

What is My Vocation? Lloyd Knecht

William Carey in reply to an inquiry as to his vocation replied, "My vocation is preaching the gospel, I cobble shoes for a living." Could Carey's attitude and commitment be one of the keys to the future of Adventism's success in fulfilling the gospel commission? Is my vocation proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ? As a carpenter, teacher, CPA, CEO, housewife, student, physician, nurse, pastor, or whatever, is how I make my living only a means to bring individuals to a saving knowledge of Jesus. A more complete understanding of the biblical gospel provides the most essential key to Adventism's bright and successful future. Praise God for the following research that challenges us all.

Reflections on the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America: Trends and Challenges (part 1 of 2)" by David Beckworth and S. Joseph Kidder, "Ministry" December 2010, relates alarming trends in the remnant church of North America. "In 2007 the Adventist church in North America baptized 37,359 people. Yet, as we examine the numbers in context, we find this reality: even we added numbers, we shrank

CONCLUSION: Our research shows major disturbing trends in Adventism in the North American Division in the area of church growth. While the church experiences a decline in the rate of growth as compared to membership and the rate of growth in the population, the church also takes more and more financial recourses to produce one convert.

Busting these disturbing trends in the North American Adventist Church will take much more than a few small changes of technique; it will require a reconsideration of our values and methods."

[see <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2010/12/reflections-on-the-future-of-north-american-seventh-day-adventism.html>]

In the second article of Ministry, February 11, 2011 S. Joseph Kidder deals with "PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATIONS: Most of these long-term trends are not very promising. They indicate that the NAD church is struggling and will continue to experience challenges moving forward. So what explains these long term trends? After reviewing the literature and interviewing 51 people within the organization, I found that some salient factors came to the forefront."

1. Internal Factors
2. Cultural Factors
3. Methodologies

Other extracts from this article included:

Exploding Trends
Conclusion

A New Approach for Church Growth; Ten Points for the North American Seventh-day Adventist Church.

[see <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2011/02/the-long-view-of-church-growth.html>]

The primary purpose of the Advent movement has been to develop a Christlike character in its members preparing them for the second coming of Jesus. "For the wedding of the lamb has come and the bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean was given her to wear (fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints)." (Rev. 19:7) This is because the members "have the patience (endurance) of the saints: here are they that keep (cherish) the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice "Thrust in thy sickle and reap; (Rev. 14:12, 15)

"It is not the Lord's purpose that ministers should be left to do the greatest part of the work of sowing the seeds of truth. Men who are not called to the ministry are to labor for their Master according to their several ability. As a worker gives himself unreservedly to the service of the Lord, he gains an experience that enables him to work more and more successfully for the master. The influence that drew him to Christ helps him to draw others to Christ. The work of a public speaker may never be laid upon him, but he is none the less a minister for God, and his work testifies that he is born of God.

Women as well as men can engage in the work If they are imbued with a sense of their duty and labor under the influence of the Spirit-of God, they will have just the self-possession required for this time. Ellen White, Testimonies 9, p.128

The work will never be finished until laymen unite with pastors in laboring for oppressed and lost souls "In visions of the night. Representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people. Many were praising God. The sick were healed and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence." Testimony for the Church, 9, p. 126

"The loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth." (RH November 22, 1892) What is my priority? Is my vocation proclaiming the good news of Jesus. Christ? As a carpenter, teacher, CPA, CEO, housewife, student, physician, nurse, pastor, or whatever, is how I make my living only a means to bring my neighbor, associate, and those in my circle of influence to a saving knowledge of Jesus?