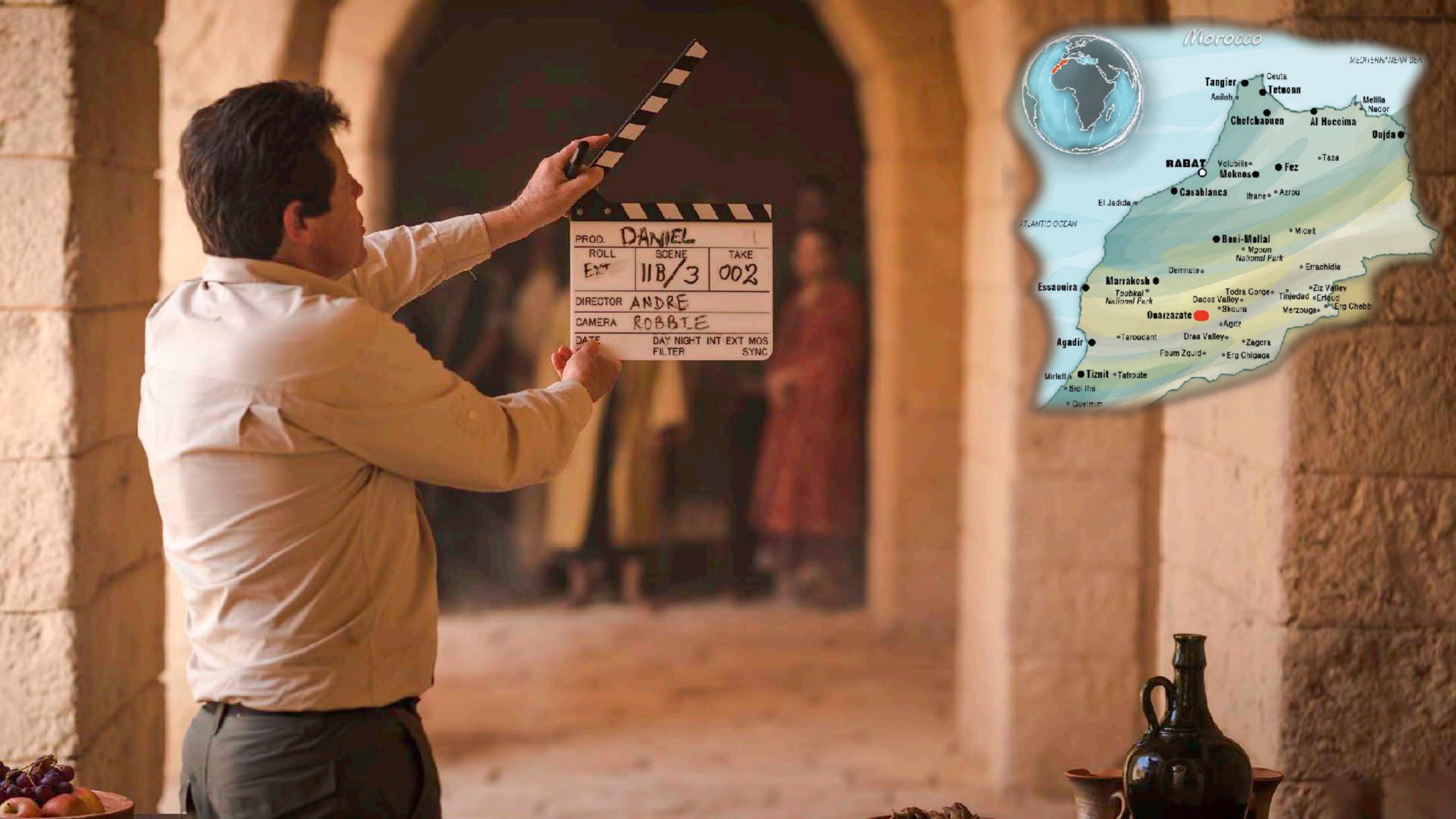
# MINISTRIES





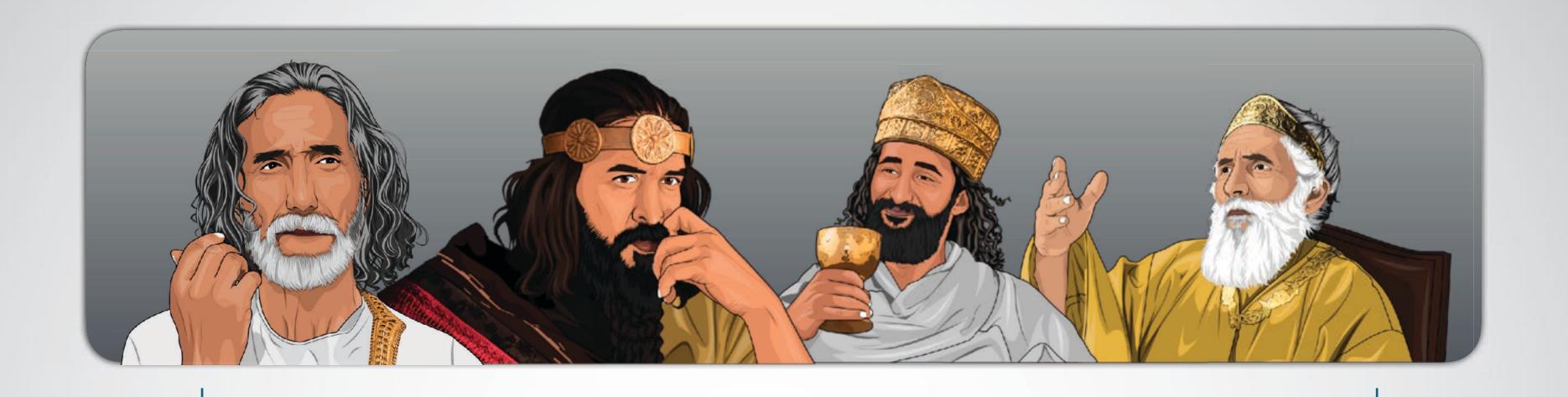














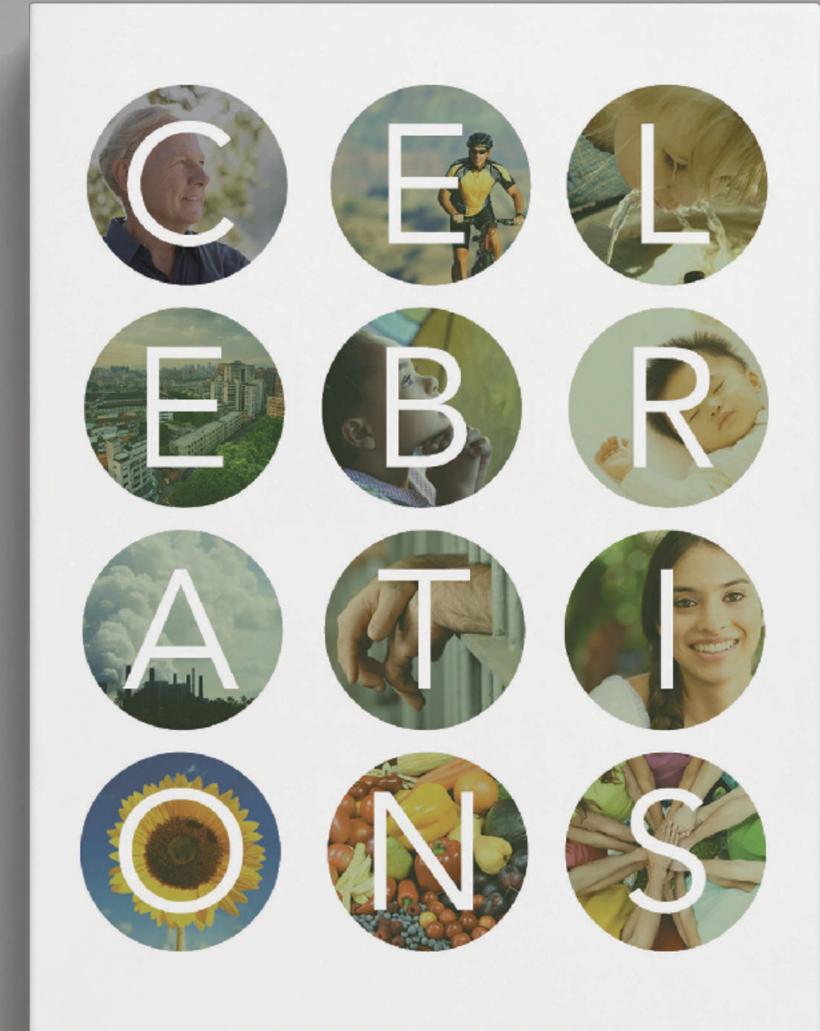
# Cartoon











### CELEBRATIONS

Living Life to the Fullest

By LABL CAESAR

# Giver Goo

# His giving is the proof of His ownership

Thich God do you believe in! And what is there in your words or conduct that suggests who He might he?

Lady Samaria didn't know what she believed in, although she was willing to argue about it. Jesus ended the argument by telling her that while lews knew what worship was about, she and her people had no idea (see John 4:22).

At the same time, Jesus is known to have said quite harsh things to the Jews: "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesized in Your name, cost out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them.' I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Man. 7:22, 23)

What if lesus said that to you or me after all our hard work in evangelism, community service, and church administration? We know very well, after all the good things we have done, that we are not like other people: thieves, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or taking peoples' money and calling it taxes (see Luke 18:10-14)! Could Jesus still say, "I never knew you"?

The amort Athenians didn't know Him either, as Paul discovered by studying their faith confessione "For as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worthip, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you" (Acts 17:23).

Paul could see that they didn't know the true God. And his message to them holds enough good instruction that today's worshippers might note. He would speak of the

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One they sensed deserved worship, though they did not know Him. Evidently, worshippers may render service to a God whom they truly do not know! Ostensibly faithful stewards may give their time and thought, their bodies and money, without a saving knowledge of the One to whem they give!

