, we will examine the distinct roles of the home, school, and church in carrying out this divine mission. Then, we will highlight the essential unity among these

three pillars in achieving lasting, eternal benefits. Finally, we will reflect on our mandate in fulfilling this sacred responsibility.

THE PURPOSE BEHIND GOD’S SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

White (1903) emphasizes that to truly grasp the scope of education, we must first understand both the nature of humanity and God’s purpose in creating us. Additionally, we must consider how humanity’s condition has been altered by the knowledge of evil and how God’s plan seeks to restore His divine purpose through education. In a sermon “*Lord Save our Children*” Chambers (2010) highlights that:

When God created Adam and Eve, He made them perfect, forming them “*in His own image*” (Genesis 1:26–27, KJV). They were holy, pure, righteous, and good, reflecting God’s character. Not only did He command them to be fruitful and multiply, but He also intended for their children to inherit their holiness, obedience, and righteousness. God’s original plan was for the world to be filled with people who remained faithful to Him—free from sin, hatred, violence, or corruption. In such a world, there would be no need for fear, as parents would never have to worry about how their children would turn out.

However, when Adam and Eve sinned, they fell under the dominion of sin, and their descendants would inherit this fallen nature. As David lamented, “*Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*” (Psalm 51:5, KJV). As a result of Adam’s disobedience, sin entered the world, bringing death

tions and sinful nature from birth. As the Bible declares, “*Well do I know how treacherous you are; you were called a rebel from birth*” (Isaiah 48:8, NIV). Chambers (2010, para 3–4)

Due to our sinful nature, we need an education system that not only prepares us for academic success and good citizenship but one that transforms the hearts of our children.

As White (1892) explains, “*Education, culture, the exercise of the will, human effort—all have their proper sphere, but here they are powerless. They may produce outward correctness of behaviour, but they cannot change the heart; they cannot purify the springs of life. There must be a power working from within, a new life from above, before men can be changed from sin to holiness. That power is Christ. His grace alone can quicken the lifeless faculties of the soul and attract it to God, to holiness*” (p. 18). This highlights the need for an education that goes beyond mere academics—one that reaches the heart and soul, fostering true transformation through the power of Christ. Such an education, as White (1903) describes, seeks to “restore in men and women the image of their Maker, to bring them back to the perfection in which they were created—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life” (p. 104).

ROLE OF THE HOME, CHURCH AND SCHOOL

To fulfil this divine purpose, God has woven a threefold cord in education—connecting heaven and our children through the home, church and school. Likewise, Simmons (2022) affirms that education, when seen through the lens of the great controversy between good and evil, is more than just instruction—it is a ministry. This sacred ministry, carried out through the home, church and school, is deeply intertwined with the work of redemption, as true education and redemption are one. Thus, Seventh-day Adventist education is not merely a privileged option; it is a divine mandate, central to God’s redemptive plan.

The first strand in this divine threefold cord of education is the home. As the child’s first school, the home lays the foundation for lifelong learning, shaping character, values, and faith from the very beginning. “*In His wisdom, the Lord has decreed that the family shall be the greatest of all educational agencies. It is in the home that the education of the child is to begin. Here is his first school. Here, with his parents as instructors, he is to learn the lessons that are to guide him throughout life—lessons of respect, obedi-*

**Thus, Seventh-day
Adventist education
... is a divine mandate,
central to God’s
redemptive plan.**

and condemnation upon all humankind (John 8:34; Romans 5:12). Although man was originally created in God’s image, the fall altered this divine reflection. Scripture records, “*Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image*” (Genesis 5:3, KJV). This signifies that Adam’s children were not born into the divine perfection he once possessed but instead inherited his imperfec-

The eternal destiny of our children is too sacred for us to be anything less than being intentional....

ence, reverence, and self-control” (White, 1892, p. 182). As a prime example, “the child Jesus did not receive instruction in the synagogue schools. His mother was His first human teacher. From her lips and from the scrolls of the prophets, He learned of heavenly things” (White, 1898, p. 71).

As parents, we have a sacred responsibility to prayerfully guide and train our children in the path of righteousness, instilling in them the principles that will shape their character and future. The Scriptures command us to be diligent in this duty: “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, KJV)

The wisdom of Solomon reinforces this principle: “Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

(Proverbs 22:6, KJV)

The Apostle Paul also commends the faithfulness of Timothy’s mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, for their early training of Timothy, stating: “I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.” (2 Timothy 1:5, NIV)

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 3:15, KJV)

These passages emphasize the profound influence of parental and generational instruction in shaping a child’s spiritual foundation. It is through this early guidance that children develop a strong and enduring faith, one that will sustain them throughout their lives.

The second strand in this divine threefold cord of education is the church. Jesus gave the church its mandate at the conclusion of His ministry: “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and

of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). Our churches serve as centres of instruction, guiding students to become disciples of Jesus. They nurture spiritual well-being and foster a community where believers can thrive in their faith.

