

## The Holiday Season and Sacrificing for Others

This may be the last Thanksgiving you may ever have in which to make a thank offering to God. Instead of gorging yourselves with the good things of this life, let us come to God and give Him, upon that day, a gift in gratitude for His loving-kindness, and so have a genuine thanksgiving day for God. Let there be no murmurings, no unpleasant feelings, no unholy thoughts, but turn your attention to God. And Christmas will soon be here.

Everybody is trying to find out how they can bring suitable gifts to one another. In the family the study is to know what next they can give. They have given something every year. Now what shall I give this year to the children, or to father and mother? But where are the Saviour's poor? They are right before your doors.

And He will say unto them on His left hand, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed

Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me" (Matt. 25:42-45).

Now, why is this so? It is because there is so much selfishness. Jesus Christ identified Himself with His suffering poor, and when we do the works of benevolence we are doing it unto Christ. I want to know how many of us are doing this kind of work. How many will keep Christmas aright? The wealthy bring gifts to their friends, but they are rich still. Then how can this be a sacrifice to them? Then what shall we do to please God? I will tell you. If you would keep this day as you should, you would call upon the needy poor, and if they are in want of anything, supply that want. And when this is done, come and render an offering unto the Lord. It says to your own soul, Christ for my

*Jesus Christ identified Himself with His suffering poor, and when we do the works of benevolence we are doing it unto Christ.*

sake became poor that through His poverty I might be made rich. Jesus, by the offering of Himself, has brought this infinite Gift within our reach. You may bring a gift to Jesus that through your offerings, others may go out in the vineyard and work to bring to God those for whom Jesus died.

This responsibility rests upon each of us, that we regard Christ as first and last and best in everything. The best offering we can make to God after we give ourselves is our property. Jesus gave Himself without reserve for us. I am so grateful that we have such a precious example in the Bible.

When we bring an offering to God, what does He require? Is it a great gift? I will tell you what He requires; it is a gift according to what a man has, be it ever so simple. God will accept it according to that which you have. We can open our hearts to God whether we be rich or poor.

(continued on page 7)

By Jim Micheff,  
President



*“We talk, write and sing about love, but no one is satisfied with just a theory of love—it must be experienced. People want to see love with skin on it.”*

## THE EXPERIENCE OF LOVE

One of the greatest challenges today is that people feel unloved. We talk, write and sing about love, but no one is satisfied with just a theory of love—it must be experienced. People want to see love with skin on it.

Parents, especially fathers, have the privilege of representing the heavenly Father to their children. They are the first picture of God their children will see. This is why Satan is so vigorously attacking our homes. Did you know that in 45 percent of homes in Lansing, children are growing up without a father? A staggering 66 percent of families in Detroit do not have a father’s presence.<sup>1</sup>

Not long ago I visited with a person who shared that he couldn’t remember his father ever telling him that he loved him or even giving any demonstration of love. His dad had a stern demeanor that sometimes could be interpreted as just plain mean. As he grew up and formed his understanding of who God was, he realized that he had developed a theory of God and His love for us

but hadn’t personally experienced it. He realized that this lack of experience was hindering him from sharing love with others.

A few weeks ago, my sister Linda, girl’s dean at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, went to a restaurant. As the hostess led her to a table, she saw a young lady in the corner—not just crying—sobbing. People walked past her, almost as if they didn’t see or hear her cries of sorrow. Linda stopped and walked over to her. Putting her hand on the girl’s shoulder she said, “Honey, what’s wrong?” In between sobs came the words: “No one loves me...not my boyfriend...not my mother...not my sister...no one!”

Linda’s heart went out to the young lady as she responded, “Yes – there is Someone who loves you! Jesus loves you! He sent me over to let you know He loves you so much that He died for you!” At that moment this girl needed some love with skin on it. The young woman, Elise, looked up and said, “You’re a Christian, aren’t you?” Linda nodded. “Would you like me to pray

with you?” she asked. Instantly the girl reached for her hand and held it tight. By the time the prayer was over Elise had stopped crying and regained her composure. As she opened her eyes she whispered, “Thank you for caring!” Linda wrote her cell number down on a piece of paper and, as she handed it to her, said, “Call me if you ever need someone to talk to or pray with.”

