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For God & Country





WHEN THINGS GO BAD

By **Mario E. Ceballos, D.Min., BCC**

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Many have asked the question, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Books have been written and much has been said, but the question remains. In these few paragraphs, it is impossible to answer that question fully.

You may find yourself serving your country in the military, in a police force, public service, or in the fire department, but everything you do turns out wrong. Let me offer a few examples of others who have been in similar situations.

Someone I love very much finds solace in these words of Jesus. “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

Paul was imprisoned and finally, put to death because he obeyed Christ’s

command to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles. John, the beloved disciple, was banished to the Isle of Patmos for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

When we feel that things have gone wrong, it affects our self-worth, with potentially horrendous consequences. When you feel as though the rug has been pulled out from under you, your entire sense of self is affected. Even problems that cause less distress don’t feel good. However, they still allow you to appreciate other positive aspects of yourself, and this strengthens your sense of self-worth. This happens naturally because people are motivated to feel good about themselves.

When you lose your sense of self-worth, a excellent way to recover is to use what psychologists call *self-affirmations*. Consider

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an individual who struggles with making presentations to colleagues. This person might feel better by remembering that they are a generally well-liked person and someone whose fellow employees come to for guidance. As a result, they'd be more likely to improve their skills, feel good about this accomplishment, and generally view themselves at work in a positive light.

Without a sense of self-worth or such self-affirmations, people often defensively place the blame for problems outside of themselves. This kind of defensive response can backfire, leading people to remain stuck in bad situations or destructive patterns of behavior.

Here are several actions that people who bounce back from defeat do when things go wrong.

They know how to adjust their goals, they do not give up.

They are realistic optimists. Research suggests that the realistic optimist is more likely to be successful. They are grateful for what they have achieved and will concentrate on their successes.

They learn from their failure.

They can sit down and assess calmly what went wrong.

They know that failure is a prelude to success. Bill Gates' first company, called Traf-O-Data, was a failure. He was able to adapt and try again with Microsoft, and we all know how successful that became.

Ask for advice. Many people have been able to crawl out from the ruins of failure and start again, but some were wise enough to seek advice from friends or mentors.

They are persistent and courageous.

Thomas Edison failed over 6,000 times when inventing the light bulb. All successful people have one thing in common. They never quit.

They know that nothing is wasted. They know how to invest in what remains after failure, which creates an environment that they are always experiencing growth.

They know when to slow down and take a break. If you have failed, the secret is to know when to let go, sit back, slow down, and regroup.

Never wait for the right moment. "Carpe diem (Seize the moment)." – Horace ⁴

One destructive attitude is for people to turn against themselves. Those who are inclined toward high standards often become critical of themselves and their performance.

Instead, practice choosing to focus your energy in positive directions until it becomes a habit. Once it does, you will be more empowered and experience less trouble in your life. You will feel like you are living on purpose, taking charge of your direction. There is some truth in what William Ernest Henley said at the end of his poem "Invictus." "I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul."⁵

Let's not forget the words of Jesus in John 16:33, "But take heart; I have overcome the world."

¹ John 16:33 (ASV)

² <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/820.17846#17850>

³ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/making-change/201203/how-feel-good-when-things-go-bad>

⁴ <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/10-things-successful-people-when-things-wrong.html>


⁵ <https://poets.org/poem/invictus>



DON'T
JUST
BEAR IT,

Use It

By Deena Bartel-Wagner,
Editor, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries



"Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Whatever happens, give thanks, because it is God's will in Christ Jesus that you do this."

Viktor Frankl was arrested by the Nazis during World War II. Stripped of his property, his family, his possessions, he was sent to Auschwitz. There a manuscript he'd labored over for years and had hidden in the lining of his coat was taken from him.

A few days later, he faced another humiliation. "I had to surrender my clothes and, in turn, inherited the worn-out rags of an inmate who had been sent to the gas chamber," said Frankl. "Instead of the many pages of my manuscript, I found in the pocket of the newly acquired coat a single page torn out of a Hebrew prayer book, which contained the main Jewish prayer, *Shema Yisrael*—"Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one God. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."¹

WHEN EVERYTHING GOES WRONG

If you were Frankl, how would you respond as you read those words, "Love the Lord God ..." Would they have brought comfort? Or, would you react in anger?

For Frankl, it gave him a focus point. He trusted his God, looked for good among the misery that permeated Auschwitz, and survived despite death surrounding him.

When we are in the midst of crisis, life-changing events, or facing disappointments, verses like 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 can be challenging to understand. "Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Whatever happens, give thanks, because it is God's will in Christ Jesus that you do this."

In her book *A Path Through Suffering*, Christian author Elisabeth Elliot wrote, "In Old Testament times suffering was seen as evil. In the New Testament, suffering and evil are no longer identical. Think of the shock the crowds must have felt when Jesus said that those who mourn, those who are poor and persecuted and have nothing are *happy*! How could He say such things? Only in light of another kingdom, another world, another way of seeing this world. And it is in terms of that life that we must learn to look at our sufferings."²

Elisabeth Elliot was a young missionary wife serving in the jungles of Ecuador. She and her husband, Jim, along with four other couples, were trying to establish contact with the Quechua Indians. On January 8, 1956, the five men believed they had the opportunity to meet with a small group of Huaorani. Instead, the group was murdered by the very people they were attempting to help.