#### Paul to the Athenians

Paul's words to the Athenians offer us at least four bits of instruction today, on the God who requires our stewardship, the God whom everybody ought to know. These four are inextricably bound up one into another.

To begin with, Paul treats the "one" he speaks of in the neuter gender. More than is appropriate may be made of this. Nevertheless, twice in this one verse, Paul speaks of a neuter "one," suggesting that those who adknowledged this deity were in fact simply admiring a concept.

The Athenians are famous for the multitude of their philosophical ideas. This was one among many, showing them as good enough to include this divinity, though they had no name or character traits by which to identify him. It was still appropriate, they seemed to think, to include him with everything else. Current stewardship practice may imagine them bringing him little moneys, serving for him in Doreas societies, and reading him eloquent prayers.

Being nice to God is good. So is the practice of countability. Stewards must be ready to give account of their stewardship (Luke 16:2). Then when Jesus returns, we may be able to list for Him the things-good thingsthat we have done. Prophesying, exercising, and other such wonderful works are surely not to the shame of anyone, nor is careful tithing or community service. How mystifying would it be, then, to show up for Jesus' party with our lists of deeds of goodness and their corresponding ribbons and certificates, only to have Him say "Get out. I never knew you!"

Were that to happen, we would need to be prepared to respond: "But Jesus, I used to be the church treasurer, and it faithful tither; I directed choirs and served as deputy assistart vice juntar something or other. I used to be nice to You!" Imagine your confusion at His demand: 'Depart, you

The God "who made the world and everything in it" (Acts 17:24) doesn't borrow anything from your famously rich uncle.

worker of lawlessness. There is no way to exaggerate either the Arcopagus is no mere human idea. He is real, whether the significance of that coming encounter or the compelling impertance of knowing, now, that we know Him.