In John Maxwell’s book *Developing the Leader Within You* he wrote, “People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.”<sup>2</sup> This is the message encapsulated in the gospel: God cares! Jesus has shown us just how much divinity cares. “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.”<sup>3</sup>

If Satan is not successful in refuting the historical fact that Jesus died on the cross, he does all he can to discredit and malign the motive behind it. He leads people to believe that since we are made in God’s image, God has the same traits of character seen in sinful humanity. The devil would have people see God as angry, jealous, exacting and ready to wipe people out if crossed. But the Bible portrays a different picture. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”<sup>4</sup> Then it goes on to say that God the Father “demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”<sup>5</sup> And that “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”<sup>6</sup>

*“Yes – there is Someone who loves you! Jesus loves you! He sent me over to let you know He loves you so much that He died for you!”*



Have you experienced God's love? How do you know God loves you? Without the experience of God's love, the word "reconciliation" doesn't mean much.

A couple of years ago, I boarded an airplane in Detroit headed for the West Coast. I was in the middle seat. The man on my left was already asleep. I looked out the window and then made a comment to the man on my right. Turning my direction, he pulled an ear bud out of his ear with a facial expression that invited me to repeat what I had said. One comment led to another and before we knew it, we were in the air and enjoying a conversation together. I asked him if he went to church. He told me that he was an atheist. I wondered how he had become one and asked if he had grown up in an atheistic home or if he had come to that conclusion later in life. He told me that when he was growing up, his parents took him to church, but his dad had a bad temper, didn't spend any time with the family and eventually abandoned them. He figured that if that was what religion did for people, he didn't want anything to do with it. How could a loving God be real and allow his mother and siblings to suffer as they had. He had come to the conclusion that the Bible was just a collection of fables and couldn't be trusted.

I realized he had never experienced the love of God or the joy of a relationship with Him. A few minutes later, he asked me what I did for a living. I told

him that I was a minister, but he was sure I was joking. When he realized I really was a minister, his facial expression changed—almost as if he were bracing for a fight. "Ok...prove to me there is a loving God," he said. I confessed that I couldn't prove it to him. But I could share why I know God is real and that He loves me.

I told him that I speak to God every day. "Does He speak back to you?" he asked. I told him that He did but in several different ways. Sometimes through thoughts or impressions and sometimes by direct answers to prayer. The most prevalent way was through the Bible. I told him that I choose to believe that the Bible is from God and explains where we came from and what will happen to us in the future. The Bible is my reference point for truth and if there is something that appears inconsistent in it, I choose to continue to believe the Bible and wait for God to bring clearer understanding.

Then I shared several examples of how God had communicated with me or answered my prayers. We went on to other topics. Later he asked me where I thought people went when they died. I reminded him that my source of truth was the Bible. Then I shared several Bible passages that give insights about death. He continued to ask me questions about life and each time, I reminded him of my point of reference and shared what the Bible said.

As we were preparing to land, he told me that normally he puts his ear buds in and doesn't talk to anybody, but he

really appreciated our conversation. He asked me why I hadn't argued with him about being an atheist. I told him that everyone has the right to believe whatever they choose. Atheism is a choice, as is Christianity. The difference between the two was the experience of God's love. "We love Him because He first loved us."<sup>7</sup> If someone can talk us into something, then perhaps someone else can talk us out of it. But when we have experienced God's love for ourselves, no one can convince us that God isn't real.

Paul reminds us that, as Christians, we are ambassadors for Christ, speaking on His behalf, as though God were pleading through us to accept His offer of reconciliation.<sup>8</sup> To be successful, we must have more than a theory of God's love; we must have a practical working knowledge of that love. "The love of Christ...compels us"<sup>9</sup> and motivates us to live for Him and to share His offer of reconciliation—the heart of the gospel.

I grew up with parents who loved God and showed me that love. Perhaps you or someone you know did not have that privilege. God wants to draw every hurting and unloved person to Him, using the words and actions of His ambassadors so that everyone can experience His love. This is our calling and mission.

<sup>1</sup> *Detroit Free Press*, Dec 1, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> John Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You*, (Thomas Nelson, 2018), p. 154.