Elisabeth could have become embittered and angry over the death of her husband. Instead, she continued her work among the Quechua, telling them the story of Jesus. Hearts were softened, and lives were changed.

disappointment, or even anger to consume us. How we survive the set-backs and bad things that happen in life must be grounded in our principles and beliefs as believers.

Put on Your Armor. When we are living through a disappointment, a hurt, or any other type of life-impacting event, we must suit up. We can't and shouldn't try to respond or cope with our own power. Instead, we must fall to the vulnerable position of prayer on our knees and trust that God is standing beside us through every step, every breath, every hurt. Don't be shy about sharing your fears

BUT THIS IS NOW, AND MY DREAMS HAVE SHATTERED

It's easy to talk about how someone else responds to bad things happening in their lives. When it touches us, it becomes much more difficult to find our way through without allowing hurt, bitterness,



"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

and troubles with God. Tell Him how you feel, ask for help, and then wait on Him. Some compelling examples of this can be found in Psalms 22, 31, 37, 38, 46, and 51.

Give Thanks. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Remember that God sees the 30,000-foot view when you are only seeing the Ground Zero view of your situation.

YOU CAN GIVE THANKS BECAUSE:

1. ***You aren't alone in this.*** God is going through it with you. It's hard to remember that sometimes. That's when putting on your armor every day becomes even more critical. The act of consciously turning the situation over to God reminds you He's listening and acting.
2. ***In the middle of the chaos, God is working on your behalf.*** He's involved and in control of even the "bad" things. Job questioned just

how in control God was in his life. But, as the rest of the story played out, Job accepted his situation and even thanked God for it.

3. ***God has a purpose for your life.*** You don't know how what happens to you today may become a pivot point for another experience later in your life. Learn from what you are going through. Reflect on the lessons you can learn and how this will change your life.

You've probably at least once prayed for God's will to be done in your life. Are you only willing to accept His will when life is going well? God isn't any less in control when it appears that everything you'd dreamed of is becoming like dust blowing away

Stay on Task. Don't neglect your daily routines. These will provide a sense of order. You have a mission to complete. Regroup and focus on what it will take to finish well, whether it's a current assignment or a life goal. Now isn't the time to lose track of the final goal.

"You are to take hold of these calamities and turn them for a testimony—you are not to escape trouble, nor merely to bear it as the will of God; you are to use it."

Embrace Courage, Not Worry. Have you ever noticed that worrying doesn't make things better? You tend to end up feeling worse about the situation. Although confusion seems like it will overwhelm you, there is another option.

You can regain a sense of control by staying in control of the choices you make. Choose to focus on the things you can do. It often takes courage to make a choice not to dwell on the disappointment, but instead to move forward.

Be Your Own Testimony. In Luke 21, Jesus talks about suffering and the fearful events His followers would face. And He also talks about testimony. In verse 13, Jesus says, "And it shall turn to you for a testimony." E. Stanley Jones interpreted this passage this way. *"Jesus makes a declaration that throws a flood of light on the whole problem [suffering] and his attitude toward it: 'It shall turn unto you a testimony,' or as it has been translated, 'It shall turn out for you as an opportunity for witnessing.' In other words, He says, 'You are to take hold of these calamities and turn them for a testimony—you are not to escape trouble, nor merely to bear it as the will of God; you are to use it.' He suggests that we are to take up pain calamity, injustice, and persecution, admit them into the purpose of our lives and make them contribute to higher ends—the ends for which we really live."*³

Whether you are experiencing disappointment or loss now or in the future, remember that God is the calm in the storm you are experiencing. His purpose for your life is to live in victory, not in anger or fear. "In a wrong-filled world we suffer (and cause) many a wrong. God is there to heal and comfort and forgive."⁴

¹ <https://bible.org/illustration/victor-frankl>

² Elliot, Elisabeth. *A Path through Suffering*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2014.

³ Jones, E. Stanley. *Christ and Human Suffering*. New York, NY: Abingdon Press, 1933. p. 72

⁴ Elliot, p. 32.



GRATEFUL IN THE HARD TIMES

By LTC (CH) Dan Bray, U. S. Army, Retired MS, MDiv.
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The word, gratitude, brings about several perspectives to consider. Questions such as what is it, should gratitude be practiced, how can I be thankful for my attitude, or how can I live gratefully come to mind.

The more I reflect upon this topic, I think I am becoming convinced that the ultimate point of consideration is none of those attributes. Instead, gratitude mirrors my response to how I view God in my life.

Most of us have been encouraged to tell others “thank you” for the birthday present we received when we were children. We may have been put in an awkward position, especially if we genuinely did not like the gift or if we were counting on something else we truly desired.

Or what about those times in our adult lives when we did not land the project that we thought rightfully belonged to us? Or we may be enduring illness for no apparent reason

If we truly trust God, as we may claim we do, then we can surely trust Him if things take a detour of the way we think our lives should go.

or hope of a cure? Are we obligated to have a spirit of gratitude when things don't always go the way we wish?

The short answer is yes.

You won't find this answer in the traditional version of the Ten Commandments. But you will see the principle clearly in the Apostle Paul's language in 1 Thessalonians 5. In the passage, he tells us to give thanks in everything.