#### Taking Up the Question

Do you know your God? Knowing Him is life eternal (John 17:3). Is He for you any more than a philosophical concept? The God Paul told Athens about didn't need their ficked envelopes or the paper stuck inside them any more than he needed matter to help him in Genesis 1: the God "who made the world and everything in it" (Acts 17:24) doesn't borrow anything from your famously rich unde. Everything is already His. If all I do is bow as the offening plate goes by, He will have just as much as if I had emptied into it everything I had. None of us can make Him rich. Everything we all get-life, breath, all things-originates with Him. Sometimes stuff gets to you distorted; sometimes as soon as it gets to me I ruin it. But He is still the source: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Pather" (James 1:17).

Paul's first truth is that the God whom he presents on

### Stewardship

1 Te are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time YY and egectunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We are responsible to Him for their proper use. We acknowledge God's ownership by faithful service to itim and our fellow human beings, and by returning tithe and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church. Stewardship is a privilege given to us by God for nurture in leve and the victory over solfishness and develousness. Streameds rejuice in the blessings that come to others as a result of their faithfulness, (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15; 1 Chron. 25:14; Haggai 1d-11; Mal. 28-12; Matt. 23-23; Roen. 15-28, 27; I Cor. 93-14; 2 Co\* 8:1-15; 5:7.]

we cancelve of Him or not. Matter, as we know it, and life, as we live it, adequately demonstrate His reality, and confirm a second truth, the truth of His creatorship. Denying "His eternal power and Godhead" while in continuous association with HIs created works is choosing to be without excase (Rom. 1:20).

On the other hand, appreciating His authority as Creator simultaneously admowledges a third fact: that He is owner; that we and all that life is, inclusive of the gifts and service we render Him, are all also

virtue of the fact that He is our When He, in the beginning, ineral, there was no location or a accepted His patents, for no po existed to claim our ownership peaching or copyright violation we are his" (Ps. 100.3, NRSV)."

#### Paul's fourth truth highligh

Owner God celebrates His own gives to all life, breath, and all t We do not get by accident. God does not give because hun knife to his back, or brush His weapon. He gives because it is l the privilege of faithful respons tithe, yet unquantifiable in offe service, is a channel through w may extend the unbounded givnever ceases to bless the world.



Visions of a

bright new world

The Second Coming of Christ

n the beginning God created between and earth, humans, and Eden-Paradisa. A fantastic garden, a place without unmet needs in perfect harmony. Sin caused this place to become tragically inacressible. It slowly fell into ablivious and finally disappeared from this earth. But the longing for it never died. Since then, every generation has dreamed its own dreams about paradise. People of all ages have been looking for this place where a better life is possible.

#### IDEAL WORLD: SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND UTOPIA

More than 500 years ago English states man and humanist Thornas More wrote the book (Payla, Greek or "non-place" or "nowhere" its content is quickly summarized: A sailor, Raphael Hythlodeus, owes about the perfect state on the distant island of Utoola. The Island Is more than 200 miles long. Its cities are magnificent. All residents speak the same language. There is neither money nor power. Cooperation is based on the principle of shared common good.

More had his own motives in writing this book. As an Island state, Utopia was not least a counter model to his contemporary England. He outlined an alternative to the inequalities of his time, to abusive capitalism, and to the poverty of the pessant population. The book gave its name to an entire germe of literature, art, and music.

#### PARAWAY WORLD: STAR WARS

Until the nineteenth century. authors projected their ideal location onto distant islands or other hard-to-reach locations. But after the last white spots on the map had disapprated and the discovery of our planet had been completed, the perfect place was moved into the

future or into space, ideally overlapping. This new gence of literate so and art is known as science fiction. Freschman Jules Verne, born in 1828, is generally

regarded as the father of science fiction. Verne put scientific and technical processes at the center of literature for the first time. Many of us are familiar with some of the herous he created. Remember Captain Nemo and his Alta tiles: the world traveler Philess Rogg or Professor Lidenbruck?

#### RED WORLD: SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM A very different way to rediscover paradise was taken

by Kail Marx, a contemposary of Jules Verne. Born in Tries, Germang in 1818, Marx became a world-farnous philosopher and social theorist. The fundamental ideas of socialism and Communism are based on his work. With his more egalitarian theories of society, he promised hamanity paradise on earth during their lifetime.

History shows that this attempt to improve living conditions ended in disaster too. Instead of paradise, the dream of equality led to dictatorship. In 1989 despair broke its course and the wall that divided Germany into two parts crumbled and took with it all ideals of a forced equality.

#### TECHNO WORLD: MEGACITY "NEOM"

One of the latest ideas to create paradise on earth is called Noom. Neom is a high-tech megacity that will span. parts of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt. Some 26,500 square kilometers (10,230 square miles) big at a cost of a half a trillion dollars, Saudi-Arabian Crown prince Mohammad him Salman bin Abdulasiz Al Saud wants to take this city from the desert sands in the next few yours. Neom is an artificial word from "neo" and "mostaqbal" and means something like "new future". The first construction phase is expected to be completed by 2025.

Neom will be innovative and ultramodern, a center of science, business, and prosperity, with new laws and taxes. The digital magaindustrial zone is to be equipped with autonomous rand traffic, passenger drones, and self-learning its ffic systems. The energy needed to run the city will be produced by wind and sun. Everyone and everything will be digitally connected. It's another attempt to create a new society.

One wonders about the feasibility of this project. Will treally do justice to our longing for a better world? So far, all intents to establish a technological utopia haven't worked out.

#### BROKEN WORLD: FASCINATION ABOUT DYSTOPIA

The fall of Communican and socialism introduced the downfall of the great seciopolitical stopias. Utopian writers have also retired. There was a lack of imagination for good or fortune in the twentleth contary. instrad of a utopia, rhystopia was established. The increasing four of technology and surveillance resulted. in such bestsellers as 1984, by George Ocwell, and Brown New World, by Aldons Headey, In the twenty-first century dystopian films are booming in Hollywood. The world is disfilusioned and broken. Postmodernism. seems to do without the grand namative that holds the world together. Today paradise is not found in the here and now, even less in the future.

#### NEW WORLD: HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

One thing is contain though. Paradise remains lost forewer, despite all human efforts to find it again. Ultimately, we humans have to admit that the bright now would is not available here on earth. But there is hope. The Bible tells us of a better world to come. In the first century A.D. John, the disciple, had a vision about the future. Serving a prison sentence on the island of Patrnos, he saw a new society and the future of humanity. "Then I, John, saw the holy circ. New Jerusalem. coming down out of heaven from God.... Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:2-5).