<sup>3</sup> John 15:13, NKJV

<sup>4</sup> John 3:16, NKJV

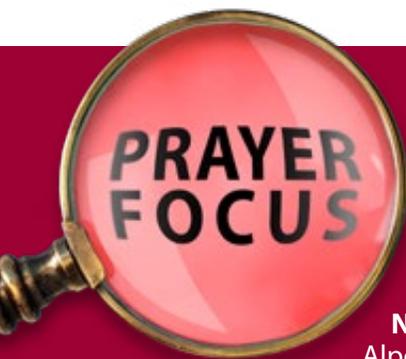
<sup>5</sup> Romans 5:8, NKJV

<sup>6</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:19, NKJV

<sup>7</sup> 1 John 4:19, NKJV

<sup>8</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:20, NKJV

<sup>9</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:14, NKJV



**Every Monday morning**, the Michigan Conference staff meets for worship and prayer. Here is the list for April. Please join with us as we pray for these churches and ministries.

**NOVEMBER 2**  
Warren  
Pastor Giancarlo de  
Miranda

**NOVEMBER 9**  
Alpena, Onaway

**NOVEMBER 16**  
Buchanan, Chikaming  
Pastor Harry Rogers,  
Pastor Aron Crews

**NOVEMBER 23**  
Holland  
Pastor Sean Reed

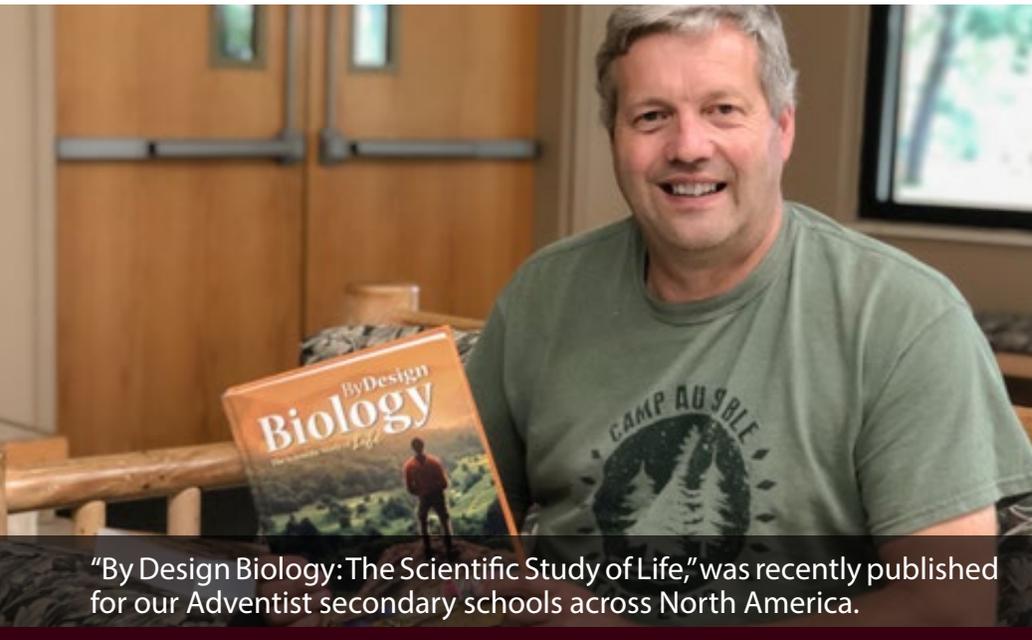
**NOVEMBER 30**  
Andrews Korean  
Pastor William Lee

**DECEMBER 7**  
Detroit Korean, Troy Korean  
Pastor Bomki Kim

**DECEMBER 14**  
Cherry Hill, Farmington  
Pastor Luke Penrod

**DECEMBER 21**  
Grand Rapids Elwell  
Pastor Bernard Rumenera

**DECEMBER 28**  
Berrien Springs Village,  
Neighbor 2 Neighbor  
Pastor Ron Kelly, Pastor Dennis



# Biology and the Master Designer: An Interview with Dr. Atkins

By Dr. Gordon Atkins  
with Andy Im

“By Design Biology: The Scientific Study of Life,” was recently published for our Adventist secondary schools across North America.

**T**he long-anticipated Biology textbook, “By Design Biology: The Scientific Study of Life,” was recently published for our Adventist secondary schools across North America. In the following interview, we discuss Dr. Gordon Atkins’ involvement in the book’s production, as well as other interesting tidbits about his work at Camp Au Sable.