I would further suggest the most crucial segment of having a grateful spirit recognizes God's presence. In all that we go through, God is still in charge and manages our world. If we truly trust God, as we may claim we do, then we can surely trust Him if things take a detour of the way we think our lives should go. If he is all-seeing, all-knowing, and all-powerful, then we can and should trust His best judgments for us.

Others may still object with, "Well then, where was God when my loved one died from cancer or a car accident? Am I still to be grateful?" Yes, to be fair, there are some situations and events that we, as human beings, cannot fathom. To offer a reasonable explanation is not reasonable. However, we can still be faithful to God by maintaining our

thankfulness to Him who chooses to keep us despite ourselves.

There is also the element of energy or effort to put forth in having a grateful attitude. Whether we are ecstatic or severely underwhelmed by a curveball in life, we choose to have a particular viewpoint. And, those viewpoints take up precious amounts of time that we can never reclaim. I would rather be around someone who is, at best, a bit more upbeat about life rather than one who endlessly has no hope.

To help us account for how we can establish an appropriate spirit of gratitude, we can do multiple things. First, we can create an old-fashioned journal of gratefulness on a piece of paper. Secondly, we can use technology and download any one of the multiple kinds of apps to help us. Thirdly, be mindful of two words that are so easy to use, and yet we fail to use them enough in our daily lives. "Thank you."

I believe the more we use that phrase, the better we place ourselves in a position to see the acts of gratitude happening in us, around us, and through us.

And, to that end, we can, in turn, return the thanks to the One who gave us thanks in the first place

Try One More Time

By Constable Monika Montgomery,
Brandon, Winnipeg Police Force, with Deena Bartel-Wagner

Thomas A. Edison, an American inventor, said, “Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.” Today, Monika Montgomery is a police officer of the Brandon Police Service because she kept trying and wouldn’t give up. Becoming a law enforcement officer wasn’t the easy thing to do. Still,

Monika felt a calling that wouldn’t allow her to do anything else.

“When I was in high school, I took an aptitude test,” says Monika. “The results provided several options that I might consider as I pursued a career, including law enforcement and practicing law. I didn’t think much of it at the time. Instead, after graduation, I went to Canadian Union College (now Burman University)



James and Monika Montgomery near
Snake Falls, Quetico Provincial Park.

to begin my studies as a biology major, with the intention of becoming a wildlife biologist.”

With her decision to take a break from her studies to teach English in the Czech

Cst. Montgomery served as a torch bearer during the 2017 Manitoba Special Olympics Closing Ceremony.

Republic, Monika didn't have any idea that a career change would be in her future. “I truly enjoyed my year in Prague teaching English and learning about a different culture,” says Monika. “When I returned to Canada, I planned to complete my degree and find work. However, a miscalculation of credits, a move to Manitoba, and getting married changed those plans.”

Although Monika graduated with a Bachelor of Science in biology with a chemistry minor, she was unable to find work related to her education. Instead, she obtained employment as an administrative assistant for an Adventist personal care home in Winnipeg, Manitoba. As the months and years passed, Monika wondered how she could best use her talents, education, and training.



DONNING THE MOUNTIE SERGE

In 2007, Monika learned that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) were accepting applications. “I knew I wanted a career that wasn't ordinary,” says Monika. “Being a part of the RCMP appealed to me because I could uniquely serve my community.”

The application process to the RCMP is an arduous and extensive six-step process, with the possibility of elimination at any stage. Candidates must attend an information session to initially determine whether they are suitable to assume police duties.

As the months and years passed, Monika wondered how she could best use her talents, education and training.



Above: Monika and James with Monika's brother, Robby Pohle, who serves as a Montana State Game Warden at Yellowstone National Park.
Inset: Monika and James with Jiri Patera, Brandon Wheat King goalie and Las Vegas Golden Knights.

Following this, they must pass a 114 question RCMP Police Aptitude Test (RPAT) and a Six Factor Personality Questionnaire. Successful candidates then move onto the Physical Abilities Requirement Evaluation (PARE). Upon certification, candidates face an interview process and are placed on a ranked list. Their RPAT and interview scores determine their ranking on the Post Interview Ranked List. Successful candidates then receive a conditional Offer of Employment. The final steps include a background investigation, followed by medical and psychological exams.

MAKING THE CUT

With the successful completion of

each of these steps, in August 2008, Monika moved on to the 24-week training at Depot Division in Regina, Saskatchewan, where RCMP cadets have trained since 1885.

"Our daily schedule began every morning at 5:30 a.m with a morning inspection. Training days were filled with drill and deportment, firearms, driver's training, police defence tactics, physical education, and applied police knowledge," says Monika. "Over our lunch hour, we were often required to be on parade in our full uniform. Then in the evenings, we had homework, gym workouts, laundry, and boot polishing."

The demanding schedule typically ran Monday through Friday and as the weeks slipped by, Monika worked

hard but struggled with firearms and marksmanship. “I was ‘back trooped’ for an additional 10 weeks of training,” says Monika. “While I passed my firearms qualifications, I also retook all of the other testing that I had already successfully completed. I couldn’t believe it when I failed a practical scenario that I previously passed.”

For three days, Monika waited to learn her fate. “I remained at the Depot while I waited,” says Monika. “My husband, James, was in London on a business trip, so we both went through those days of uncertainty alone.”

