

A TEN-YEAR STUDY OF YOUTH RETENTION IN THE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

THE TENTH YEAR

The Institute of Church Ministry (ICM) has previously reported on the first nine years of a ten-year study of over 1500 Adventist teenagers and their relationships with the church [see Roger L. Dudley and Janet Leigh Kangas, *The World of the Adventist Teenager* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Assn., 1990) for a complete report on the first two years. Reports on subsequent years have appeared in the *Adventist Review*, the *Journal of Adventist Education*, and *Ministry* among others. See complete listing at the end of this report]. This project is being sponsored by the North American Division, particularly the Youth and Young Adults and the Education departments. The present paper reports the findings of the tenth year of the study.

ADVENTIST YOUTH SURVEY 10 contained 71 questions on four pages. The 1996-97 study asked the respondents how active they had been and now were in various areas of church life. It explored attitudes toward doctrines and life-style standards of the church. It requested information on devotional practices and secular

activities. Standard demographic questions were included, and participants were given a chance to comment about their religion and their church.

Tracking the Subjects

One important reason for sending out a yearly survey is to attempt to maintain contact with the young adults before they slip out of the range of the study. In a project of this kind the researchers must develop a long-term relationship with the subjects. Part of encouraging this relationship is to keep track of any residential changes. People today are highly mobile, and after a year the postal system will no longer forward mail. Also, name changes occur among women because of marriage. So the very first question asked was: "Is the name and address on the envelope in which we mailed this questionnaire still your correct one?" A third (34%) answered "no," indicating the high rate of change in just one year. Those answering "no" were instructed to fill in the correct name and/or address in the blank space provided.

Keeping track of these address changes is a major job for ICM staff. Scores of letters have been returned undelivered because the addresses were no longer correct and no forwarding addresses were given. When the first mailing of the tenth-year questionnaire was sent out in June 1996, these young people were 24 or 25 years of age (the study had begun with those 15 or 16 nine years before). As the year passed by, a number turned 26. Most had left home. Some had joined the military. Nearly half had married. Close to a quarter had children of their own. In some cases even their

parents did not know where they were at present. ICM then is attempting to find current addresses by contacting church clerks, searching church directories, or using computer look-up programs. Even with this effort, ICM has not been able (at this writing) to obtain current addresses for over 200 members of the sample. While only one regular questionnaire is prepared each year, construction, mailings, follow up, and processing of the survey has been a year-around job for the ICM staff.

ICM had expected that some attrition would occur. Indeed, this was why such a large sample was selected in the beginning; to be sure that a sufficient group for appropriate analyses would remain at the end of ten years. In addition to those for whom no current addresses are available, another 76 have asked that their names be dropped from the study. In June 1996, the tenth-year survey was mailed to all those (1245 members) in the original sample for whom addresses were available or who had not asked to be dropped from the study even though only 653 had completed the ninth-year survey. All non-respondents were sent a second mailing in August, a third mailing in October, and a fourth mailing in January. Only those who had completed the ninth-year questionnaire but who had still not responded to tenth-year mailings were sent a fifth appeal in April.

By June 1997, at the time of the data analyses, 679 usable questionnaires had been received, and a few others have since trickled in. This number represents about 45% of the original sample (1523) that began in 1987. If, however, those for whom no

valid addresses are known and those who have requested to be dropped from the sample are deleted from the pool, this would leave 1245 potential respondents and make the return rate about 55%.

Another way to view this is to calculate that the 679 respondents are 104% of the 653 who completed the ninth-year survey and 99% of the 684 who completed the eighth-year survey. The response rate for the second, third, and fourth years was about 83% of that of each previous year. In other words, the study suffered an attrition of about 17% each of these years, but for the fifth year the attrition was only 3%, for the sixth year it was 6%, for both the seventh and eighth years it was 9%, and for the ninth year it had dropped to only 5%. The most rapid drop off came in the first few years, the sample was quite stable during the fifth and sixth years, the attrition rate increased slightly during the seventh and eighth years, and in the ninth year returned to the lowest level since year five.

Now, in the tenth year, for the very first time the response has exceeded that of the year before and nearly equaled that of two years ago. However, ICM is still looking for more data to complete this study. We have a list of over 500 names and addresses of original sample members for which the addresses are presumably still good. That is, letters sent to these young adults have not been returned as undelivered, and these sample members have not asked to have their names removed. However, while all of these responded to the original questionnaire and many to subsequent questionnaires,

none have returned the tenth-year survey.

If their present status in relation to the church could be determined, then all of the earlier data could be used to predict outcomes, making the study more complete.

Therefore, we designed an abbreviated questionnaire which asks only a few questions about relationship to the church. ICM is employing the Adventist Information Ministries (AIM) to attempt to locate telephone numbers and conduct a phone survey with each non-respondent who can be located. Hopefully, this will result in allowing the majority of the original sample to be included in the final analyses. This report will not include the telephone survey results which will be given in a later report.

While it is regrettable that many who filled out the original survey are either "lost" or no longer active, the really good news of this study must not be overlooked. Nearly 700 adolescents have contributed yearly to this project over the ten years they matured into young adults. That is a record unmatched by any church study of which we have knowledge. These 679 will constitute the basis for this report.

Some Personal Information

Respondents for the tenth year were 37% male and 63% female. Since the original sample was 43% male and 57% female, it is evident that the male response rate has been somewhat less than the female rate. Ethnic backgrounds (close to the same proportions as the previous year) were as follows:

Asian/Oriental

8%

Black	12%
Hispanic	11%
White	66%
Other	3%

The survey then asked for their present marital status.

Single with no definite plans	45%
Engaged to be married	9%
Living together	3%
Married	40%
Divorced and not remarried	3%

A year ago, 55% were single without definite plans. This has dropped ten points in one year with 9% more being married and 1% more being engaged. Still, even though these young adults were in their mid-twenties, nearly half were still single with no definite plans. This supports studies of the general population that indicate that people are marrying later than they did a generation ago. A second observation is that in a society where living together without marriage has become one of the fastest growing household arrangements, only 3% of this sample (20 people) were in this situation. Only 22% of the sample had children; the other 78% did not.

Reflecting the Adventist emphasis on education, the sample was well-educated. Virtually all (99%) had finished high school or academy and 94% had gone on to

college. More than half (58%) were college graduates, and 18% had taken post-graduate work. Many were still pursuing education as revealed by a question about their present occupation.

In college or university	28%
Work at job	52%
Home maker	7%
Other	13%

This then is the group upon which this report is based. Even with the considerable attrition from 1987, 679 young adults told the church about themselves. That is still a large study. Here is what they said.

Relationship to the Church

The main purpose of the ten-year study is to discover how this representative sample of young adults has related to the church. First, three yes-or-no questions were asked which are given below in abbreviated form. For full wording check the questionnaire in the appendix

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Are you at present a member of the Adventist church?	85%	15%
Have you ever dropped out of the church or stopped attending?	52%	48%
If you did become inactive, have you renewed your commitment?	40%	60%

These three questions are key to the entire study, but they present some inconsistencies. To the second question, 354 people answered that they had, at some time in the past, dropped out of the church or stopped attending services. However, the third question was answered by 362 people which means that 8 persons who said that they never dropped out also said they became active again. To have 8 out of 679 (1%) misunderstand the question is not too serious. More troubling is that 323 indicated that they never became inactive, and 146 stated that they renewed their membership. This total of 469 is 108 short of the 577 who claimed to be members of the church in the first question above.

The solution seems to be that these 108 had stopped attending, have not renewed their commitment, but still consider themselves as members of the church. As a check on this, note that 354 reported having dropped out, but only 146 as having returned. That leaves 208 inactive. This compares well with the 101 who reported that they are not presently members plus the 108 who are inactive but who still count themselves as Adventists or a total of 209 (because a few did not answer certain questions, exact congruence is not possible).

If we then accept that 208 of this group of 679 are essentially out of the church, that would be a dropout rate of 31%. However, remember that this rate is for those who filled out and returned the questionnaire. It would be reasonable to suppose that the 844 young adults who did not respond to the tenth-year survey might have a higher

dropout rate. After all, many have lost contact with their local congregations. Some asked to be removed from the study. Some have not replied in years. It would be conservative to estimate that 50% of them are no longer practicing Adventists, though, of course, we cannot verify that at this point. This is what we hope the telephone survey will help establish.