Wesley (2016) emphasizes that early believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, which transformed their lives, influenced society, and contributed to the church’s growth. The apostle Paul built upon the foundation laid by Timothy’s mother and grandmother, continuing this tradition by mentoring Timothy. He encouraged him to develop strong character, resist materialism, and lead by example. Timothy was later called to serve in ministry. This highlights the Christian Church’s role as a school of witness and evangelism, demonstrating the enduring impact of early Christian education.

The third cord of education is the school. According to Maitanmi (2019), the demands of modern life and the necessity for parents to work outside the home to support their families have made teachers increasingly vital as parental figures in children’s lives. As a result, the school serves as an extension of the Christian home, reflecting and upholding the same values taught in both the home and the church. Students should be nurtured by Christian parents, pastors, spiritual leaders, and teachers who model these values. Nielsen (2023) submits that when students witness genuine spirituality being modeled by three significant adults in their lives, they are far more likely to develop an authentic love for Jesus themselves. In this context, teachers in Adventist schools often become one of these key figures. Consequently, the Seventh-day Adventist school system is designed to give more than mere academics. It prepares students for service in both this life and eternity, fostering the development of their physical, mental, and spiritual capacities (White, 1903). The uniqueness of Adventist Christian education is articulated in the General Conference Working Policy, Section FE 05 (as cited in Wesley, 2022, p. 25), as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: General Conference Working Policy, Section FE 05

The Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is Christ-centered. Adventists believe that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God’s character and purposes can be understood as revealed in the Bible, in Jesus Christ, and in nature. The distinctive characteristics of Adventist education—derived from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G White—point to the redemptive aim of true education: to restore human beings into the image of their Maker. Seventh-day Adventists believe that God is infinitely loving, wise, and powerful. He relates to human beings on a personal level, presenting

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Seventh-day Adventists believe that God is infinitely loving, wise, and powerful. He relates to human beings on a personal level, presenting His character as the ultimate norm for human conduct and His grace as the means of restoration.

Adventists recognize that human motives, thinking, and behavior have fallen short of God’s ideal. Education, in its broadest sense, is a means of restoring human beings to their original relationship with God. Working together, homes, schools, and churches cooperate with divine agencies in preparing learners for responsible citizenship in this world and in the world-to-come.

Adventist education imparts more than academic knowledge. It fosters a balanced development of the whole person—spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. Its time dimensions span eternity. It seeks to develop a life of faith in God and respect for the dignity of all human beings; to build character akin to that of the Creator, to nurture thinkers rather than mere reflectors of others’ thoughts; to promote loving service rather than selfish ambition; to ensure maximum development of each individual’s potential; and to embrace all that is true, good, and beautiful.

UNITY AMONG THESE THREE PILLARS

When answering the question, how strong is your rope? What are its strands made of? consider the preparations you have in place to guide your children through life. Like a tour guide, how are you ensuring they are equipped for the journey ahead? What is the state of your supporting community? Are the three strands of your cord—home, church, and school—strong and secure? Do they align under the same redemptive principles, or are they pulling in different directions?

The Cognitive Genesis study (2005, as cited in Nielsen, 2023) suggests that the most effective character development occurs through a three-way partnership of parents, church, and school. In a similar vein, the Valuegenesis study (McClintock, 2017) found that spiritual growth and commitment were significantly stronger when these three entities supported each other. Therefore, children need strong homes, churches, and church schools working together to have the best chance of developing a mature Christian faith. When the home, church and school collaborate with divine agencies we will be better able to produce responsible citizens in this world and for eternity.

APPEAL

The eternal destiny of our children is too sacred for us to be anything less than being intentional about the rope—the principles, values, and methods—we use to guide them through life. Our responsibility extends beyond preparing them for success in this world; we must also equip them for eternity. We cannot

afford for any strand of this rope to weaken or fray, for if it does, we risk it breaking altogether, leaving our children vulnerable to the perils of this world.

White (1913) urges us to work together for the well-being of our children, emphasizing that the responsibility should not rest on teachers alone. She calls for the active cooperation and support of every church member. Parents, she advises, must make every effort to place their children in environments that foster the character God desires. They should utilize every spiritual resource available to guide and protect their children. While the forces of evil may seek to harm them, God will raise a standard against the enemy.

Do you feel a deep need to protect your children? An urge to build a fortress around them? The adage reminds us that *“it takes a village to raise a child”*, and God’s design for that village includes the home, the church and the school. Solomon’s wise words— *“A threefold cord is not quickly broken”* (Ecclesiastes 4:12, KJV)—emphasize the strength found in unity, in shared purpose, and in allied goals. When Christ is at the center of our homes, churches, and schools, He takes responsibility for securing the eternal future of our children.