Then, two days before graduation, Monika learned that her RCMP contract wouldn’t be extended. She was told that she could return in a year and repeat the entire 24 weeks of training. “This couldn’t have happened at a worse time,” says Monika. We’d just purchased a home in the community where I had been assigned. I didn’t know what I was going to do.”

WHAT TO DO NOW?

After returning to Winnipeg, Monika looked for work, but nothing appealed to her. An unsuccessful interview with the Winnipeg Police Service led to further disappointment. While visiting Monika’s parents in Lloydminster, Alberta, Monika applied for and was offered a dispatch position advertised by the local

RCMP detachment. Although the position was only for casual hours, Monika and James decided to relocate to Alberta. Then, James received a job offer in Brandon, Manitoba. “It made more financial sense to move to Brandon, where James could work full time and I could look at gaining employment with the municipal police service,” says Monika.

“Two months later, I began work as a non-emergency call taker with the Brandon Police Service,” says Monika. “It wasn’t the same as being an officer, but I really enjoyed the work. I still wanted to apply to become an officer, but the Police Officer’s Physical Abilities Test (POPAT) was more difficult for me than the RCMP’s test.” After two failed recruit applications with Brandon Police Service, Monika began to question whether she should continue seeking a career as a police officer.

“As a Clerical Front Desk Attendant (CFDA), I was assigned as one of the clerks for a platoon of constables, with a Staff Sergeant in command. One of my Staff Sergeants was Doug Thompson,” says Monika. “He knew about the setbacks and disappointments I had experienced at Depot, and he continued to encourage me not to give up on my dreams. Shortly after his promotion to Inspector, he asked me if I was still interested in becoming a police officer.

“With his encouragement, I submitted my third recruit application

Two days before graduation, Monika learned that her RCMP contract wouldn’t be extended.

“Although I have had my share of struggles and adversity, with God’s help, I have prevailed.”

in four years and somehow made it through the recruit process.”

CONSTABLE MONTGOMERY

Monika made the cut, completed her training, and joined the 90-member sworn force in 2014. “It took time to realize my dream, but it was definitely worth it,” says Monika. “I am a constable with the Brandon Police Service and have worked my way up from probationary constable to 1st Class Constable.”

Brandon police officers generally work a two-day two-night 12-hour shift rotation with four days off. “On the street we deal with bar fights, assaults, domestic disturbances, calls for advice and calls of sudden deaths,” says Monika. “Like almost every jurisdiction in Canada, we are seeing increasing numbers of mental health cases and suicides. If I didn’t walk with God, the depravity and negativity would be more than I could bear.”

REACHING INTO THE COMMUNITY AND CHURCH

Shortly after making their home in Brandon, Monika and Jamie learned about an opportunity for community engagement. “We are both avid hockey fans and were ecstatic to learn that we could volunteer as ushers during Brandon Wheat Kings home games. We saw this as a way to build relationships with people in the

community,” says Monika.

Another unexpected opportunity has been in billeting junior hockey players who move to Brandon in order to play hockey for the Wheat Kings each season. “We often talked about offering to house a Wheat King player, and when we learned that one of the players would be coming from the Czech Republic, we jumped at the chance. Because I can speak Czech at a basic level, we offered to billet Jiri Patera, an NHL draft pick of the Vegas Golden Knights,” says Monika. “It has been a tremendous experience having Jiri live with us for the past two years and become part of our family.”

Involvement with her local church family is also an integral part of her weekly routine. “Since moving to Brandon, I have been involved with the children’s ministry program at our church,” says Monika. “I’ve also been designated the child protection coordinator and de facto safety officer, as well as bulletin secretary. My church family understands the nature of the work I do and they regularly lift me up in prayer for protection, wisdom, and health.”

GOD’S CONTINUED BLESSINGS

Monika has witnessed God’s intervention in ways she never imagined. Following an on-duty collision between two police cruisers in 2016, an internal investigation led to a lengthy suspension at a time when her father was diagnosed with a brain

Cst. Monika Montgomery and Cst. Brooke Huculak serving as honor guards during the swearing-in ceremony of the new City Council and Mayor following a municipal election.



tumour. While most people might be discouraged, bitter and angry, Monika chooses to see how God’s hand was at work. “The collision happened two full years before the decisions were made for my suspension, and the dates for that suspension coincided with the exact time period that my family needed me by their side during my Dad’s medical crisis. God knew that I would need time off in 2018.” After completing her suspension, Monika was fully reinstated. “I sent a note to the Chief, to thank him for the part that he played in God’s plan to make sure that I was there for my family.”

Today, Monika serves as the training coordinator for the Brandon Police Service. “I am currently responsible for both the training budget and the uniform and equipment budget. I schedule training courses and make travel arrangements for members of our police service when they attend training outside of our organization. In addition, I am in charge of coordinating the field training for our new recruits,” says Monika. “In the absence of my Sergeant, I also oversee the delivery of court documents to our local courthouse, and manage the department’s uniform

and equipment inventory.”

Reflecting on the hurdles she’s encountered, Monika says that if you believe you are called to do something, you shouldn’t give up. “The more I learned, the more I trained, the more I found that I wanted this career,” says Monika. “Although I have had my share of struggles and adversity, with God’s help, I have prevailed.”