If, however, we accept tentatively the 50% figure, then we could add another 422 dropouts to the 208 figure from the tenth-year survey, making a total of 630 or 41% of the original sample. On the basis of our present data, it seems reasonable to believe that at least 40% of Seventh-day Adventist teenagers in North America will essentially drop out of the church by their middle twenties. Actually, more drop out, but some will return (perhaps a fifth of the dropouts). More may return later in life, but, of course, more may also leave. This study does not provide data to suggest what may happen beyond the mid-twenties.

As suggested above, membership means different things to different persons. Therefore, the survey included a list designed to determine the degree of activity the young adult was experiencing in the church. The list was introduced with the statement: "How active are you in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as measured by the following activities?"

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Attend church services regularly	56%	44%

Attend Sabbath school regularly	35%	65%
Attend other meetings (prayer, youth, small group)	25%	75%
Hold some type of church office	22%	78%
Serve on one or more church committees	13%	87%
Participate in share-your-faith activities	21%	79%
Attend church social functions	43%	57%
Pay tithe on income regularly	44%	56%
Give offerings other than tithe to church projects	49%	51%

Earlier we noted that 85% claim to be members of the Adventist church, but that 31% were actually inactive, leaving no more than 69% of these respondents as members in any real sense of the word. Here the situation is even worse for only 56% say they attend church regularly. Since regular worship attendance (with this age group) is part of the definition of being an active member, it would be reasonable to assume that some 44% are not really plugged in to the life of the congregation. If we remember that inactivity is no doubt more pronounced among the non-respondents, it seems conservative indeed to say that the church is suffering a loss of between 40% and 50% of its young adults.

Being an active church member, however, involves more than simply attending the Sabbath worship service. As meager as worship attendance is at 56%, Sabbath school attendance at 35% is 21 points below that. And Sabbath school is the place

where one studies the Bible and learns the tenets of faith. Still further down, only 25% attend any other kind of meeting regularly. The percentages holding church office, serving on a congregational committee, or participating in out-reach activities are even lower.

These are no longer teenagers. They are in the prime of young adulthood at an age (25-27) when many of the older generation held major church responsibilities. Whether the low level of involvement results from their own choice, or whether they have not been given responsibilities is not clear, but the situation presents a major challenge to the church. The disengagement of such a large percentage of well-educated young adults who should now be assuming leadership in the church threatens the future viability of our movement.

Youth and Adventist Doctrine

While correct belief is not all there is to being an Adventist, it is certainly core.

Without our distinctive message, there is little reason to remain in our particular faith community, especially if friendship ties are broken.

Therefore, the young adults were presented with six key Adventist doctrines and asked to indicate their extent of agreement with them on a five-point scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." In the table below the two agree positions have been combined and the two disagree positions have also been combined. The extent to which the two percentages fail to add to 100% represents the "uncertain" position.

	<u>AGREE</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u>
The Sabbath	91%	4%
The Second Coming of Jesus	92%	3%
The State of the Dead	88%	3%
The Heavenly Sanctuary and the 2300 Days	62%	7%
Ellen White is a true prophet	73%	9%
The Adventist Church is the true church	69%	14%

Agreement is very high on the first three items. Even though some fall-off occurs on the last three, even here an average of two-thirds agree, and disagreement is below 10% except for the last statement. Much of the drop in agreement has been because of uncertainty rather than disbelief, especially on the Heavenly Sanctuary item where 31% were uncertain. Disbelief in Adventist doctrine does not appear to be a major cause of

dropout for youth and young adults.

Youth and Church Standards

What about life-style standards? The question read: "To what extent do you agree with these perceived standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?" In the list below the same notations are employed as in presenting the responses to doctrines.

	<u>AGREE</u>	<u>DISAGREE</u>
Not use illegal drugs	93%	6%
Not use tobacco	92%	4%
Keep the Sabbath holy	88%	4%
Not drink alcoholic beverages	77%	15%
Dress modestly	75%	12%
Sex should occur only within marriage	74%	14%
Not wear cosmetic jewelry	33%	49%
Not listen to rock music	32%	52%
Not dance	22%	60%
Not attend movie theaters	16%	71%

To better illustrate a pattern, the list has been arranged in descending order of agreement rather than in the order the items appeared in the questionnaire. Agreement on the top three items is very high. Most young adults oppose drugs and tobacco and see the sense in Sabbath observance (though their way of keeping the Sabbath may vary from that of previous generations). The next three items on alcohol, modest dress, and sex in marriage have somewhat lower agreement but are still affirmed by approximately three-fourths. The big gap comes with the last four. In line with previous

research, a third or fewer agree with Adventist standards on jewelry, music, dancing, and movies. The latter is opposed by nearly three-fourths.

Personal Religion

One question asked: "How important is religious faith in your life?" This measures what social scientists generally refer to as *salience*. Answers were as follows:

Very important	52%
Quite important	30%
Slightly important	15%
Not at all important	3%

This is quite amazing. In this sample, 82% said that religious faith was either very or quite important--far higher than the percentage that is active in the church. In spite of the dropout rate, only 3% felt that religious faith was not important at all. This may indicate that contemporary young adults tend to view religious faith apart from institutional commitment. It may also suggest that inactive young adults may be open to fresh approaches to religious faith.

Another measure of personal religion is frequency of devotional practices. The subjects were asked how often they engaged in four devotional behaviors. In the following list D = daily, W = weekly or oftener, M = at least monthly, and RN = rarely or never.

 D W M RN

Personal prayer	59%	23%	9%	9%
Personal Bible study	13%	30%	21%	36%
Read religious literature	10%	31%	30%	29%
Family worship	12%	17%	15%	56%

Most of these young adults pray, at least on a weekly basis. The majority, however, do not engage in other spiritual disciplines very frequently. A special concern is family worship for it is in this period of life that adults are setting up homes and developing the patterns that will govern them. Less than 30% have family worship as often as once a week.

Perhaps the most important question on the survey was: "How likely is it that you will remain a Seventh-day Adventist for the rest of your life?"

Definitely plan to	61%
Probably will	19%
Not sure	11%
Very unlikely	9%

This is very positive assessment since 80% indicate a good chance of remaining in the church, and only 9% are negative to the idea. Indeed, it seems too rosy in view of the fact that 44% do not now attend church regularly, 78% hold no office or service position in the church, and fewer than half support the church financially. It seems likely that many youth and young adults have an identity with Seventh-day Adventism but do

not translate this ideological concept into institutional involvement. The hopeful message is that this generation may be open to renewing their commitment to the church if fresh and relevant approaches to them can be devised.

Spiritual Influences

The question read: "As you look back on your early life, how would you rate the influence of the following people on your spiritual development?" In the following list HEL = helpful, NEU = neutral, NEG = negative, and NA = not applicable (youth had no such person in his/her life).

	<u>HEL</u>	<u>NEU</u>	<u>NEG</u>	<u>NA</u>
Your mother	80%	12%	6%	2%
Your father	62%	20%	11%	7%
Teachers in an Adventist school	50%	28%	13%	9%
A particular pastor	56%	32%	8%	4%
Your closest friends	42%	41%	13%	4%
Adults in your local church	31%	41%	24%	4%

Mothers contributed the most to spiritual development by far. Only half felt that

their Adventist teachers were a positive influence in their spiritual development. Adults in the local congregation were not very helpful and drew relatively high negative scores. Teachers, pastors, and church members must ask themselves: How can we improve these ratings for future generations?

Attitudinal Questions

To further explore attitudes toward the church six questions were posed.

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Would you like your children to be raised in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?	88%	12%
Will you send your children to Adventist schools?	72%	28%
Will you teach your children that Ellen G. White was a prophet?	74%	26%
Do you feel accepted by members of your local church?	74%	26%
Do you feel that your church is just as much yours as any other member's and that you have equal input?	56%	44%
If you are married, does your spouse have different views on how to practice religion than you do? (56% checked "not married")	18%	26%

In spite of their own lack of participation large majorities wish to rear their children in the Adventist faith, including providing an Adventist education. Three-fourths feel accepted by the church, but only a little over half believe they have equal input into its operation. This continues the theme that while many in this generation have become inactive, they still have feelings for the church. This group should be good candidates for re-conversion if the right approaches are used.

Ordinary Activities

In order to better understand these young adults, it may be helpful to explore the so-called "secular" activities in which they engage. After all, the Christian life is more

than just church and the sacred. How are our subjects spending their free time? They were asked: "How often do you participate in the following activities?" In the list below 1 = nearly every day, 2 = several times per week, 3 = at least every month, 4 = rarely, and 5 = never.