**Andy Im:** Tell us a little bit about your background and how you ended up at Andrews University.

**Dr. Atkins:** I was born in Ottawa, Canada, where I attended Kingsway College through high school. After graduating, I enrolled at Andrews University where I completed both my undergraduate and master’s degrees. I moved back to Canada to work on my PhD in neuroscience at McGill University in Montreal.

After university, I began looking for a permanent position but I wanted to do postdoctoral research at the same time. Only two neuro labs in the world had the equipment I needed: one in Germany and one at Andrews. When I applied, they sent me to Andrews. I was there for two years on a well-funded postdoc (a temporary position that allowed me to continue my research). During that time, I was offered and accepted a position in the Biology department at Andrews.

**Andy Im:** What year was that?

**Dr. Atkins:** I started in July 1990. I taught and did research there for 25 years before I moved to Camp Au Sable.

**Andy Im:** What led you to Camp Au Sable?

**Dr. Atkins:** Well, Pastor Ken (Micheff) had a burning desire that the nature center at Camp Au Sable be better. At the time, it was a building full of dead stuff. He had a vision that it could be much more! He developed an ad-hoc committee to come up with a master plan to enhance the nature center and bring people closer to God’s creation. I was a part of that master planning committee. When I handed it to Pastor Ken, I said, “Here is the master plan for the nature center, but what I think you want is a plan for a nature program.” He asked me to write a vision document for what a full-time camp naturalist position would look like. I did and a little while later he asked if I would take the position! So, in a way, I wrote my own job description. If I’m ever frustrated with my job, I guess it’s my own fault!

**Andy Im:** Can you share a little about some of the other things that you do here?

**Dr. Atkins:** Summer camp, of course. During the main season, outside of summer camp, outdoor ed is the primary responsibility. All

the Adventist elementary school 5th graders come for a 3-day experience. For our smaller schools we include grades 5-8. Most years I have an intern, so I’m involved in mentoring as well. I also work for Pathfinders where we typically develop a new honor for the North American Division each year. The most recent honor was “Oceans”. We do stuff with Adventurers and Pathfinders because nature and club ministries go together well. I also conduct and publish research. The Conference feels that the camp naturalist ought to be a current scientist, particularly as we deal with creation-evolution issues. I also lead nature tours of campus. The biggest group that I work with are birders. In the time remaining I work on the master plan for the nature center development.

**Andy Im:** Tell me about the book By Design Biology and your role in its publication.

**Dr. Atkins:** Former North American Division Education director Larry Blackmer had a vision for this project. He recognized that our science curricula had a few issues. First, we didn’t have a uniquely Adventist biology textbook to use in our academies. Our schools used standard biology textbooks and had to fill in the gaps and deal with evolution that’s inherent in modern biology these days. The second issue was the volume of

the books we were using. If you look at high school biology textbooks, they are almost as big as college textbooks. Most teachers in our academies weren't able to get through all of the material, so they'd pick and choose, which left huge gaps. The goal of this book was to have it written from a Christian worldview, but not be so huge that it was impossible to get through. It's only 27 chapters.

I was one of the Adventist content writers/editors. The process went something like this. The Kendal-Hunt staff writers came up with an outline for each chapter. The Adventist writers would take the chapter outline and say, "OK, I think it's missing this," or "Here's where we are going to have to plug in some different material, and also unplug some of the inherit evolutionary concepts." With that road map, the writers composed the first draft. Areas in which they had no background, in terms of the design part, were left for us to write. We took the core of the biological information and wrote that into a chapter that would fit into an Adventist textbook. Some of the illustrations are mine. I was involved in the approval process to ensure the content lined up with our worldview, and Larry Blackmer, the executive editor, did the final read-through to make sure this was really what the North American Division was looking for.

The most important thing was that biology be learned within the context of a Master Designer, and a loving God. We also included discussions about Darwinian evolution so that students can understand the way biology is looked at by most scientists in the world, and can correlate the relationship between secular and creationist worldviews.

I never dreamed of being involved in writing a textbook. I had written and published lots of research articles but this was different. My experience with camp and a broad range of age groups and academic levels provided me with a better framework for taking the technical stuff and presenting it in a way that would work well for high school.

