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The *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* is prepared by the Office of the Adult Bible Study Guide of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The preparation of the guides is under the general direction of the Sabbath School Publications Board, a subcommittee of the General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM), publisher of the Bible study guides. The published guide reflects the input of a worldwide evaluation committee and the approval of the Sabbath School Publications Board and thus does not solely or necessarily represent the intent of the author(s).

Agents of

Swede Ingmar Bergman told a story about a knight named Antonius Block who kneels in front of a confessional to confess his sins. He does not realize until later that he is talking to Death—a shadowy, robed character—rather than a priest. Block declares that he is seeking not faith, not suppositions, but knowledge.

“I want,” he says, “God to stretch out His hand toward me, reveal Himself, and speak to me.”

Death replies that perhaps there is no God, that there is only nothing.

“Then,” says Block, “life is an outrageous horror. No one can live in the face of death, knowing that all is nothingness.”

Today millions live in the face of such nothingness. They have no faith in God, no hope in anything past the world around them. No wonder,

then, that so many focus on the comforts of this life, seeking solace in pleasure and the various worldly distractions. The Christian faith—which calls upon us to “fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Cor. 4:18, NIV)—is foreign to them.

As Christians, we are God’s agents to bring people hope, to show that there is a God who loves and cares for them.

As Christians, we are God’s agents to bring these people hope, to show that there is a God who loves and cares for them, to show that although life has many outrageous horrors, it is not ultimately an outrageous horror but that God will finally make all things right.

The Bible gives us many inspirational stories of God’s agents of hope. In this quarter’s lessons we will focus on some of these outstanding missionaries; on whom they were and what they did in seeking to bring others to a saving knowledge of the Lord of salvation.

Ellen G. White tells the story of a man nearly chilled to death in deep snow. He was about to give up struggling for his life when he heard the moans from a fellow traveler nearby. His first impulse was to rescue the

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other man. When he found him, he rubbed the man's frozen limbs. He finally got him to his feet and carried him through the drifts to safety.

Then "the truth flashed home to him that in saving his neighbor he had saved himself also" by quickening "the blood which was freezing in his own veins."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 319.

The point? A healthy church is a church focused on mission to others. Sharing God's love with the community brings fresh life and energy into the church.

It would be a mistake this quarter to study these biblical agents as interesting historical figures and leave it at that. Rather, we need to catch the inspiration of their lives and focus on our mission to this dying world. There is nothing more refreshing, or more life-giving, than reaching out to others.

Our prayer is that this quarter's lessons on biblical agents of hope will lead us into a renewed commitment to share God's love with our neighbors and friends and in mission fields around the world. In so doing, we may just find that we have entered into a whole new dimension in our Christian lives.

Gary Krause, an Australian born to missionary parents in Fiji, is director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the General Conference. He is married to Bettina, and they have one daughter, Bethany Grace.

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ON THE AIR

Someone predicted 50 years ago that with the advent of television, radio would die out in a decade. It didn't happen. In fact, radio is just as powerful and prevalent today as it was before television. People listen at work, in the car, and in their homes. The Adventist radio networks in North America are growing, with new stations, new programming, and new listeners.

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will add new stations across Canada and enhance the radio network in the United States. I want to help make this a reality so that thousands of listeners can hear the Gospel message—some for the first time. For me it's personal.