Are you willing to embrace God’s plan? Will you commit today to making your home a place of worship where Christian values are instilled in your children? Are we dedicated to ensuring that our churches remain houses of prayer rather than dens of thieves, so our chil-

dren can grow in faith and discipleship? Will we stand alongside them in their educational journey, ensuring they are taught in the ways of the Lord? Let us prayerfully surrender to Jesus, allowing Him to do a greater work in each of us.

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Rox-Anne McKoy Chambers, MA serves as Education and Women's Ministries Director for the Central Jamaica Conference.



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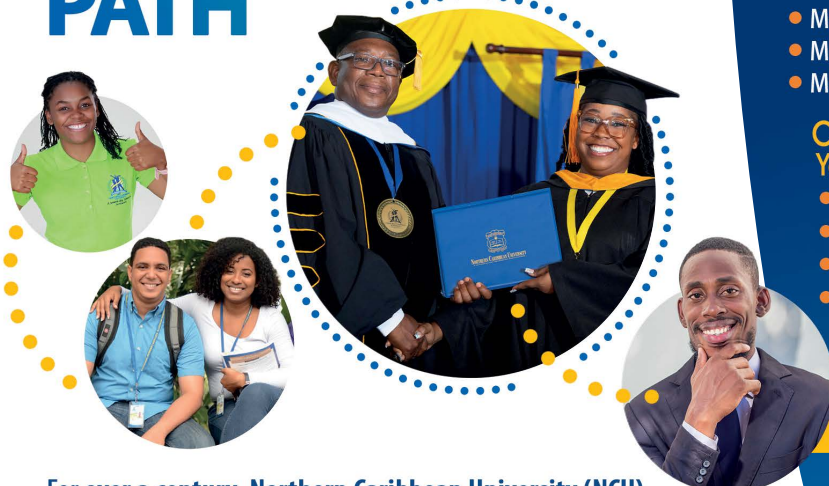
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It is with profound admiration and delight that we extend our sincere congratulations to the Willowdene Group of Schools on the occasion of their significant 60th anniversary celebration.

For six decades, the Willowdene Group of Schools has served as a distinguished institution of learning, fostering growth and excellence—shaping the lives of numerous students and inspiring countless future endeavors. This significant milestone reflects the steadfast dedication of the educators, staff, alumni, and community, all of whom have collaboratively built a lasting legacy of academic achievement and character development.

This diamond jubilee serves as an occasion for joyful reflection, the renewal of vision, and the pursuit of continued success. We look forward to many more years dedicated to inspiring young minds and fostering a positive impact on society.

Warmest congratulations once again!

CHAIRMAN OF THE SCHOOL BOARD
AND PRESIDENT OF CENTRAL JAMAICA CONFERENCE OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS.
PASTOR. Nevail D. Barrett, MA, JP



Congratulations to the Willowdene Group of Schools on reaching this Diamond Jubilee — a powerful reminder of God's faithfulness in building a legacy of education, restoration, and hope!

Today, we celebrate not just a milestone, but a living testimony to the truth that "we have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history"

(White, 1915, p.196)

EDUCATION DIRECTOR - CENTRAL JAMAICA
CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS.
Mrs. Rox-Anne McKoy Chambers, MA



The Willowdene Group of Schools celebrates 60 years of providing Christ-centered Adventist Christian Education, to the children of the church and the wider society, since 1965, under the motto: "Nisi Dominus Frustra, Except the Lord be with us all is in vain".

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PRINCIPAL.
Peter A. Williams, M.A; J.P

Mission Statement

Willowdene Group of Schools, a Seventh-day Adventist co-educational institution, provides Christ-centered education and prepares students for the joys of service in this life and the life to come.