God will create the only real bright new world. Paradise is not about a holiday idyll on a faraway island; not about space travel, about famousles of equality or high technology; it's about the absence of sin "But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abornination or a lie" (vesse 2V). Instead, God's presence guarantees supreme happiness. Meeting God face to face will be enough, as it was in Edon. "But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face\* (Rev. 22.3, 4).

Whoever longs for this better place is invited to believe and come along. And the Spirit and the bride say 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come" (Rev. 22:17).

So, come!

Claudia Mohr serves in the dispartment for public relations of the Seventh-day-Adventist Church in Germany, she lives with her husband, Jens-Dilver, and their daughter, Melody, in Ostfildern.



Read more about What We Believe at www.adventist.org/en/bellefs/

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Health & Wellness

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## Saved by Health?

Clarity on the role of the health message

In a recent church member survey this "agree/disagree" statement bothered me: "Following the health message ensures my salvation." Does it?

o. Our salvation comes through accepting Jesus, His righteousness, and His death on the cross in our place: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9, NIV). Thankfully, this includes all forms of deeds and actions—including healthful habits and behaviors. Our salvation is not earned through exercise, rest, or even diet. Salvation is a gift!

A significant number of respondents to the world church survey you cite reported they thought that following the health message ensured their salvation. It is vitally important that we have clarity on this question.

As a church and as individuals we have been blessed with a wonderful, wholistic, preventive, preserving, and at times even healing, grace-filled health message. After the Otsego, Michigan, United States, vision in June 1863, Ellen White stated that we were given the health message because our work was not yet done. In short, we are saved to serve, not healthy in order to be saved! Let's allow Ellen White's writings to elucidate the purpose for healthful living by asking the what, why, and how of it all.

The health message is wholistic and addresses all aspects of our being—physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional.

"In teaching health principles, keep before the mind the great object of reform—that its purpose is to secure the highest development of body and mind and soul. Show that the laws of nature, being the laws

of God, are designed for our good; that obedience to them promotes happiness in this life, and *aids* in the preparation for the life to come."

Through comprehensive health ministry, we may educate on health, meet people's needs in a practical way, and demonstrate God's love.

"As a people we have been given the work of making known the principles of health reform. There are some who think that the question of diet is not of sufficient importance to be included in their evangelistic work. But such make a great mistake. God's word declares, 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' 1 Corinthians 10:31, KJV. The subject of temperance, in all its bearings, has an important place in the work of salvation."<sup>2</sup>

In our daily living, careful health choices and temperate living may enhance our communication with God and relationship with Him.

"The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man and affect his inmost life. Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind."

Good news! Saved by His grace, we may share wholeness and serve all.

Filen G. White, The Affastry of Mesting (Mauritain View, Calif.: Practic Press Feb. Astn., 1965), p. 146. (Relics supplied.) Filler G. White, Coursels on Meath (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Astn., 1963) p. 443. Filler G. White, Chief Guidance (Narshville: Southern Pub. Astn., 1964) p. 443.

Peter N. Landless, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference

Zeno L. Charles-Marcel, a board-certified internist, is an associate director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference

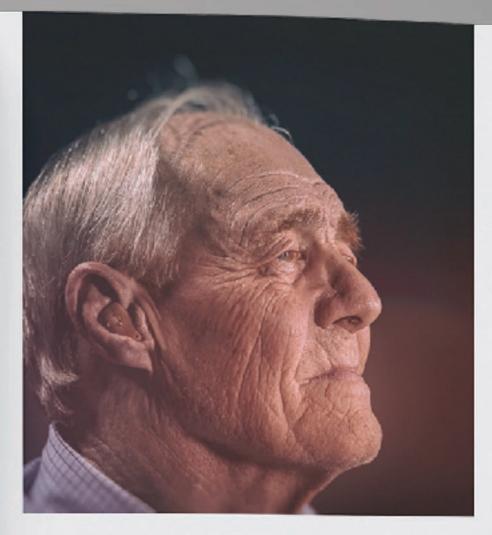
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Health & Wellness

# **Tinnitus**

Is there a remedy?

I am 60 years of age and live healthfully, but I'm troubled by ringing in my ears. A friend has recommended ginkgo biloba. How should I proceed?

o begin, we advise you to seek professional medical help with this problem. What you describe fits the condition known as tinnitus. Tinnitus is the sensation of sound that feels as if it is coming from the inside rather than from the usual sounds of our surroundings. It seems as if it is right inside one's head (which, in fact, it is). It may be perceived equally in both ears, or more in one ear than the other. The sound has been described in a number of ways, such as like a ringing, a humming, a hissing, or even a roaring. Some say the sound resembles the noise cicadas make.

Tinnitus is a common condition that occurs in up to 25 percent of persons over the age of 18. It happens more frequently as we age and peaks as we reach our 60s. During the past 10 years tinnitus is occurring more in younger people, probably because of the growing exposure to noise and loud music (and the widespread use of earbuds for listening to these sounds over long periods).

Some degree of hearing loss is present in a high percentage of people who have tinnitus. Fortunately, only a small percentage of people would classify their tinnitus as so disturbing that it interferes with

their ability to function. It also tends to improve and become less bothersome over time in approximately half of those who have it.

Tinnitus may be associated with infection of the middle ear, or even wax in the ear canal that may be close to the eardrum. Once these conditions have been treated (the infection resolved or the wax removed), both the hearing and tinnitus usually improve.

A professional assessment is needed. Clinical history and examination will guide the process and identify readily treatable causes. Imaging may be done if the tinnitus or decreased hearing is on one side more than the other, or if there are signs of nervous system damage. Audiology (hearing testing) should be performed if the tinnitus is present on one side only, has been present for six months or more, or if you experience difficulty with your hearing.

Numerous studies on specific medications (e.g., antidepressants) and supplements (e.g., ginkgo biloba) have not been shown to be useful in the treatment of tinnitus.