**Andy Im:** How has your study of biology impacted your spiritual outlook or strengthened your position on God?

**Dr. Atkins:** I was brought up in an Adventist family with an appreciation of the outdoors and nature. Teaching biology really helped me articulate what I believed and strengthened my faith. As a young scientist, I learned that we make mistakes. Just because something is scientific doesn't mean



The most important thing was that biology be learned within the context of a Master Designer, and a loving God.

it is necessarily true. For example, one of my early published articles seemed correct at the time, but now I don't believe it—and I wrote it! We've learned new things about how DNA works, and now the interpretation of that paper is just plain wrong. So, in making errors myself in science, it has helped me understand the nature of science and how to deal with apparent conflicts between science and faith. I understand now that all the knowledge we have is relative knowledge. Only God knows absolute truth in science and religion [in any comprehensive sense]. The Bible says we see through a glass dimly, so we should expect there to be questions that require faith. If we think we have it all worked out and we have all the answers, I think that's a red flag. Do we think we are God? No, but we can go to the Bible and God's creation for fundamental truths we can build on.



How awesome that God's hands and feet come in multiple sizes: yours, mine and kids', too.

## "Look Mom, He's Coming!"

A few days ago I was in the upstairs play room with our kids. It was a beautiful sunny day and Tucker and I were playing at his train table right next to windows that face the mountains. All of a sudden Tucker looked out the window and shouted, "Mom, look up there in the clouds! It's Jesus! He's coming again!"

My eyes filled with tears and my heart skipped a beat at the sincerity in his voice. I began to play along with him. He described what he was seeing and the angels that surrounded Jesus in the cloud. He came out from under his train table as though he was being drawn towards Jesus and said, "Mom, we need to go meet Him!"

We went down the stairs and out the door, where I followed him to the greenhouse. Once we arrived in the greenhouse he looked around and said, "Mom, is this Heaven?" I couldn't help but chuckle as I looked around from a human mom's perspective. There were weeds everywhere, plants that hadn't made it and mole holes in the ground.

I smiled once again at his enthusiasm and we began talking about what Heaven might look like.

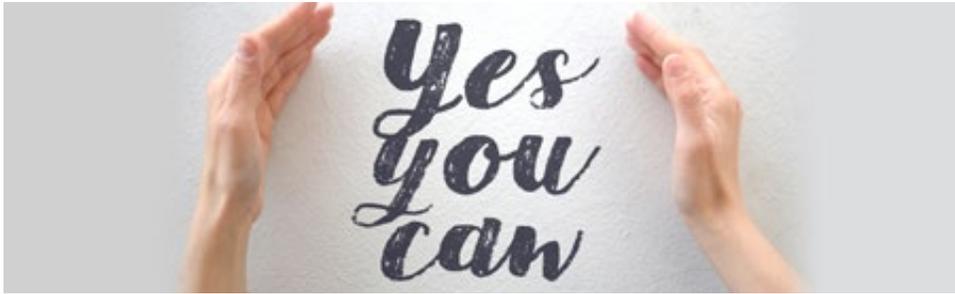
At this spot in the story I have to be honest. I can't say as a busy, tired and sometimes cranky mom of two young kids, that we talk about heaven very much. It doesn't "feel" very close on the long, lonely days as a stay-at-home mom. But you know, God looks beyond days that feel like we've taught our kids nothing, the days we lose

our patience, and the times we forget to pray with them before bed. I don't care what this old world and the devil throw at us—if we can become like little children, and get enthusiastic about Jesus and His Second Coming, He will bring those friends, neighbors, enemies and coworkers to hear what we have to share.

I, for one, was put in my place when my four-year-old son initiated playing "Second Coming." It won't be long

before we won't have to "play" Second Coming! Let's not hide this amazing information from our community; let's not feel like we've arrived because we're worshiping on the right day, we're going to church, we're doing everything right. God has called us to be His hands and feet. How awesome that God's hands and feet come in multiple sizes: yours, mine and kids', too.

By **Jody Jarnes**



"Some miracles are very obvious, dramatic, and 'now!' Others are disguised in time and circumstances. . ."