During the darkest moments of her life, Monika continues to believe that God is in control of her life. She often relied on David’s psalm to give comfort and peace. “*Thank the Lord, my rock, who trained my hands to fight, and my fingers to do battle, my merciful one, my fortress, my stronghold, and my savior, my shield, the one in whom I take refuge, and the one who brings people under my authority.*” Psalm 144:1-2, *God’s Word Translation*

BECOMING an OVERCOMER

By Chief Petty Officer Patrick Reynolds,
U. S. Navy (Retired) with Deena Bartel-Wagner

How do you transition from a Southern Baptist heritage of the rapture and eternal hellfire to becoming a Seventh-day Adventist pastor? For Patrick Reynolds, it took a stint in the U. S. Navy, life as a submariner, and the witness of a wife who followed her convictions.

“I grew up as a Southern Baptist,” says Patrick. “My father was a head elder in the local Baptist church. When my behavior was less than desired, he’d often remind me about the rapture, being left behind, and burning in hell forever.”

At ten years old, Patrick lost a connection with his father when his parents divorced. On the cusp of his teen years, he didn’t have a male role model to guide him. “Then my mother met and married James Lewis,” says Patrick. “I appreciated his kindhearted and supportive nature. But he wasn’t at all religious.”

At this point, Patrick faced a turning point in his spiritual walk. Rather than embracing what he’d been taught by his father, he began to experiment with the dark things of the occult and demon summoning.

CHOOSING A NAVAL CAREER

“I barely made the grades to graduate from high school,” says Patrick. “During my senior year, I’d joined the U. S. Navy under their early enlistment program. Just a few days after graduation, I left for boot camp in Florida.”

Following boot camp, Patrick attended the diesel mechanic school in Illinois. “I learned the skills necessary to work on marine diesel engines,” says Patrick. “This prepared me for my work at my first duty station in Little Creek, Virginia. As mechanics, we were responsible for the maintenance of the fast boat squadron of 65-foot aluminum patrol craft. These boats were tasked with patrolling the Atlantic shoreline from Norfolk, Virginia to Puerto Rico.”

During his time at Little Creek, Patrick worked hard and experienced tangible results. “I worked my way up from engineer to

Rather than embracing what he'd been taught by his father, he began to experiment with the dark things of the occult and demon summoning.

Captain of my own 65-foot patrol boat,” says Patrick. “I was proud and very blessed to be able to work locally with our Navy’s Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and SEAL teams in various operations during my time there.”

After several years at Little Creek’s amphibious base, Patrick was assigned to a Spruance class destroyer. “I oversaw maintenance of the ship’s air conditioning units and all onboard refrigeration equipment. While we were deployed to the Indian Ocean, I flew to a remote base to repair the air conditioning unit that cooled their communications gear. I received an award for the skills that I utilized in this situation.”

Sailors on a destroyer have the primary role of anti-submarine warfare. “In other words, our job is to hunt down and destroy enemy submarines below the ocean depths,” says Patrick. “As I observed our operations, I was impressed with how good we were at it.”

Patrick Reynolds, Chief Petty Officer, U.S. Navy (Retired)





The faithful prayers and witness of Vilma influenced Patrick to attend and eventually join the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

FROM DESTROYER TO SUBMARINE

While on the destroyer, Patrick witnessed an encounter that changed his naval career. “I was so impressed with how the enemy fleet reacted to one of our nuclear fast attack submarines that I decided to transfer to the submarine fleet,” says Patrick. “I never looked back.” He eventually served on several Los Angeles class fast attack submarines. He also had the opportunity to see one being built from scratch.

While on submarine duty, Patrick was an engineering auxiliary Chief overseeing the work of many Sailors as they maintained the air, seawater, sanitary, hydraulic systems. “A submarine is like a self-contained world,” says Patrick. “The Navy engineers recognized we are surrounded by saltwater. Out of that source, we can filter and create our own fresh water supply and oxygen which is stored onboard in tanks and then pumped back into the boat.”

A pivotal point in an enlisted man’s naval career is making the rank of Navy Chief. “Thousands of E-6’s take a test, and their entire military career and academic achievements are reviewed by a group of Master Chiefs during a review board,” says Patrick. “The best of the best are then reviewed, and the top 300 receive the prestigious selection to become a Chief Petty Officer. This is considered the pinnacle of the enlisted ranks and is not easy to achieve.”

Patrick struggled with this achievement for a long time and almost gave up. “I had done so poorly in high school, and I did not think I could attend college, so I didn’t even try.”