If there is hearing loss, hearing aids have been found to help both the hearing and to reduce tinnitus. If tinnitus is associated with stress and mood disorders, a well-informed specialist may advise referral for assistance in coping with the challenges of tinnitus.

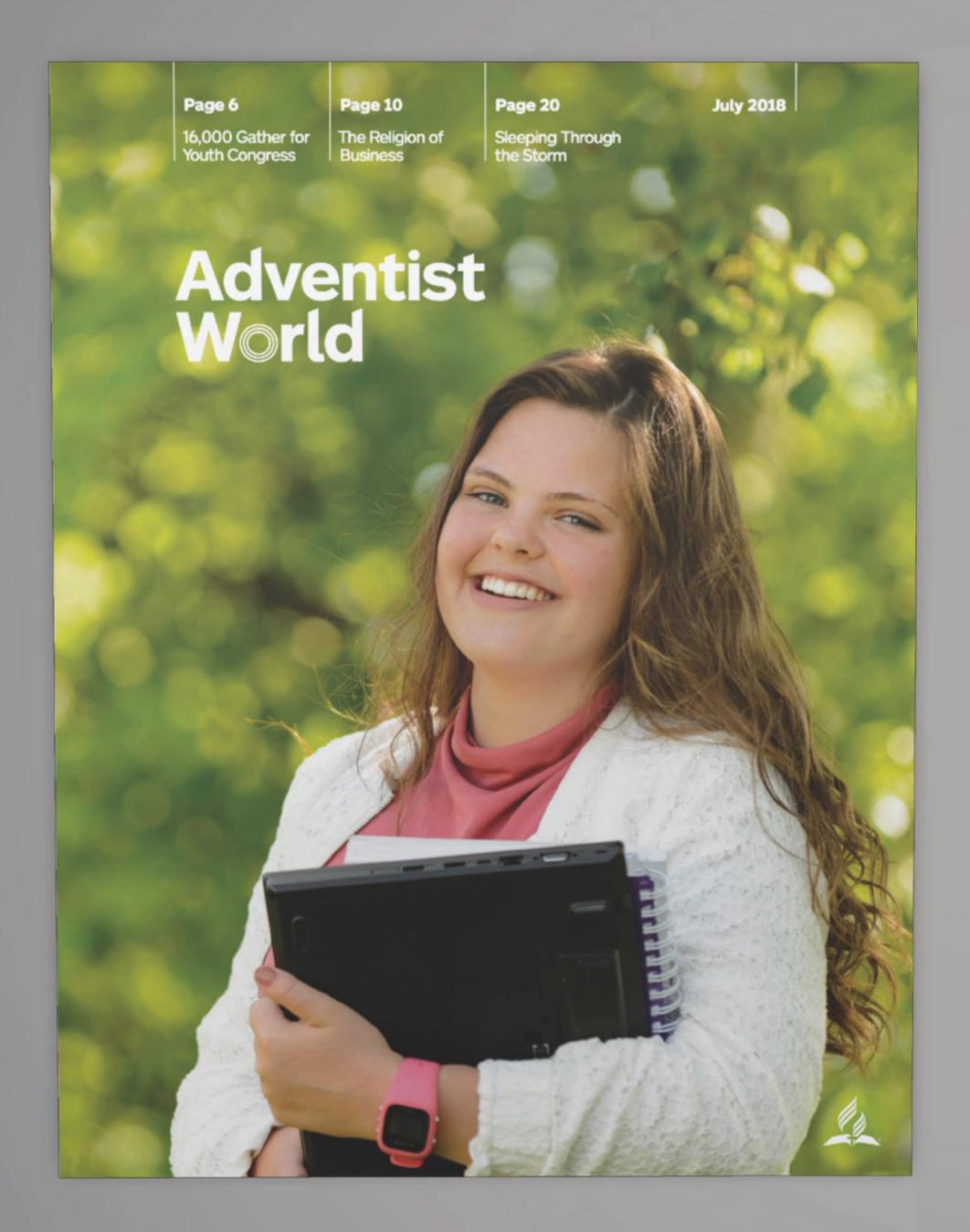
Whatever health problems we face, our prayer is that even in illness we will hear God's voice saying, "This is the way, walk in it" (Isa. 30:21).

Peter N. Landless, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference.