## Miracles Come in "Cans"

If you could go to the grocery store and buy a miracle in a can, would you do it? Well, miracles *do* come in "cans." "I **can** do all things through Christ who strengthens me."<sup>1</sup>

**Trust in the Midst of Trouble.** We can trust God and rely on His unfailing power, promises and plan to see us through every trouble *and* provide every need: "He is a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear."<sup>2</sup> We might be tempted to prefer finding a winning lottery ticket in the parking lot. That's the quick and easy fix, but quick and easy rarely grow character, strength, patience, obedience, compassion, love, or loyalty. They just don't. Apparently, Heaven has a different accounting system of what constitutes real treasure.<sup>3</sup>

**Truth.** The truth is, if Christ brings you to it, He'll bring through it. As the song goes, "My Lord knows the way through the wilderness; all I have to do is follow—Strength for today is mine always, and all that I need for tomorrow!" After all, did the Lord suffer His disciples to get caught in a storm in the middle of the Sea of Galilee just to watch them drown?<sup>4</sup> No, He yearned to grow their faith, trust, and obedience. "Faith grows strong in earnest conflict with doubt and fear."<sup>5</sup> Paul was still in prison tethered to that rough guard when he

penned this sure promise: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."<sup>6</sup>

**Don't Miss Your Miracle.** We plead for answers—even miracles—and what are those miracles going to look like? We are boldly invited: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver you, and you will glorify Me."<sup>7</sup> Some miracles are very obvious, dramatic, and "now!" Others are disguised in time and circumstances that don't budge so quickly.

### Your miracle:

- **May not look like one.** Paul was shipwrecked by a violent storm and escaped drowning by floating on a piece of board, later to be bitten by a viper. As promised, he and the prisoners on board escaped death and Paul was not killed.<sup>8</sup>
- **May be a process over time.** The prodigal son's father spent perhaps months or years praying that his boy would return from the pigpen of the world. He prayed in hope and patience; his prayers were answered.<sup>9</sup>
- **May be different than what you asked for.** Many of God's heroes lost their lives, their loved ones, and their fortune—only to receive the reward of faith—eternal life. "These all died in faith, not having received the

promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."<sup>10</sup>

- **Will yield faith, trust, security, and peace.** The Ancient Job had his worst things first and his best things last. He lost family, possessions, position, and health. The curtain is pulled back so we can see the Instigator of evil, pain, and suffering. His faith survived, then thrived, and all was eventually restored. He declared: I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I will see God, whom I shall see for myself, and not a stranger."<sup>11</sup>

**The Greatest Miracle.** The greatest miracle is what God does in you, not for you as your faith is tried in the fire. These trials are allowed for a purpose, and what the devil would use for our destruction, God will use for good. He will reproduce His own image in us, as "gold tried in the fire"<sup>12</sup>—the currency of Heaven.

By **Vicki Griffin**,

Health and Temperance Director

1 Philippians 4:13  
2 Psalm 46:1-2  
3 James 1:2  
4 Matthew 14:22-33

5 4 Testimonies, p.117  
6 Philippians 4:29  
7 Psalm 50:15  
8 Acts 27, 28

9 Luke 5:11-32  
10 Hebrews 11:13  
11 Job 19:25-27  
12 Revelation 3:18

# PASTORAL TRANSITIONS



**Pastor Ben Garcia** is the new pastor of the Elk Rapids Spanish, Kalkaska, and Traverse City churches. He previously ministered to the Saginaw and Saint Charles churches.

## NEWS BRIEF



### Camp Au Sable Housing Rates

Camp Au Sable's housing rates and fees for individuals, families, and church groups. This is a great opportunity for those desiring to spend time in nature at Camp Au Sable. For additional rates and information, please visit the following link: <https://www.misda.org/camp-rates>.

#### Camp Au Sable Lodging and Fees Information

<i>All rates are Adult Per night fees</i>	Cabins	Aud. Bsmt 1-8 Cedar Lodge Loft Nature Center	Aud. Bsmt 9-10 Cedar Lodge Deer Lodge Eagle Lodge	Forest Lodge	RV Park	Northwoods Tent Camping: Wagon Train: <b>\$3/person/night</b>
Price per person	\$10.00	\$25.00	\$30.00	\$70.00 (*note senior rate)	RVs/Trailers \$25.00/night, per site	<b>FORT</b> \$90/night minimum per night up to 15 people Plus \$4/person/night for each additional person
Family Rate (parents + children)	\$25.00	\$55.00	\$75.00	\$70.00 (*note senior rate)  <i>*FL is reserved for: Senior Citizens, Conf. Employees, Program Speakers, &amp; Other Specified Program Guests</i>	Tents \$10.00/night, per site	Experience rustic camping in nature at our FORT or Northwoods, or Wagon Train!  *No recreational activities are provided for these rustic areas.