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
Watch television	59%	21%	9%	8%	3%
Listen to rock music	39%	19%	10%	18%	14%
Attend the cinema	0%	3%	49%	40%	8%
Rent movies on video	1%	9%	56%	30%	4%
Watch MTV	4%	7%	11%	26%	52%
Participate in social dancing	0%	3%	15%	38%	44%
Use recreational drugs	1%	1%	2%	4%	92%
Drink alcoholic beverages	2%	3%	16%	25%	54%
Play video games	2%	7%	13%	29%	49%
Surf the World Wide Web	6%	10%	13%	17%	54%

Watching television and listening to rock music are very frequent activities. While going to the movies or renting films on video are not as frequent, the majority engage in them on at least a monthly basis. Most of the young adults do not very often watch MTV, play video games, or surf the Web. Neither is social dancing very popular. Only small minorities use alcohol or recreational drugs frequently.

About a third (34.5%) of these mid-twenties adults are not sexually active.

Whether this is because of conscientious convictions or lack of opportunity cannot be determined from the present data. Also 14% indicated that they had, at some time, suffered from an eating disorder.

All of the data presented above reveal a great deal of information about these 679 young adults. The next major task in this study will be to put the data sets from all ten years into a single file and develop a series of predictive equations. This process will identify what early experiences in home, church, and school are likely to identify which youth drop out of the church and which ones remain and are active. From this information the church can better shape its ministry to adolescents.

Free Response Questions

Following the multiple-choice questions, six open-ended questions were asked to gather information about reasons for staying in, dropping out, or returning to the church and to elicit general attitudes toward the church. Questions will be listed one at a time with the transcribed answers following each question. Answers will be identified by a code number which is meaningless to the reader but which allows the researchers to connect the comments to the other data supplied by the same individuals.

Question 66: If you ever dropped out of church membership or stopped attending services, what were the main reasons that caused you to do this?

03004 n/a

03006 Boredom and hypocrites in my home church.

03007 Boring services.

03008 Work schedule.

03014 n/a

03019 No love in the church. Acceptance of me for who I am. (Father and male roles interest me as I did not have a dad since I was 2 years old.)

03021 The current church I'm a member of has nothing that appeals to me.

03024 When I was younger I blamed leaving on my church and on my pastor. Now I realize I wanted to do it for myself. I needed to be away from the high expectations and the low forgiveness place.

03025 n/a

03032 n/a

03033 Never stopped physically. Mentally, I'm not so sure.

03040 My family moved. I did not know where the church in my neighborhood was.

03044 n/a

03046 Marrying a non-Adventist who converted just for me, though I heard it hundreds of times that I made the mistake of trying to expect a Christian home from someone who did not genuinely know Christ. I admonish all young women and men for that matter; you can't change a person for the Lord. Only the Spirit can. So don't try. You'll jeopardize more than you'll expect, even your own spirituality.

04003 The other members of the church (older members).

04007 The Adventist Church is no longer pertinent to society, and I find church services lack intelligence.

05002 Do not live near an SDA Church. I do wish to continue going when I move out of state.

05004 When you read the Bible, you have to see what you read in the world, not just talk it.

05023 Lack of church support when needed most. Did not believe I was included or would take part like I used to.

05035 In my own personal opinion, there is not enough preaching of what Jesus can do for a righteous person (someone who is not doing drugs, cheating, or living crazy) right now. Too much focus on what Jesus will do at the Second Coming but not for today.

05051 I was a teenager and probably felt lonely and low self-esteem and uncertain/naive about my faith.

05052 n/a

05054 I was confused. I had a lot of questions and was discouraged or brushed off

when I asked those questions. I didn't feel like I truly understood "Adventism."
05061 I got involved in different secular activities. I was also very disgusted with the people in my church.
05062 n/a
05065 Time commitment in school.
05073 n/a
05083 I have never dropped out, and I can't see myself ever dropping out.
05086 I was involved with a non-Adventist, who although did not discourage me from attending church, made it difficult for me to go. My second reason was that I could not find a church in ____ that I was comfortable with.
05110 n/a
05112 n/a
06001 I was living with someone and my name was removed from the church records, but I didn't miss a Sabbath.
06002 I was asked to leave the church by the pastor because of a premarital pregnancy.
06007 n/a
07005 Lonely at church. No one my age.
07012 No transportation. Family problems.
07013 Bored with church. People were not supportive of youth issues/problems.
07014 Other members of the church. They were very hypocritical and although I realize the church is a place for sinners, not saints, I got very little blessing being there because of them.
09003 n/a
09011 n/a
09015 I was living in Europe, didn't understand the language, and found it boring.
09021 Hypocrites.
09023 Hypocrites with stupid rules. The "class" division between the rich and poor church members. The "RICH ARE BETTER." The "Holier-than-thou" attitude of nearly all adults in the church. The belief that you must obey or be burnt; be good, because if you are, you get to run from the heathen or become a martyr and wait for the Second Coming.
09028 I didn't really believe in God anymore, and the church lacks real answers on how to succeed in life.
09029 Drugs. Adults in church. Poor relationships.
09036 n/a
10006 Rebellion. Not having a daily personal relationship with God.
10010 I am opposed to organized religions, and I feel they do more harm than good. And in general, there is not much there that I enjoy. So I find it a waste of time.
10016 n/a

10017 I don't feel I fit into the social membership, and there is too much gossip.

10019 I got lost in the party scene--up too late Friday nights during my teenage years. I would just sleep through the idea of going to church.

10022 n/a

11001 n/a

11002 I moved from my original church family, and my ex-husband had no interest in going to church with me.

11003 n/a

13006 A year and a half ago I was very active in the church by being chairman of the nominating committee, Sabbath Social Superintendent, and church pianist. I was on the rostrum during the divine service every other week, Sabbath School teacher, etc. Instead of putting the same clique of older people in all the leadership positions (which occurred for as long as I could remember), the nominating committee decided to inject a mixture of older people, youth, and women into leadership positions. The older clique was infuriated, refused to participate in the positions they were nominated for, and attended other churches. I had supported them for years, and when they had an opportunity to support me, they basically thought I wasn't ready to be so active. I had gone to an Adventist Academy for 4 years, and my mother raised us strongly in faith. I had just as much knowledge and desire as they did.

13019 -

13027 If I were, it would be because I needed to be more educated about SDA beliefs. I have conflicts with a lot of issues, and I want them totally sorted out so that my head and heart is in the right place.

13029 n/a

13041 n/a

13042 I dropped out for about a year while deciding on which church to attend. I didn't completely like the SDA churches in my area.

14003 If ever I had to, it would be because members of the church are back-stabbers, and they are not helping in my march towards heaven by being fake disciples.

17047 n/a

17048 n/a

17049 n/a

17059 n/a

17059 n/a

17063 I stopped attending services because I wanted to see if I'd gone to church because of my mother or of my own will. I was nine years old when I became a member. The church wrote me off as a member last year.

17065 My name was dropped when I had a child out of wedlock.

17067 I work in a hospital. They require all (to my knowledge) patient-care employees to work every other weekend (2 per month). Although my shift is in the evening, I

sometimes forego church and "rest." There have been times when I didn't go to church because my husband did not want to go.

18001 The church did not recognize me as a person in the world today and, therefore, did not give me the kind of support I needed.

18013 The older members and how the youth was treated.

18037 n/a

18039 Members of the church were harassing me about my failed marriage and other things.

19002 Sometimes I feel that the church doesn't really make a difference. It is not the church that saves you. It is the relationship with God. Church can be beneficial, but in large impersonal churches it is hard to feel welcome.

19009 n/a

19010 n/a

19011 The teaching is not according to the Bible.

19018 n/a

19019 I can't stand hypocrites. Some ____ Academy teachers and the principal are ____ and totally destroyed my feelings towards the "Adventist Institution." In other words, I'm very bitter!!!

19021 Too many people were criticizing others but never themselves. After years of dedication older members were "not needed" and dismissed from the church.

21001 Busy.

21003 n/a

21012 I lost interest in spiritual things and wanted to experience drugs, Grateful Dead culture, etc. I saw a lot of hypocrisy at academy and was turned off by "religion" which pushed me away from God.

21015 Felt unaccepted by church members. Tired of being judged for who or what I am. I feel I get more out of religious discussions with my friends than out of church.