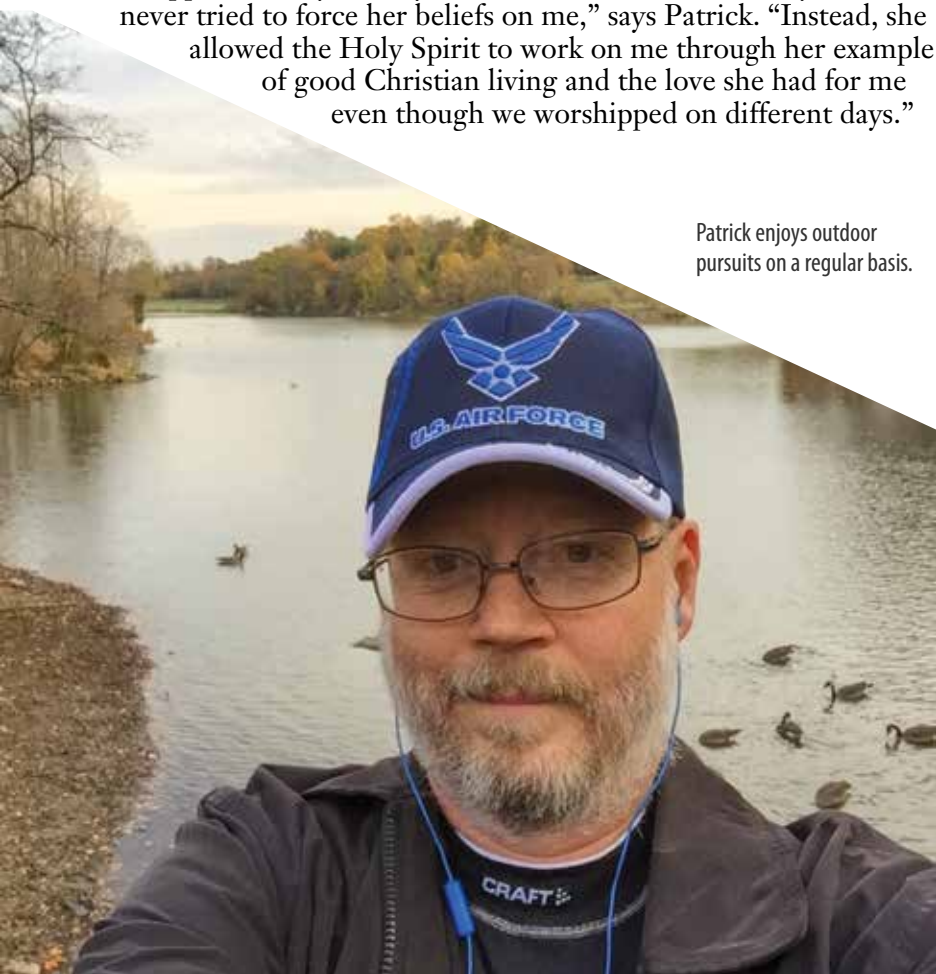
“My wife, Vilma...allowed the Holy Spirit to work on me through her example of good Christian living and the love she had for me even though we worshipped on different days.”

NOT IN MY OWN STRENGTH

During this low point in his career, Patrick began to turn back to his childhood beliefs. “During these struggles, even though I wasn’t an Adventist, I was still a Christian. I always drew on the word of God to get me through the rough patches,” says Patrick. “My favorite text is Philippians 4:13. ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.’”

At this point, Patrick had returned to attending a Sunday church. “My wife, Vilma, was attending a local Adventist church. This went on for approximately seven years, and I remember distinctly that she never tried to force her beliefs on me,” says Patrick. “Instead, she allowed the Holy Spirit to work on me through her example of good Christian living and the love she had for me even though we worshipped on different days.”

Patrick enjoys outdoor pursuits on a regular basis.



Following his decision to join the Adventist Church, Patrick faced new barriers, which became witnessing opportunities. “I had a tough time getting time off to worship on the Sabbath. For me, it was a double dose of difficulties because I started out in my career as a Sunday-keeper. Then, all of a sudden, I was a Sabbath-keeper,” says Patrick. “The leadership didn’t understand why I suddenly changed, so it created a witnessing opportunity for me. Because I was new to Adventism, it proved extremely difficult for me to extrapolate my beliefs to my supervisors to obtain time off for worship.”

When Patrick approached his Captain and requested to have Sabbath off, he was surprised at the officer’s request. “The Captain asked me if I would be willing to provide services for as many religious followers onboard who requested worship,” says Patrick. “This allowed me to provide services to others and gave me the unique opportunity to witness about my Sabbath-keeping and Adventist faith.”

YOU CAN’T RETIRE

As Patrick approached the 20-year mark of his career, he began to look at retirement. “As I began to consider retirement, I attended a 30-day evangelistic crusade in Chesapeake, Virginia, when I decided to turn my life over to God fully,” says Patrick. “The problem was that I was in the submarine force, and my position was highly requested.

I was told that the odds of the Pentagon approving my request for retirement was slim to none.”

Patrick decided to trust God. He prayed and submitted his papers. At the same time, he asked God for a sign.

“I needed assurance that God was preparing me for the ministry as I applied for retirement,”

says Patrick. “I discovered that several of my friends who also were Chiefs in the submarines were also requesting retirement.”



Patrick and
Pastor Mark Finley

Patrick decided to trust God. He prayed and submitted his papers. At the same time, he asked God for a sign.

Several months passed, and Patrick agonized as he waited for the decision. “When I heard about my retirement, I discovered that I was the only one among the Chiefs approved,” says Patrick. “No one could explain why, but I knew why! God had intervened, and I knew then and there that the Lord was preparing me to enter the ministry.”

I HAVE A DEGREE WITH NOWHERE TO GO

After leaving the Navy, Patrick earned a Bachelor in Religion from LaSierra University in Riverside, California. Several conferences expressed interest, and following numerous phone calls, Patrick believed he’d been assigned to a church district. “I sold my house, and about a week later, I received a phone call that I wouldn’t be going to that conference,” says Patrick. “Of course, I was devastated. We didn’t really know what to do, so we prayed for guidance.”