**\*SENIORS** ages 62 and older, **subtract \$10.00 per night per room** to all of the above rates, excluding family and cabin rates. \*limit 1 discount per room.

#### RESERVATION DEPOSITS & POLICY

**RESERVATION DEPOSITS:** 1) **Main Village Area: \$250.00** 2) **Cedar Village Area or Deer Lodge: \$150.00** 3) **FORT: \$50.00**

\*Checks may be made payable to Camp Au Sable, and mailed to: 2590 Camp Au Sable Rd., Grayling, MI 49738.

\*Credit Cards are accepted. \*No reservation will be guaranteed until the deposit is received.

### (The Holiday Season and Sacrificing for Others)

But now Satan has managed to turn our offerings from God to one another, and thus has exalted self in His stead... He has turned it into a channel of selfishness, to purchase toys and trifles that will do your children no good, and to make larger gifts to one another... We do not want the cause of God to go crippling along for want of means that are needed upon the right hand and upon the left. . . Let every one bring in an offering to God. Don't you think that this is the way to observe

Christmas? Don't you think it is the best way, rather than that means should go into the treasuries of the ungodly?

Now there is a new year coming, and as the light is streaming from the open door, every one of us should thirst for more and more of its illuminating power because the earth is growing darker and darker every day. Many have not experienced the fullness of this light upon their heart. Fathers and mothers, it is your duty before your

families to let the love of God into your hearts, that they may see that you are bound up with their eternal interests, that when they do anything that grieves you it grieves Jesus. Unless you are persevering in your efforts, unless you are working all the time, Satan will overcome you at last, for he never ceases his vigilance.

**By Ellen G. White,**

Taken, in part, from Manuscript Releases, Vol. 21 [1501-1598, 1990-1991]

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# MONTHLY CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER

- 1-6 New in Ministry
- 13-15 Personal Ministries Training
- 15-17 Prayer & Fasting
- 22-29 GLAA Home Leave
- 25-26 Office Closed (Thanksgiving)

## DECEMBER

- 4-6 Office Staff Retreat
- 13 Lay Advisory Coordinating Committee
- 17-Jan 3 GLAA Home Leave
- 24-27 Office Closed (Christmas)

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## NATURE NUGGET

### A Lesson from Steamboat Geyser

By Dr. Gordon Atkins,  
Nature Director,  
Camp Au Sable



Photo: Dr. Gordon Atkins

On a recent trip to Yellowstone National Park, my wife and I decided to explore the Norris Geyser Basin. This is a particularly active area in terms of geothermal features like mud volcanoes, fumaroles, hot springs and, of course, geysers. Geysers occur where the hot magma below the earth's crust heats water into steam, which periodically boils over in a powerful spray of steam and hot water.

Some geysers are very regular like Old Faithful, which erupts approximately each hour or so. Others, like Steamboat Geyser, are irregular, ranging from 2 days to 20 years between eruptions. This is where this story begins!

Steamboat Geyser is located near the parking lot by the Norris Geyser basin. As we arrived, we read a warning sign: "Park at your own risk. Eruptions of Steamboat can spew caustic minerals that can etch the windows and paint of your vehicle." We noticed a few cars carefully covered, but the parking lot was nearly full of unprotected vehicles. I reasoned

that we are only staying an hour or so. What are the chances that this geyser that can lay dormant for 20 years and erupt in the next hour? So, despite the warning signs, I parked our truck.

Of course, you can guess what happened! While we were on the boardwalk, the ground shook, Steamboat Geyser roared and erupted, spewing hot caustic water and steam 411 ft. into the air. It was spectacular. We got drenched, and as the warning indicated, some of the spray landed on our truck, permanently pitting the windshield.

What a reminder of what the Bible warns us about the last days of this earth as we know it! Despite the warning signs of Christ's second coming, many are going to deliberately ignore them. Sadly, some that may have been looking forward to the great event all their life, will lose their zeal and give up. The ground WILL shake, there WILL be a great sound, and the coming of Jesus WILL be spectacular. Will you be waiting and watching, or will you be caught unaware?