22006 Uncertain of how I wanted to serve Christ!

22008 n/a

22009 n/a

22010 My personal problems of looking at people rather than the message of the church. Thinking I was judging people rather than following God.

22106 Needed to step back and find out what I really believed and wanted for my religious life.

22018 I feel I am not welcomed and felt cheated by a church member.

22019 Too many hypocrites. The church has some beliefs that I feel are a little fanatical. I also don't think I agree with everything the SDA religion believes in.

22020 In college, very tired from studies, lazy on Sabbath morning.

22021 n/a

22022 Extreme legalism and a lack of tolerance for different personalities and beliefs.

23011 I work nights, and it is very difficult to get up early enough to go to church. I do miss it and am looking at a job change within a year so that I can attend regularly.

23012 Narrow-minded legalism. Being very vague.

23021 Lack of interest by myself. Lack of attention by the church to me. I felt the church offered nothing to me personally.

24003 The local church where I was didn't fit my needs. I was also "experiencing a new SDA college" lifestyle.

24006 n/a

27007 I got out on my own and needed to explore the world to find out if my beliefs were really what I believed or just what I was raised with.

24009 n/a

24010 n/a

24015 There were initially very few people my age attending; then my job, which I loved, caused me to work weekends every few months. There was/is no appeal for me in going back. Also in the last year, my parents divorced, and both still attend, making it a tad awkward. I still believe the principles I was brought up with.

24021 n/a

24026 My husband is not a Christian. I attended less in my late teens and early twenties. I was more into friends, marriage, etc. I still go nearly twice a month.

24028 n/a

24029 I was unhappy with how the church was and how I was treated by people at the church.

24030 n/a

24037 -

24031 We are youth who are not accepted at church.

24032 Some people need the strength provided by others to maintain their relationship with God (for lack of a better term). For me, my relationship with God is extremely personal. I found that church membership distracted me and, in fact, caused my relationship with God to break down. Exclusive personal worship has strengthened my relationship.

24038 n/a

24035 I was very young at the time and unsure of myself and in what direction I wanted my life to go. The church I was a member of just didn't feel right. The people were very cold and aloof, not just towards other members but to some guests as well.

24041 -

24042 n/a

24068 n/a

26010 n/a

26019 I move a lot for my job, so sometimes it's hard to get involved in a new church. Also, in college I would often skip in summer time and go to the beach.

27006 n/a

27007 Dissention in the church.

27008 Lack of a relationship with Christ.

27012 -

27015 If I ever dropped out, it would be because of a recent experience where the churches were very cold, unfriendly, and did not even try to include us. I would rather spend Sabbath on my own rather than try to carve out a place in the ice.

27016 n/a

27017 n/a

27018 Hypocritical members.

28010 I didn't enjoy the church I was attending.

28029 Bad influences, specifically boyfriend, and also having low self-esteem because of situations with a negative impact.

28042 Bored with it.

29002 -

29007 We've stopped attending regularly due to the children's nap schedule; frequent moves and not become any closer to church family; and some conflict of life-style choices made at this time.

29008 Negative parental pressure, feeling distanced from God, and feeling church doesn't help much.

29009 n/a

29011 n/a

29012 n/a

29017 I felt forced to attend church and church school when I was younger, and this caused me to rebel and back out.

29016 Feelings of unacceptance; have to get up early on weekends --Why can't there be an afternoon service?

29019 Didn't like the large university church, and it became less important. I wanted to do my own thing.

29020 Judgmental people. People, for instance, see you wear earrings and say take all or take none--that is not the way to keep people in the church.

29021 -

29031 Travel. Involvement with local events.

29025 n/a

29026 It has nothing to do with my current church. The church is excellent. I'm just too tired by the end of the week to get up that early.

29029 No acceptable lifestyle, and the SDA's are extremely judgmental of others.

29030 n/a

29032 -

29033 Didn't feel God really cared or answered my prayers.

29039 n/a

29041 n/a

29043 I didn't fit into any of the Sabbath school classes. They were either for teenagers or elderly folks, and we had and still have a hard time getting interested in the printed lessons. We also worked nights; therefore, had a hard time shifting schedules.

29044 n/a

29045 I occasionally worked on Sabbath when my job needed me, but usually I was just too tired to get up. I attended church about once a month for a sermon or so.

29046 At the time I dropped out, I just wasn't interested and had not been for years. I only went because I lived at home and had no other choices. My reasons for not returning became greater as I became more educated through life and school.

29049 Having two children outside of marriage. Was given ultimatum by local pastor to marry father or lose membership. I resigned my membership.

29050 Church is unrealistic.

29051 n/a

29062 I became discouraged and even disgusted by the behavior and attitude of my pastor. He was very selfish, rude, and self-righteous. I was not comfortable with attending any other SDA churches in the area. Religion became less important to me.

29063 -

29068 We travelled; then we planned family activities on the weekends that conflicted with the church schedule for about 2 months. Not really "left" the church--just kind of "skipped."

29071 I didn't like the pastor.

29074 n/a

29075 n/a

29077 n/a

29079 n/a

29082 I became an atheist during my junior year of high school at _____ Academy. Seeing staff and fellow students pray, sing, and go through these routines seemed so artificial. One day, I saw a National Geographic film on "The Mysteries of the Mind." I began to believe man created religion. Once I lost faith, I think Satan was able to influence my life.

29085 I stopped attending church for awhile because of the people. If you aren't rich, they don't know who you are. The pastor was the same way. I got tired of being treated like dirt.

29087 When I went away for school, I couldn't find a local church, and I just got in the habit of not attending.

29086 n/a

29088 No Korean SDA church here.

29090 n/a

29091 Conflict with the pastor.

29094 n/a

30001 Could not find a church in the area that spiritually filled me.

30011 I became discouraged when I looked at other people. Many seemed to be hypocrites.

32005 n/a

32014 I was caught up in the "world." Not very committed to the church nor having a relationship with the Lord (other things took priority). Not under parents' roof. I could do what I wanted.

33008 n/a

33010 Attending church was something I always had to do, and now no one is telling me to go to church. Also, I do not find church meeting any of my needs. I feel like I can walk into church, and no one cares, so I usually attend my classmate's church where the pastor and members make me feel welcome and take the time to find out what's going on in my life and what my needs are.

33016 n/a

33017 A little slip in my spiritual participation.

33020 n/a

34001 Moved away from my hometown and family for a job.

34002 Environmental influences. Not intentional.

34005 Large university settings allow dropping out because you are just another face. Large churches are good for most people, but some people like small, more intimate religious activities.

34008 -

34014 Mom made me go to church. Didn't feel very welcomed there.

34015 Moved.

34017 n/a

34025 I married a man who is not a practicing Lutheran. He was raised Lutheran but is very hesitant to commit to any organized religion. He was never against me going, and I did go occasionally. I often chose not to go so I could have time with him.

34026 n/a

34030 n/a

34036 n/a

34039 n/a

34040 n/a

34046 My job requires me to work weekends and nights. I work in a retail business. I can't request every Friday night and Saturday off.

34051 Sitting in a church pew, surrounded by people, feels more lonely than sitting in a park playing solitaire. That was the first reason. Later, as I was being courted by the Lord, I began attending the SDA church again, and once again lost interest; but for a

very different reason. Jesus. I need to hear about Jesus. I need to hear that He loves me. I need someone to remind me how He showed me His love. Because I forget sometimes. All it takes is a stressful day at work to hear the Word. So I found other places to go. Places that weren't distracted by someone else's writings or other church's teachings. They told only about my Lord, His sacrifice, His love, and what it means for me.

34052 n/a

34053 Moved away. Did not feel comfortable at new church. Job related reasons.

34054 Not interesting, doesn't seem like people genuinely care if you are there, don't feel accepted.

35006 Work.

35009 n/a

35012 n/a

35014 Did not feel welcomed. Services did not hold my attention.

35016 n/a

35019 I felt no one cared whether I went or not. The members were snobbish, the pastor indifferent. The only time I got interested was through the youth pastor (recently). We were friends. But the other reasons returned.

35022 College life (parties, study time, girls, afraid my friends wouldn't accept me, no desire for the church at all).

35023 My Sabbath school teacher called me a sinner in front of Sabbath School class because I did not attend an SDA school.