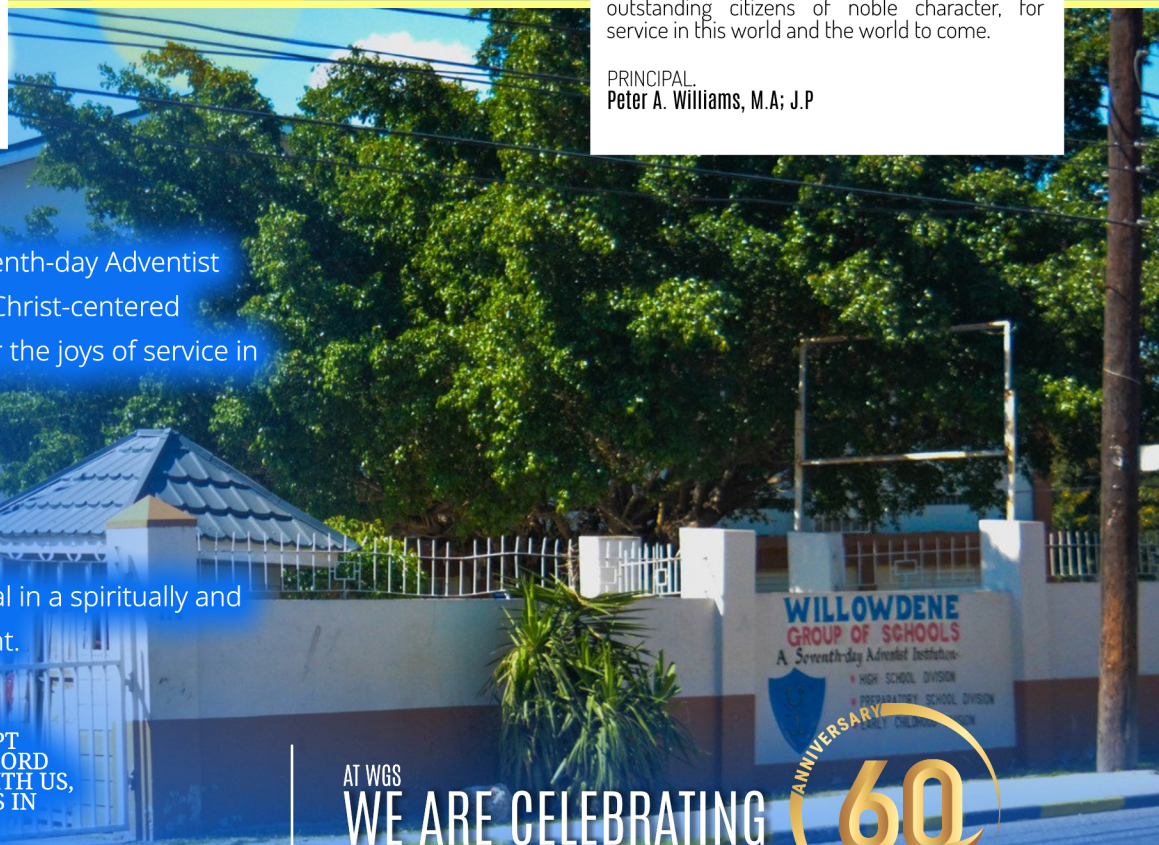
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The church elects an Education Secretary to promote and generate support for Christian Education. The duties of the Education Secretary may include:

1. To raise awareness among the members about the importance of Adventist Christian Education.
2. Maintaining an up-to-date census on the educational status of all the children and youth of the church.
3. Assist needy parents and guardians to fiancé the cost of Adventist Christian Education for their children.
4. Coordinating activities designed to create scholarship funds for Christian Education.
5. Overseeing the distribution of scholarships to students in an equitable way.
6. Lobby with the church board to create scholarships and grants to support Christian Education.
7. Assisting in contacting all Seventh-day Adventist homes where there are school-age children or young people to encourage attendance at the local church school, or at a Seventh-day Adventist secondary school, college, or university, and to suggest solutions to possible problems.
8. Contacting members who have no school-age children, encouraging them to provide financial aid to needy Seventh-day Adventist students.
9. Maintaining contact with students from the church who are in attendance at Seventh-day Adventist schools away from the home church.
10. Making sure that all students are actively integrated into the pro-gramme of the church.
11. Provide information re educational opportunities thereby ensuring that all the youths have a acquired a necessary skill or tertiary education.
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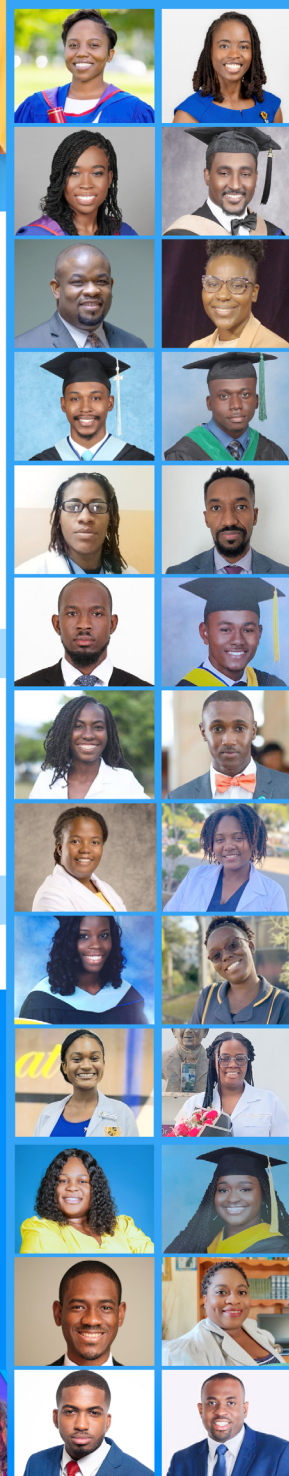
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