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Photo: Emma Simpson
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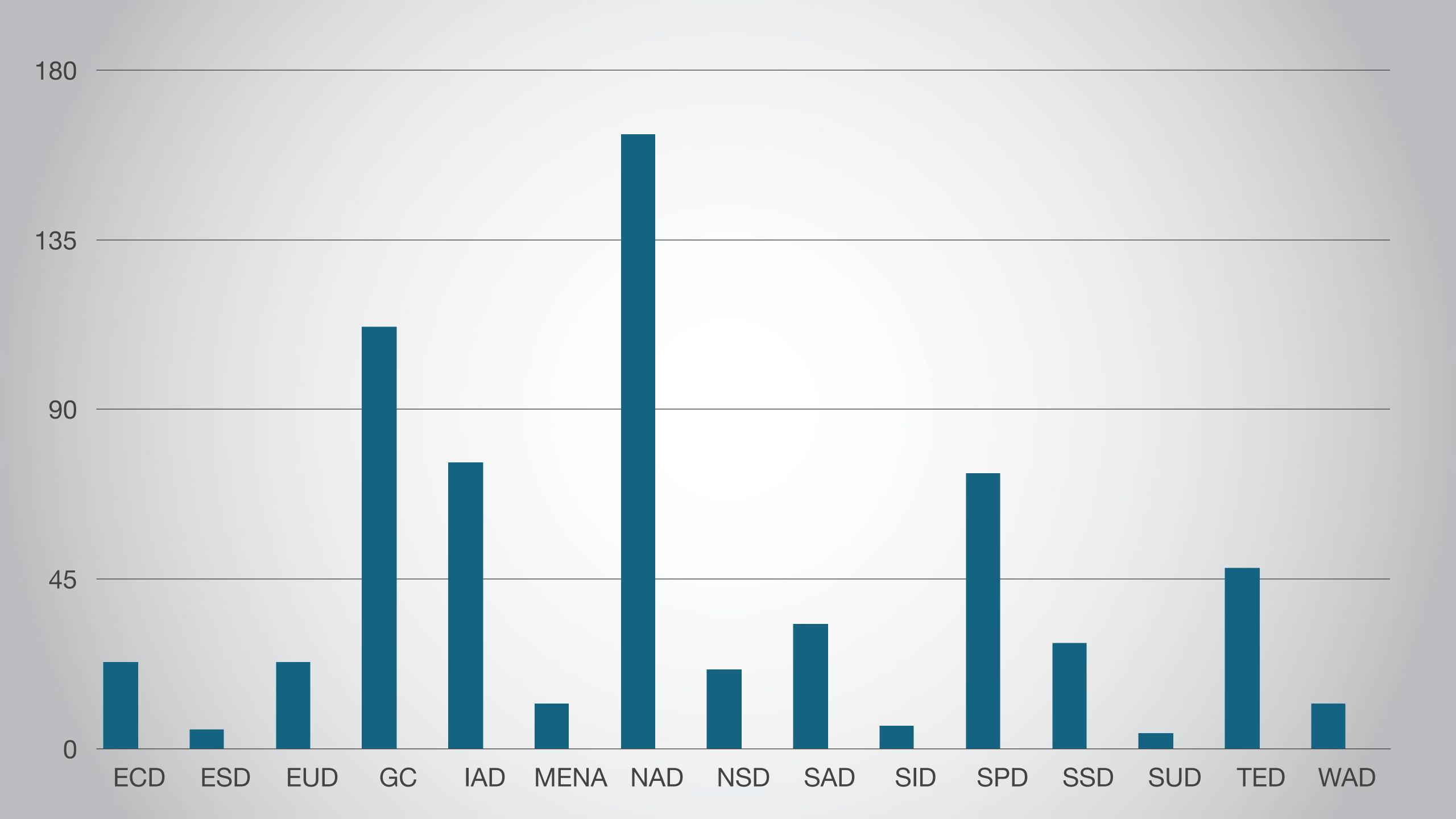