35025 Personal problems and felt unwelcome by the church family.

36002 Did not feel wanted.

36005 It didn't fit in with my lifestyle. I was sick of all rules and regulations.

36006 Tired. Rather sleep in. Bored with the services.

36008 n/a

36013 Mostly due to the friends I had.

36014 Lived a long distance away and in the winter with temperature often reaching -30 degrees or below. It becomes difficult especially with an infant.

36015 No one there my age.

37005 Not interested in attending church.

37007 -

37008 The church has no stomach for discussions concerning the "Philosophy" of Christianity. The church should call themselves Jews. More concerned about works and doctrines than faith.

37013 The people in our churches are way too judgmental. No one really seems happy to be there. It's like they have to be or something.

37014 No motivation.

37019 Initially, typical teenage rebellion--as an adult, I feel the church is more

concerned with being right in every sense of the word. I believe Saturday is the Sabbath, but I don't believe only Adventists will see heaven. I believe someone who really cares about their fellow humans and is hungry, etc. will ultimately gain access to heaven before the man that sets his alarm and shows up to Sabbath School and church on time. The Pharisee were "in church" regularly and doing things right. When Jesus wanted spiritual strength, He went to the wilderness to pray.

37031 -

37040 I'd say family life and trying to get higher education.

37043 n/a

37045 I have started to go to church with my wife, which is where her family of six attend along with our daughter's great grandmother.

37054 I felt I could get just as much benefit from being in nature as being in church.

37056 n/a

37057 n/a

37060 I really feel like the people don't care about me. I feel like if I were to die, the pastor and congregation would not even miss me.

37061 Not interested.

37062 n/a

37064 My father, _____, preaches for the church. Then he turns around and commits adultery and then is still accepted back to the church in another state. He had an affair with his secretary for 12 years while being married to my mother, and he was head of the ___ and ___. He is a known figure in the church!

37066 The church I attended didn't really support me after I got into high school. I think because I stopped ingathering and stuff. Then I got married, and we went to the Catholic church which was much more accepting because it is so big.

39001 n/a

39004 Hypocritical church members.

39005 The people. There was no love. It was all talk. People were so against anything that was important to youth.

39006 Same old thing every week. Found members very hypocritical and always concerned with others' faults and never their own. Not just one church but several in several states!

39007 n/a

39009 I believe that the SDA church concentrates too much on rules and what a person should and should not do rather than on that person's spiritual life.

39010 Bad health and lack of interest on the part of my husband.

40002 -

40010 Forced to become a Sabbath School teacher. Parents got upset if I miss one Sabbath and then gave me long lectures.

40013 n/a

40014 Boredom and the church is 20 miles away.

40015 Tired from the previous week of school (I just graduated) so I slept in. Also, I don't like going alone, and I usually couldn't find someone to go with.

40018 I didn't enjoy any of the services in my area.

41002 Had my head up my butt and let my work interfere.

42006 If I were to stop, it would be because of all the political junk that goes on at all levels of the church.

42007 During college, I sometimes skipped church several weeks in a row for lack of interest in the service. Superficial churches don't keep you coming back.

42008 I attend approximately once a month--not exactly active. Frankly, I don't think about religion much. Serious question about "fundamental" beliefs.

42011 Drugs/alcohol/tobacco. I lived the life of a drug addict for about 6 or 7 years.

42016 n/a

42018 The main reason why I attended church was to see my friends. When they weren't there anymore, I didn't feel interested enough to attend regularly. I tried going back a couple times for spiritual fulfillment but was disappointed.

42013 n/a

42031 I didn't have anyone to go with me to church, and I wasn't motivated enough to go by myself.

42035 n/a

42037 I got tired of sitting through sermons that I had heard hundreds of times. There is so much I want to know about God, but I never find any of it out at church.

42033 Graduated from Adventist school and lost interest.

42038 n/a

42039 Lost interest. My ex-husband. Wanted to be around people my age, but they weren't at church.

42045 Mostly it was because I was rebellious. I've been an Adventist all my life and was away from home so I didn't go to church very often. I had friends who didn't go to church so I did things with them. Also I didn't know anyone in the new church I was attending, and they were people whom I didn't want to take time to get to know.

42048 Dated someone non-Adventist. Didn't attend church for a few months.

42051 People were not accepted if they didn't meet dress codes or follow the church rules. They were treated as outcasts and not "good enough" to come to the church.

42053 I thought our church was too self-righteous. They seemed to condemn everyone else--it seemed much too superficial. Really, does wearing a wedding ring mean you can't hold a church position?

42054 Church isn't for the people who have seen too many sins. Then they preach to others about not sinning. Look in your own closet.

42061 The narrow minded attitude of the people. I've done research and, I no longer believe the teachings.

42066 Hypocrisy among the Pharisees. No one is willing to question standards and doctrines.... brainwashed with LAW rather than basic Christian beliefs and lifestyle-- what I value.

42068 When I left home to attend college, I left the "family" rules which governed life at home. I wanted a life of doing activities which brought me enjoyment, not a life of legalism (SDA Do's and Don't's).

42072 n/a

42073 Attitudes of people.

42076 Laziness, disinterest, didn't feel accepted.

42080 No interest and time.

42086 n/a

42097 A member of a conference and local church members conspired against my family, and I just didn't feel like going.

43005 n/a

43006 n/a

43007 I guess not going has just become a habit because I don't really remember why I stopped attending.

43008 n/a

43010 I am a very spiritual person, but I do not find the SDA Church a "home." The members tend to be condescending and judgmental. I have since joined another church which I attend regularly with my family.

43021 n/a

43023 After a rush/hectic week, it's really easy to sleep in on Saturday. Then next thing you know, you're doing things around the house and trying to get caught up.

43027 Guilty conscience.

43030 I don't believe that God exists at all. If someone created us, I don't believe that being takes a personal interest in us.

43033 n/a

43035 n/a

43037 I was gaining no spiritual benefit. Also, I wanted to take a step back, as they say, and get some perspective. I found it necessary to separate myself in order to be more objective about my church.

43039 Hypocritical behavior of most members.

43050 I have never completely stopped going to church, but I probably miss services 1-2 times per month to go to the beach or mountains/

43066 I rarely attend church.

43044 Disagreement with church standards, i.e. jewelry, Friday night, Sabbath, dancing, movies. I'm attending the church again, but I still disagree with them.

43045 n/a

43048 Had no where to go and no one to go with. So it was hard when I did have

somewhere to go to get back in the habit of going.

43053 The fact that it was a new church. Since I really didn't know anybody, it was less important to go to church.

43060 n/a

43064 The attitude of the "rich" people. Don't get me wrong, but the pastor only "helps" the rich and doesn't minister to all the people who really need it!

43066 I rarely attend church.

43068 n/a

43069 n/a

43071 Spouse stopped going.

43075 n/a

43076 Sabbath School wasn't actively fun or educational for me.

43082 Didn't feel that God was really there--it was more of a show off.

43084 n/a

43088 The members were a bunch of ostentatious, self-important, holier-than-thou, self-righteous jerks.

43039 Hypocrisy of church leaders and church political machine. Inability to confess their own sin as they prevent others from serving the wounded in the church.

Backbiting of pastoral staff.

43093 n/a

43094 Nothing for my age group to participate in.

43098 Hypocrisy, forcing religion in academy and SDA college.

43099 Discouraged by how some church leaders conducted themselves; wasn't being fulfilled.

43100 I stopped attending Sabbath School because my husband and I didn't seem to fit in anywhere.

43019 Undecided on what I believe--friends didn't go--tired on weekends.

44001 n/a

44005 I have chosen to follow my heart. The church does not share my points of view in life.

44006 n/a

44011 My ex-husband caused friction and bad-mouthed the church because not enough family activities, but when they were available, he still did not wish to participate.

44012 Immaturity. Wanted to do my own thing.

44013 Different philosophy; different beliefs.

44014 n/a

44015 Started working on Saturdays, did not totally agree with all the rules. Father dropped membership.

44018 Moved out of town.

44019 n/a

44020 Family stopped going. I also felt that SDA church was hypocritical; couldn't deal with that nonsense.

44031 n/a

44040 n/a

44041 Summer vacations. Conflict with pastor's attitude and behavior.

44047 n/a

44048 Never left the church but compromised my faith by being influenced by friends, "Adventist friends." Not having an adequate relationship with God. Looking for love and acceptance.

44052 No, but there was a time I didn't seek out church services unless I was with family. I don't go some times because sometimes even the church seems a distraction from spiritual growth. For me, sometimes enjoying a natural recreation is more beneficial to my spiritual growth.