That’s when Patrick decided to start his Master of Divinity program at LaSierra University and continue to work in his position as Deputy Director of Security. “In 2009, when I graduated, the country was in the midst of the recession and real estate market crash. At the same time, my wife’s work decided to close their southern California and offered to move her to the General Conference Office in Silver Spring, Maryland. Since I didn’t have any ministry options at that time, we decided it was best to pack up and move.”

Since the recession was nationwide, no pastoral positions were available in Maryland, either. Patrick found work as a data scanner, an assistant to a vice president, and finally, work in an IT department. One day, Patrick responded to a tech issue in another department. During the conversation, Patrick mentioned that he had an M.Div. degree and wanted to be involved in ministry. “I was invited to preach at a local church,” says Patrick. “The pastor of the church was getting ready to retire. He recommended my name to the Chesapeake Conference, and I was hired as a District Pastor.”

Through the obstacles and disappointments, Patrick chose the path of an overcomer. “When we are faced with difficulties in life, we have basically two options as Christians. The first one is to draw upon God’s word and seek the Lord’s strength to become an overcomer,” says Patrick. “Or we can choose option two and lash out at God for the tribulations and blame Him for all our troubles. I chose option one, and that is what I recommend.”

When Bad Things **HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE...**



In the past few weeks, we have watched as almost every nation on earth reeled from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A devastating tornado in Nashville, Tennessee was followed by a “Bomb Cyclone” in Colorado and a horrific accident involving over 100 vehicles. An earthquake in Utah and the devastating financial collapse of the world’s stock markets have created layers upon layers of trauma to the citizens of this planet.

In each of the aforementioned tragedies, good people have responded by spontaneously helping. Many kudos to the doctors, nurses, respiratory technicians, facilities engineers, maintenance staffers, and food service workers who have redoubled their presence to keep hospitals open. Love and appreciation to the grocers, truck drivers, and farmers who maintain the flowing supply chain.

The epidemiologists and scientists who are studying this virus and working tirelessly to find and create a cure are good people fighting to eradicate a bad thing. Firefighters and emergency medical technicians show up to save lives and extricate people from the twisted frames of crashed cars after an accident or the structural remnants of buildings after natural disasters. Their altruism is for God and country, family, and friends.

Thanks to the pastors and chaplains who have responded to the current crisis by maximizing technology to advance creative methods to deliver worship and pastoral care to seekers and servers.

Paul L. Patterson

Roads to **HAPPINESS** THAT ARE NEVER CLOSED

*I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath
dealt bountifully with me.* Psalm 13:6.

By Ellen G. White

Every earthly wish may be gratified, and yet men pass on as did the ungrateful lepers who had been cleansed and healed of their obnoxious disease. These lepers had been restored to health by Christ, and the parts that had been destroyed by the disease were re-created; but only one, on finding himself made whole, returned to give God glory....

The lesson which is recorded concerning the ten lepers should awaken in every heart a most earnest desire to change the existing order of ingratitude into one of praise and thanksgiving. Let the professed people of God stop murmuring and complaining. Let us remember who is the first great Giver of all our blessings. We are fed and clothed and sustained in life, and should we not educate ourselves and our children to respond with gratitude to our heavenly Father?¹

Have we not reason to talk of God's goodness and to tell of His power? When friends are kind to us we esteem it a privilege to thank them for their kindness. How much more should we count it a joy to return thanks to the Friend who has given us every good and perfect gift. Then let us, in every church, cultivate thanksgiving to God. Let us educate our lips to praise God in the family circle.... Let our gifts and offerings declare our gratitude for the favors we daily receive. In everything we should show forth the joy of the Lord and make known the message of God's saving grace.²

The hearts of those who reveal the attributes of Christ glow with divine love. They are imbued with the spirit of gratitude.... Lift up Jesus. Lift Him up, the man of Calvary, with the voice of song and prayer. Seek earnestly to spread the gospel. Tell the precious story of God's love for man. In this work you will find a satisfaction that will last through the eternal ages.³

¹ The Review and Herald, November 13, 1894.

² The Review and Herald, May 7, 1908.

³ The Review and Herald, July 11, 1899.

Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Welcomes A New **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**



Chaplain M. Gilda Roddy has accepted the call to join the ACM team as the new Assistant Director. Her territory includes the Columbia, Atlantic, and Lake Unions, as well as the Adventist Church in Canada. She assumed her duties September 1, 2019.

Chaplain Roddy was born in Mauritius. Her adolescent years were spent in Australia. After graduation from high school, she took a leap of faith and matriculated to Oakwood College. There she built lifelong

relationships as she prepared for a career in Gospel ministry.

Her leadership and pastoral career blossomed at Oakwood University where she served as the Associate Pastor for Young Adults. Subsequently, she served in the Florida Conference, for 10 years, as Pastor of the Celebration Church and Chaplain at the Celebration Hospital in Orlando. In another leap of faith and adventure, she accepted a call to the Greater Sydney Conference in Australia. She served admirably as the Director of Ministries for Women, Children and Sabbath School.