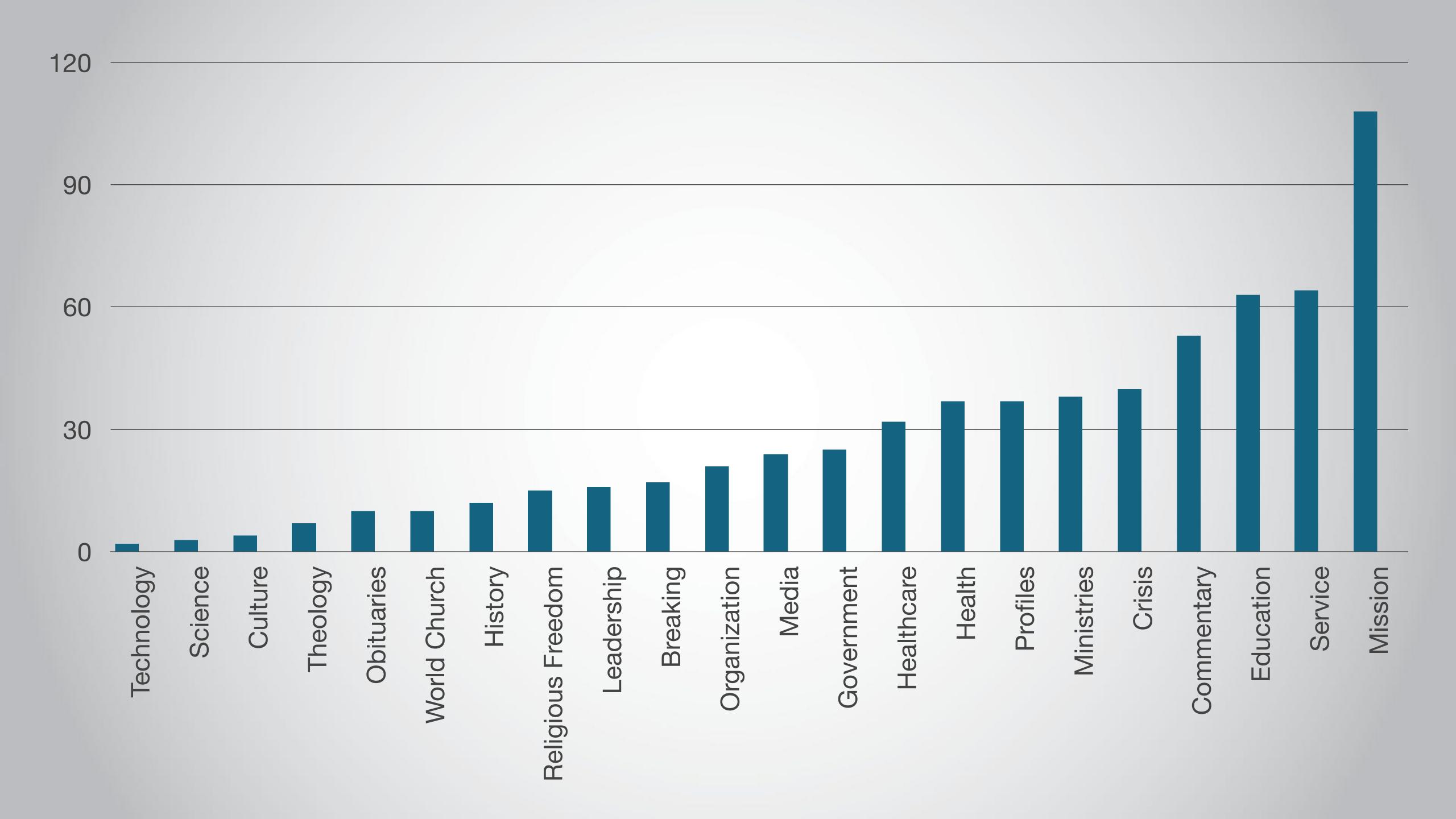
















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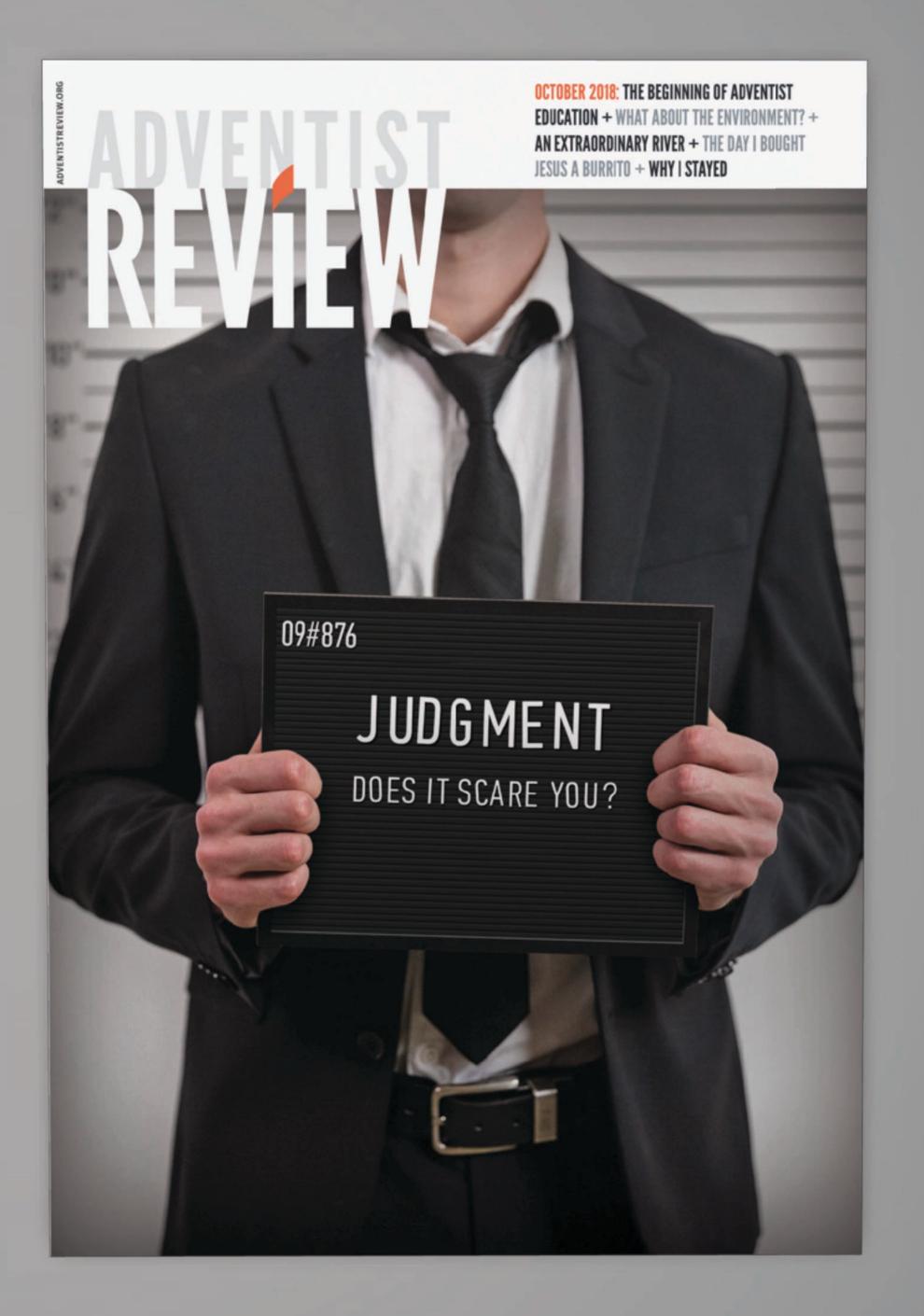
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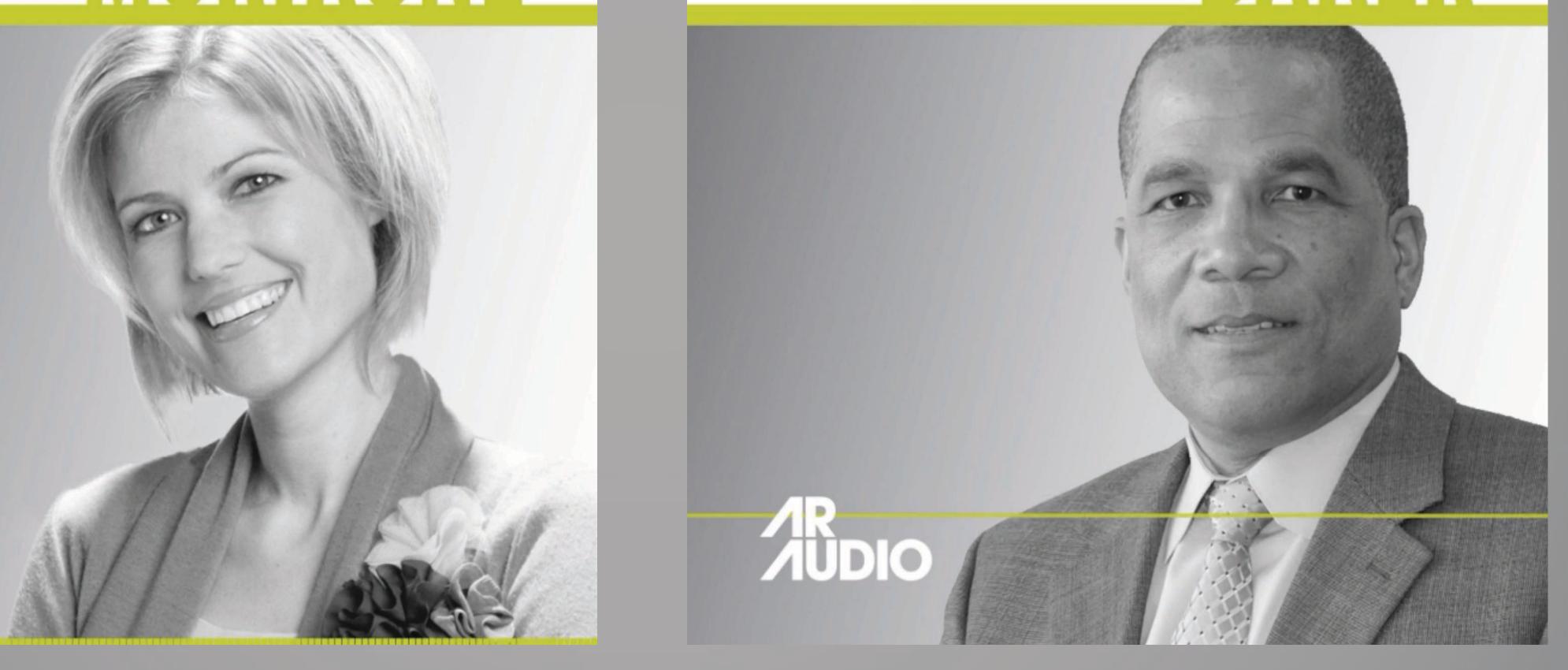