44056 n/a

44057 n/a

44059 n/a

44060 n/a

44064 Girlfriend not Adventist. Group at church is younger.

46002 No youth activities. It became very boring.

46003 Disinterested; spiritual needs and growth not met in this church.

46009 Husband, moved to a new town. New congregation is less friendly.

46018 -

47002 The pastor of my church is just a little "money monger." He's more worried first about money, then the church "congregation." That is, if you have money, you're his congregation.

47003 I started going out with some friends on Friday nights and was too tired to get up the next morning for church.

47004 Lost interest and felt that I wasn't learning from services.

47006 I continue to remain on the church books because I feel that the SDA church is closest to the way I believe. I have stopped going to church because I feel that the members in the church set double standards. They say that the church is true and good; then they go and cheat on their wives or they spend the afternoon at the local bar, or worse they have no patience for any alternative theories.

47008 n/a

47011 n/a

47015 Thought I could find more happiness in the world, only because I didn't truly know Christ.

47025 Difficult to find a church family I enjoy or that are my age. Plus very busy with graduate school.

47026 Lack of people my age to worship with in my congregation.

47029 n/a

47031 -

47039 My discrepancy with the lack of warmth and acceptance to others. A general disregard for the needs of the youth.

47047 When I went away to college, little by little I stopped attending church.

47048 Problems with family. The people at church were very unfriendly.

47051 Hypocrisy by members and leaders.

47053 Honestly, it started with being rebellious and not interested. Now I do not believe in a god at all! Some people need to have something besides themselves to believe in-- I do not.

47054 n/a

47055 Lived in _____, emersed by SDA's, saw a lot of hypocrites, didn't want to be a part of them. And churches were so large you were only another young face. Newly married and enjoyed other recreational activities during the church and Sabbath School hours!

47057 n/a

47058 n/a

47060 Lack of motivation.

47063 Church members (especially youth group) were very judgmental about people they didn't even know. They didn't make me feel comfortable around them.

47066 I started working on Sabbath. I didn't feel my local church was giving me what I needed, especially as a youth in the church.

47076 Lack of time. Working 7 days a week.

47085 I've let the business of life get in the way. I don't really have a valid excuse.

47092 Hypocrites in the church.

47104 My church doesn't accept its youth for who they are but by what they look like. Nothing is done for the youth. They are too busy judging each other.

47114 -

47118 Moved to a different location and got caught with schoolwork, etc.

47121 n/a

48006 Parents pushed church too much.

48008 Divorce/felt alienated from church members.

48014 n/a

48022 n/a

48028 n/a

48029 n/a

48040 -

48042 Worked on weekends because I went to school during the week.

48043 Just lost interest. I didn't have a personal relationship with God and felt it wasn't that important. I could do other things.

49002 I am currently in medical school, and my schedule frequently makes it difficult for me to attend church, either because I'm working or I'm exhausted from being on call the previous night. Then sometimes I just don't feel like going.

49006 I don't believe in organized religion. Spirituality comes from within. I believe my religion is an unevolved concept.

49007 I did not feel comfortable in the church. I was doing things that disagreed with the church, and I just didn't want to go.

49011 Higher education has opened my frame of thinking. Going to church and most of their messages (above and beyond love and forgiveness) no longer fulfill my mental needs.

49014 Felt I was not growing spiritually.

50001 I never have.

50004 Lost interest in the sermons and congregations. Sermons were anything but challenging and thought-provoking.

50005 n/a

50007 Moved often. I never really dropped out. But because we were always in different towns, I couldn't always find the church, or there wasn't one in the town.

50008 The main reason to drop out of the church was one elder. He worked for the conference center. We went on a trip to Mexico. My dad said a few things they didn't like.

50020 n/a

50026 n/a

50028 We have essentially stopped attending services because my husband works at the conference office and attends daily. Our definition of church differs from most in that we enjoy spending time with God. Church is not stimulating--it doesn't make me think of God, and the message He's trying to give is in the Bible.

50034 Time! It seems my family is always going somewhere on the weekend or housework, garden work, or work on the job. When I do have time, I don't really feel interested.

50037 n/a

50040 n/a

50041 Church is not my thing. As mentioned in circles before, the idea of church being a place for sinners to come is a fantasy. Judgment is passed on you if you are perceived to be a sinner. The church is too worried about watching each other instead of God.

50043 Disagreement with some church doctrine. One pastor (a wonderful man) taught me to think for myself.

50050 Hypocrisy of the membership.

50053 n/a

50056 Did not drop membership. Was dropped due to lack of attendance.

50058 I considered dropping out when I was in college, but I never did.

50061 Felt my outlook on life was/is too liberal.

50064 I had doctrinal differences. I don't find anywhere in the Bible that says if you aren't an SDA, then you can't go to heaven. EGW never proclaimed to be a prophet; yet SDAs act high and mighty about being the true church and hold everyone else is so wrong.

50072 The influence of friends. Especially friends in academy who were from Adventist homes but not practicing. Also my parents not upholding their beliefs and church standards.

50073 Too tired on the weekends from work.

50074 n/a

50078 Too many rules. I don't see anything wrong with dancing, alcohol, movie theaters, or jewelry as long as they are not in excess. I do not believe EGW was necessarily a prophet.

50080 -

55085 -

50086 I was either working or wanted to sleep instead.

50087 n/a

50089 Over the last 2 years we gradually stopped attending church service. We go only to Sabbath School because it alone meets our needs. Our church service is void and meaningless with a hypocritical pastor.

50094 n/a

50095 n/a

50104 Trying to find myself and whatever faith I am.

50105 Moved to a new area and didn't know where the church was and would rather stay home on weekends. Also, study a lot on weekends.

50106 n/a

50107 I still hold membership at SDA church. However, I stopped attending as I wanted to receive a better message and more from a church.

50108 n/a

50109 My particular church had no services for my age group and I lost interest.

50116 n/a

50123 Didn't like the church members gossiping about me. Sometimes not getting along with mom.

50124 Major church division.

51003 Discouragement.

51007 My work.

51009 I moved away from my home; thus away from the church I knew most of my life, and I couldn't find a small-enough church in my area--all churches seem to be consolidated and huge. I used to go to church to socialize with believers; now it is more

difficult. Churches are too big.

51016 Moved to another town. Had to work on Sabbath.

50020 I work at a hospital; my shift requires me to work every other weekend. I attend church most of the time when I'm off.

51021 I felt like I was separated from God for my sins, especially sexual relations. It is as if I couldn't look into His eyes. Also, sometimes the sermons were too shallow, and I wasn't getting any "deep food." I've been in the church all my life and know most of the "superficial stuff."

51024 I have decreased attendance because I don't feel that my needs are truly met through the church.

51026 Didn't know anybody at church.

51028 I haven't, but my sister's membership was somehow "lost" and in trying to figure out what happened, several church members were rude to her as well as me, and that has shaken her faith in the church family.

51040 I've never but friends have, and lately I have seen the "world" as offering some exciting stuff.

51046 I changed congregations because I didn't agree with what my pastor's stand was. It was hard to stay and receive a blessing from someone that you do not respect.

51047 Want to sleep in. Don't have church clothes. Don't know anyone there. No friends in the area. It just doesn't seem important right now. I enjoy doing other things rather than going to church.

51048 Inconvenient to go to church.

51049 Services stopped meeting my spiritual needs. The politics of the church got in the way of the gospel, and I could no longer be bothered nor waste my time.

51051 -

51057 Everything and everyone connected with the church (the hypocrisy, lies, etc.).

51058 n/a

51061 There was a very brief time when my husband and I were living in _____ that we rarely went to church. We lived there about 10 months while he went to graduate school. The pastor of the _____ Church was very interesting to listen to, but the church was small to our standard, and the people were all older. No one with whom we had anything in common.

51066 n/a

51068 Lost interest.

51069 Apathetic, not enough time.

51070 Nothing for my generation.

51073 No, I have never dropped out, but I don't go as often.

51098 n/a

51099 When I was 18 and starting UCLA, I stopped attending church, and as years past, I grew farther from SDA views.

51112 I felt I was getting more out of being together with some friends and studying the Bible than going to my very self- centered church.

51119 I chose a lifestyle which didn't include being a Seventh-day Adventist Christian.

51124 I have regularly stopped attending church due to my location at the time and not finding a church I liked. Also I strongly disagree with a lot of the formal teachings of the church. I believe more in my relationship with God rather than religion.