Her next phase of ministry was in the Loma Linda Community. While there she completed a Master of Science degree. She also served as a staff chaplain while pursuing doctoral studies in Mission Leadership. During that season of her life, Chaplain Roddy was ordained by the Southeast California Conference.

Chaplain Roddy is coming to ACM from the staff of the Loma Linda University Church where she developed the ministry of Pastoral Care. She will bring new energy, new perspectives, and new balance to our team.

Welcome aboard Chaplain Roddy!

Southwestern Union **HONORS** **THOSE WHO SERVE**

In an effort to show appreciation for the service of the military personnel, peace officers, and firefighters in our communities, the Southwestern Union held its first National Service Organization Day at the Mansfield Seventh-day Adventist Church in Mansfield, Texas.

“Holding this special day was a way to recognize and honor those in our communities who sacrifice of themselves to serve others,” said Helvis C. Moody, Southwestern Union youth and young adult/prayer ministries director, who coordinated the ministry opportunity. A special effort was made to invite local community servants.

Themed, “In Honor of Their Service” the day began with Sabbath School and worship services with a focus on service and recognition of those who serve. Special guests included William Cork, assistant



director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries for the North American Division and a chaplain in the Army Reserve and many others.

In the afternoon, several seminars were presented to provide encouragement and educational information, with topics including being informed prior to signing up for military service; how to keep happy, healthy marriages when a spouse is deployed; best practices for interactions with peace officers and how to stay positive, encouraged and excited about the future.

Following the seminars, guests enjoyed refreshments and making new friends. “I encourage all of our churches to hold ministry opportunities such as these to share our appreciation and brotherly love for our community servants,” said Moody.

This article originally appeared in the Southwest Union Record, January-February 2020 issue.



CAP Chaplain's CONTRIBUTION REMEMBERED

By Captain (CHC) Washington Johnson, II, U. S. Navy

Associate Director, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, North American Division



On a picture-perfect autumn afternoon, during a special ceremony, a bronze memorial medallion was affixed to the grave marker of Chaplain Edward Earl Cleveland (1921- 2009) at Oakwood Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Huntsville, Alabama, to honor his service as a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Chaplain.

The idea for a medallion was conceived by Elder R. Steven Norman III, Communications Director of the Southern Union of Seventh-day Adventists to acknowledge clergy and educators in memoriam who have dedicated their lives to service in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The officiant for the ceremony was Captain Washington Johnson II, United States Navy Chaplain Corps, who serves as an Assistant Director of

Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries in the North American Division.

The honor was most fitting for Chaplain Cleveland. Known as a legend in the field of public evangelism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Cleveland conducted countless evangelistic crusades, authored 16 books, served as an administrator at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Oakwood University, and was later inducted into the Martin Luther King, Jr. collegium of preachers and scholars at Morehouse College Atlanta, Georgia. In 2007 Oakwood University dedicated a building bearing Cleveland's and the names of two other distinguished leaders in the Seventh-day Church: "The Bradford-Cleveland-Brooks Leadership Center."

Cleveland's role as a CAP Chaplain is remembered with distinction, as it held a special place in both his heart and ministry. He considered it a great honor when in 1993 he became a chaplain in the CAP at the urging of his close friend and colleague, Elder James Melancon, who also then served as a CAP chaplain holding the rank of Colonel. During Cleveland's ten years of service he was assigned to the Huntsville Composite Squadron and received several medals, ribbons, and unit awards. Cleveland was devoted to



duty with the CAP and showed great appreciation for all military service personnel, including his father's service in World War I. A photo of Cleveland's father, William C. Cleveland Sr., could be admired on his home office desk at any given time.

In attendance for this historical occasion was Charles Bradford, former president of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists and Harold Lee, D.Min, former Director of the Bradford Cleveland Brooks Leadership Center. Other participants included Dr. Mervyn Warren, who gave a heartfelt invocation. Elder James Melancon passionately spoke of Cleveland's role as a chaplain in the CAP. Elder R. Steven Norman III shared the background of the medallion and



affixed it to Cleveland's grave marker. Elder T. Marshall Kelly and Dr. Joyce Johnson led the congregation in a melodious and inspirational reminder of the Second Coming, symbolized in part by the medallion, with a verse of the song, "We Have This Hope:"

*We have this hope that burns within
our hearts,*

Hope in the coming of the Lord.

*We have this faith that Christ
alone imparts,*

Faith in the promise of His Word.

We believe the time is here,

When the nations far and near

Shall awake, and shout and sing

Hallelujah! Christ is King!

*We have this hope that burns within
our hearts,*

Hope in the coming of the Lord.

– Wayne Hooper, 1962

The words of the song also portrayed Cleveland's strong belief in the imminent and soon return of Christ, as evidenced by his passionate work as a gospel evangelist. The memorable ceremony that honored Chaplain Cleveland's service to both God and Country concluded with a benediction of, love, hope and divine protection by Elder T. Marshall Kelly.

**THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CLERGY
MEMORIAL MEDALLIONS CAN BE PURCHASED
THROUGH ADVENTSOURCE.**

Always be joyful. Never stop
praying. Whatever happens, give
thanks, because it is God's will
in Christ Jesus that you do this.

2 Thessalonians 5:16-18, God's Word Translation

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The bravest sight in
the world is to see a
great man struggling
against adversity.

– Lucius Annaeus Seneca



For
God & **Country**

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