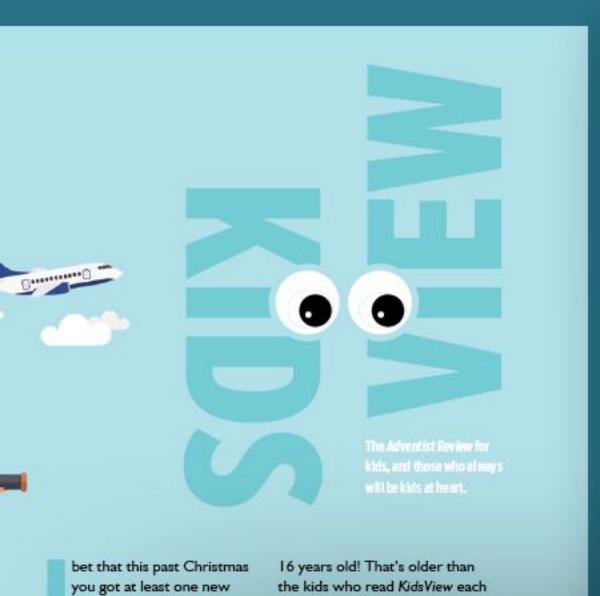




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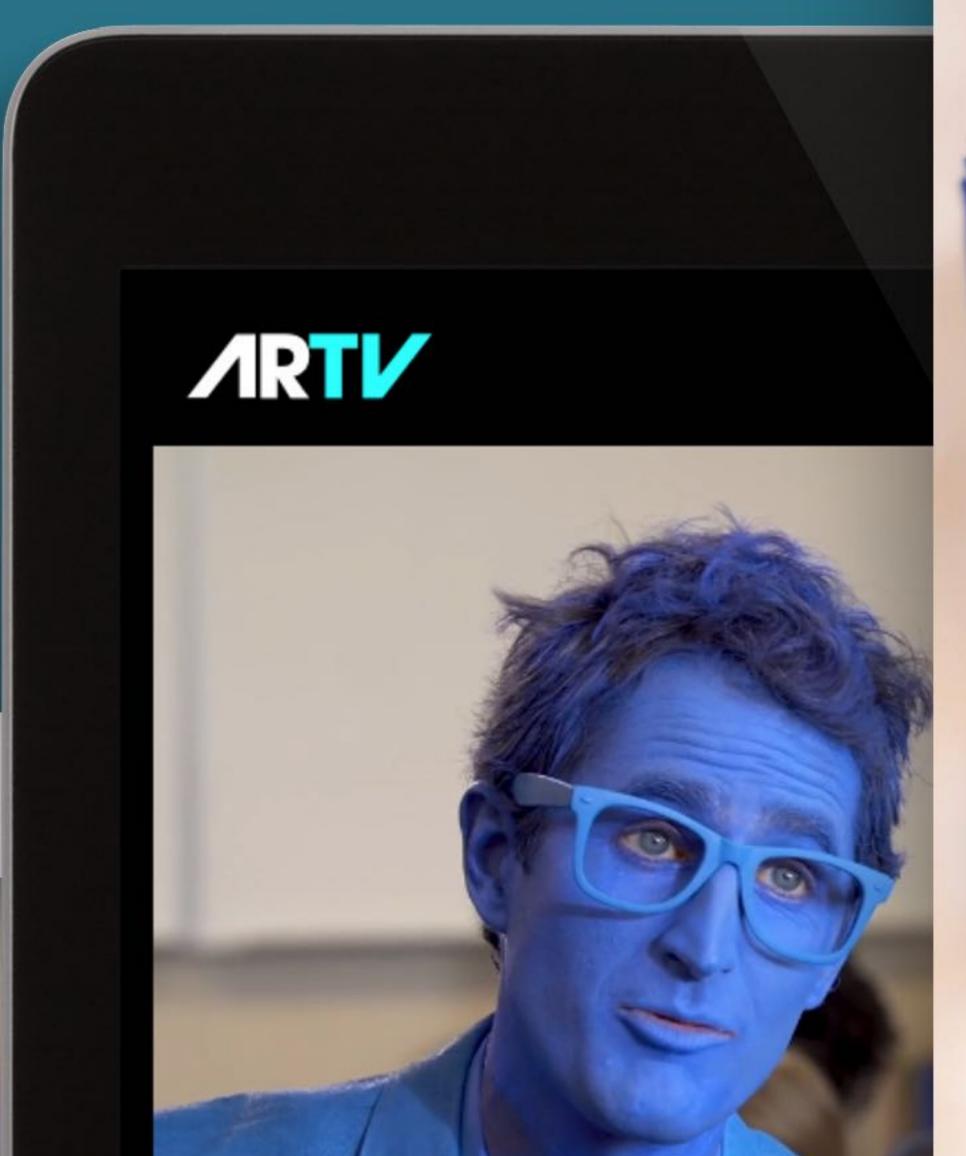




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