51131 No. Attendance is/has not always been every week as I am often active in outdoor camping, 4-wheeling, hiking, etc.

51137 n/a

51140 Overwhelmingly busy schedule.

51142 n/a

51155 The pastor of my family church seems so preoccupied with worldly materials (cars, weight, looks, gossips), and I get the feeling he's more interested in what is going on than caring for people. I wanted Bible studies to reclaim my knowledge/growth, but I couldn't listen to someone I don't feel is sincere, and instead of finding another church, it became easier to just sleep in.

51175 n/a

51187 n/a

51191 Pure laziness. I have intentions of going but mostly sleep in.

51194 n/a

51196 No classes offered for post-collegiate age.

51203 I haven't left or dropped out, but at one period I felt that I was a hypocrite and "why go" and "do" something so sacred when in my heart I felt worthless.

51204 I felt like a hypocrite calling myself Christian and not acting like one. So I decided to drop out.

51206 Started questioning if all I had been told was the truth. SDA church is very legalistic; members of the church are very hypocritical and JUDGMENTAL!

51209 My association with people who did not attend church.

51215 Did not find a church I like and do not enjoy dressing up for others in my age group.

51217 Heavy school/work schedule. Visiting the mountains and beach.

51222 n/a

51223 n/a

51225 n/a

51228 My religion views changed.

51231 That I could. For most of my life, I was not allowed to decide whether or not I would go to church. Even in college, the decision was forced on me by mandatory requirements. When I finally had a choice, I chose that which had been forbidden. Now, not going to church is a matter of habit.

51232 Church politics. Division of church. Loss of pastor. Negative messages told to

congregation. No joy in coming to worship. Left church service more discouraged than encouraged. Leaving church brought me closer to God. Just because one leaves or quits attending is not saying that person doesn't worship or love God.

51239 Husband was indifferent. Didn't like the local church. No one cared if we were there or not. The church was too big. Didn't get any blessing out of the services.

51240 n/a

51241 I do not share the common beliefs of the SDA church and have no interest in organized religion.

51244 I was not spiritually fulfilled in church and felt members were judgmental, not accepting, and had conditions I must first meet. Also my mother smothered me with religion, and I felt turned off.

51248 n/a

51253 n/a

51255 n/a

51257 I've never dropped out of the SDA church or stopped attending services for a significant length of time.

51258 I dropped out because I got sick of the attitude and rules and not willing to accept a difference. I also found out that when I left the SDA college, that was a lot different, and SDA's can live in a bubble sometimes.

51259 I never got anything out of the services when I was attending.

51262 Church services don't seem pertinent to me.

51266 n/a

51267 n/a

51273 n/a

51274 I made poor friend choices that led me away from the church. I also felt excluded from events at church.

51280 I am a resident physician and can attend only 1-2 Sabbaths a month.

51281 Sometimes I'm tired and exhausted from activities or work the day before or just did other things. Church fell out of my priorities.

51282 No appeal and my boyfriend at the time and now husband doesn't believe in the SDA church. He grew up (till age 7) as a Witness.

51283 I have always felt alienated for having different views or beliefs. I have become very anti "organized religion." My beliefs coincide with most SDA doctrines, but I disagree with the few who are very opinionated in most churches I have attended.

51284 Too tired to get up! Too much to do. My husband works nights, so he sleeps, and I don't like going by myself.

51285 Organized religion. The congregation. The messages to the church youth, Sabbath School, and church were not doing what I needed them to do. Members being Adventists only for appearances or just on Friday nights and Saturday.

51287 n/a

51289 n/a

51291 Rarely went in college because relaxing in the park or mountains with friends was more fulfilling.

51293 n/a

51294 I was unhappy with how often I was getting asked out by guys at church during graduate school. Hardly anyone my age seemed to be there for the right reasons. And if you were single, you'd get sucked into it.

51297 n/a

51298 n/a

51305 n/a

51307 I have never entirely stopped attending, but sometimes I go rather infrequently, primarily because my church is an hour away. I haven't found a church in the area I like, and I don't need church/groups every week, I guess.

51309 Lack of youth in the local church and close-minded congregational views.

51318 The political part; my ethical background and cultural customs; how things were being run. Rules were very strict.

51323 Work became a higher priority.

51325 No longer any interest; parents stopped forcing me to go, and I broke up with my girlfriend with whom I used to go to church regularly.

52001 n/a

52002 Boredom.

52004 n/a

52005 Work.

52006 Bored.

52008 My pregnancy out of wedlock.

52014 I realized that by going to church I never felt like I got a blessing from it. I spend a lot of time in nature which for me gives a better blessing and a closeness to God.

52016 n/a

52124 Boring; did not make church interesting.

52126 Felt somewhat cut off; not many people my age in congregation.

52134 n/a

52141 n/a

52147 Lack of interest (sermons I couldn't relate to).

52155 n/a

52161 -

52162 n/a

52167 Convenience; more interest in own activities.

52172 I never got anything out of church services.

52176 n/a

52177 I started working full time; plus I realized I didn't like anyone at my church (except

my family).

52179 Moved out of the area. Only attend my church once or twice a month.

52183 Because I had my son out of wedlock and the church took my membership away, I thought it was really unfair. I got married before my son was born.

52184 Stopped attending services. I was away from home for the year. The local churches were very cold. I spent the Sabbath with my non-SDA friends. Still practiced my religion.

52187 I never dropped out or stopped attending, but if I could ever find an excuse not to go, I wouldn't attend.

52188 Primarily frustration with my youth and the lukewarmness of the church. Secondarily, came the enlightenment of freedom from ceremonial law-keeping such as the Sabbath.

52191 When I got pregnant with my daughter, they accepted me. Then it seemed after she was born, I was shunned away. But the funny thing is my daughter is very accepted at church. I used to love church, but one lady particularly down-graded me because I wouldn't give her my baby in adoption. And I felt being looked down on in church.

52198 n/a

52199 n/a

52210 I have been damaged very badly in the SDA church, physically, mentally, and emotionally and, most importantly--spiritually. It has only been within the past two years that I have begun to deal with what happened to my friends and me thirteen years ago. Due to these events I left the church, full of anger and hatred for all those still connected with it. After two years of therapy and many critical bouts of depression, I have let go of the hatred and learned to manage the anger.

52214 n/a

52215 n/a

52216 Lazy and lost interest for a while.

52219 Services were boring. People at church were snobby.

52229 n/a

52233 n/a

52234 Physically never, but there was a time I just went to church and came back home the same empty Christian life. Why? Lost touch with Jesus; no personal study.

52235 Yes. I thought I was pregnant. Confided in my closest friend and was rejected because it is/was socially unacceptable in the SDA community.

52243 n/a

52247 I have been discouraged to go to the church where my membership is located because they are not interested in the college-aged group.

52251 Members are not making others feel welcomed.

52252 I know the church is the true church. I am sick of the rich, conservative

hypocrites. I disagree with many things with the church--the silent "no's" of the church.
52263 Moved to a different area and never found a Seventh-day Adventist Church to attend.

52267 n/a

52268 The hypocrisy involved in the congregation. The judgmental views and superior thoughts of selfishness by some members.

52269 I'm going through a very serious inner turmoil. The reason is through higher education and an analysis of the structure of oppression. Religion is the forefront of the stripping of humanity. As a South African victim once said, "When the white man came, we had land, he had the Bible; now we have the Bible and he has all our land."

52277 n/a

52278 Problems between members in church were discouraging. Guilty or felt unworthy.

52279 Since most of the doctrines taught at church are not what I believe, I feel it would be hypocritical for me to attend church.

52281 I've never stopped attending. Certain times I did not attend because I was camping, sick, or had lots of homework (school).

52299 Job. The need for more money.

52302 n/a

54004 I was kicked out for living with the woman that I'm going to marry.

54007 Found services uninteresting. I feel that organization lacks effort. Did not drop out. Not a regular attendant.

54014 Loss of credibility.

54015 n/a

54018 n/a

55001 n/a

55005 Moved to a new area and didn't get involved in new church.

55007 Hard seats. Boredom.

55009 n/a

55014 Because my minister refused to marry my husband and I because he was a mason and told me I was no longer welcome in the church if I married him.

56005 n/a

56006 Gossip.

56022 n/a

56023 n/a

56030 n/a

56034 Girlfriend that I had at that time was not religious. I wanted to experience life out of the church and learn for myself.

56036 Gossip. Just stopped feeling the urge to.

56044 About two and a half years ago I was involved with someone who was very

critical and openly rebellious about our church. I started to think the same way and would look at church members as BIG hypocrites--I was just turned off.

56045 n/a

56048 n/a

56053 No love from church members. Not able to clearly discern God's love.

56054 n/a

56056 n/a

56058 n/a

56059 Haven't dropped out, but don't go every Sabbath. Starting back up again.

Reasons: None really; maybe too tired.

56064 n/a

56065 n/a

56067 Moving far away from my church (no SDA church closer). Working full-time as a teacher and being exhausted by Friday night.

56069 n/a

56072 Lost interest in the church and the people who spoke. They need to be more up to date in the modern world which would catch my interest.

56079 n/a

56082 n/a

56089 Spouse differences and time restrains.

56090 Lack of enthusiasm

56091 No reason. I go to church for Jesus not for the people. Jesus is the only one that can save me.

56104 In my teen years, I left the church because I was partying (went to a public high school after 8 years of SDA elementary school). I attended a revival seminar and went to ___ College where I met some kids and started partying again.

56120 Stopped 10 years ago for one year. Attended on and off during that time. Felt as if I did not fit in....age 14 to 15.

57002 I never dropped out completely, but I don't always attend weekly. On the weekends my husband works nights. I don't always go by myself while he sleeps.

57005 Getting caught up in a very busy schedule and worldly things. Pregnancy caused morning sickness, and then the doctor advised keeping the baby home for a month.

57012 n/a

57020 Didn't feel like a spiritual blessing; more like a social function.

57022 Up till I quit, someone was making me go. I perceived much hypocrisy in the people with whom I came in contact.

57024 I am self-employed and use the Sabbath day as a regular work day. Also I moved away from my church family and have not put forth the effort.

57027 I went off to college and wasn't interested anymore. It was a secular college, and

I was sowing my wild oats. I was perhaps rebelling against a lot of strict rules from my mother and church. I wanted to experience the world.

57038 n/a

57039 n/a

57041 Local congregation not very friendly.

57043 I no longer feel that church fills a need in my life. I get a far greater blessing from being in nature.

57046 n/a

57049 I was working 13-hour night shifts and was missing church because I couldn't stay awake long enough for church when I worked on Fridays at the hospital. After awhile, I got so tired, I missed church due to waking up early with depression and became isolated and discouraged.

57050 I've never dropped out because a few older people always made sure I was involved while I was younger (teen). I got used to that and had fun so I stayed even when I thought of leaving.

57051 n/a

57055 n/a

57059 My parents stopped attending church, my sister was in sort of rebellion state, and I didn't want to. My brothers didn't attend, and there were very few youth at church.

57063 n/a

57068 Ex-husband.

57069 n/a

57070 Found church to be boring. I lost interest and didn't want to go. Also, it was partly a way of rebelling against anyone who required me to go to church--I would see if I could get out of going.

57071 I wasn't feeling that I was receiving a blessing like it just wasn't important enough.

58016 The church congregation made me and my husband very uncomfortable, even ostracized, because we don't have any children, even though we've been married only one year.

58017 I almost left the church four years ago when some Adventist professors told me that my political views were incompatible with the wishes of the church. I had organized a protest on behalf of a person ostracized by the local Adventist community.

58019 Time, job, rebellious.

58022 n/a

58028 Lack of stimulating service.

58029 Shame at what I did during the rest of the week... wasn't befitting a Christian, felt like a hypocrite.

59018 n/a

59020 I became pregnant, and also I was going through some spiritual problems.

59022 Stopped attending services. My boyfriend.

59026 n/a

59027 n/a

59028 n/a

59033 No personal fulfillment in the words which were being preached. I have more questions which cannot be answered from the Holy Bible.

59034 n/a

59036 n/a

59040 I really don't have a reason; I just stopped going. It's not that I don't think about going; I just never do, and when I do, I end up going on Sunday with my husband.

59042 I was asked to because of having a child out of wedlock.

59044 The older members of the church run it and think about the youth last.

59065 I moved from Seattle a year ago and the church I attended was ____ Church. I now attend ____ Church. I don't get there as often as I like because I do not have transportation.

60023 The pastor. Church family. Bible worker.

60043 For about three months I would go to church only once or twice each month. The reason was the feeling of unworthiness of Jesus' love and forgiveness when I could not stop sinning. It was Satan that made me feel that way.

61012 n/a

61013 I saw the SDA church as hypocritical. I see little or no involvement by the SDA in world issues. I believe in a god or higher being but do not hold any one faith superior to the others. I feel there are many paths to spirituality. Furthermore, being a descendant of African slaves my ancestors were not Christians. Why should I be? Was their faith inferior? I think not.

61019 I worked every weekend. Diminishing interest.

61022 I didn't feel welcomed. Didn't feel like a part of the church family.

61032 The boring services. Lack of activities for the young adult. We tend to have a lot of no's, but do not offer alternatives.

61033 Poor treatment by church members and not enough self-esteem to tell them to stop interfering in my personal life.

61040 I'm not perfect, but I do strive to do what's right. Over the years I've learned never to look towards humans but to God. No one could make me want to leave the church, but I know that my walk with God needs to be stronger than it is now. Please pray for me.

61042 Disfellowshipped.

63002 n/a

63004 Being kicked out of _____ Adventist College by Dean _____ and the Administrative Council.

63009 I felt like no one would notice if I was there or not, and they weren't preaching to

me; they were preaching at me.

63015 Right now I am unable to attend church because we have a premature baby that can not be taken any where around germs. I miss church very much and can't wait until I can return. I know the Lord is coming back soon.

63026 n/a

63038 12 years of Adventist education!

64001 To much hypocrisy, etc.

64002 n/a

64004 The "dos" and "don'ts" (mostly "don'ts") were emphasized more greatly than love and praise of God.

65008 The first time was because the pastor of the church I grew up in had an affair and put his wife out of the church because she found out, and I didn't think it was Christian of him. Second time was because we moved, and I was scared to start over, so it took awhile once my mother came to visit and found the best church ever. I love it.

65020 No local congregation.

66001 I think I was tired of all of the politics, and I was feeling rebellious and unsure of what was the truth.

65021 Parents divorce, lower social and economic status than my peers.

66005 Judgmental people. My own convictions not strong enough.

66028 The pastor at my church was hypocritical and deeply affected my faith in the Adventist institution and beliefs.

66035 n/a

66039 n/a

66041 n/a

66052 -

66054 I married my SDA high-school sweetheart. He started having an affair 6 months after the marriage. I did not respond well. I started doing things I had never considered before. The church has never been in my life since then.

66056 Difference of beliefs.

66058 I feel I become closer to God in my private study times than in church with so many hypocrites.

66060 n/a

66061 The forcefulness of teachers, pastors, and elders. Meaning it's the Seventh-day way or no way at all. Also being that it was a Spanish-speaking church, the big words were hard to understand. They read scripture but didn't apply them to today, only the past.

66062 I do not believe in God.

66074 n/a

66075 I was greatly discouraged with the people and how supposed "Christians" could be so rude, not accepting, and cruel. However, after working with missionaries, the

"cream of the crop" and getting the worst treatment of all, I realized Adventists are only people, not super-humans.

66078 Coldness: The majority of the churches I have attended are unfriendly places.

Out of touch: I find most Adventists out of touch with current events and how they relate to the individual. Sanctimonious: Most I have encountered seem to be quite certain in the rightness of their position and condescending in their application of it.

66079 Never have left the denomination.

66080 n/a

66085 n/a

66082 n/a

66088 No, but if I did it would be because of all the gossip and things people do behind closed doors. Then come to church and "praise" the Lord.

67002 n/a

67004 I felt as if I was doing things that are wrong and I'd be a hypocrite if I'd attend church.

67007 At times I would not attend church because Saturday was my only day off, and I liked to sleep in. I'd make it to the sermon more than Sabbath School.

Question 67: If you ever came back to the church after being out of it for a time, or became active after a period of inactivity, what were the main reasons for your re-commitment?

03004 Mark Finley via satellite. The opportunity came up for me to participate, and I did.

03006 God.

03007 n/a

03008 n/a

03014 n/a

03019 n/a

03021 n/a

03025 n/a

03024 I have come back only partially. I bring my children to Sabbath School, and we have family worship. I want my children to know God, but I want to keep them from the bitter people in the church with whom I grew up.

03032 n/a

03033 A friend reminded me that Jesus loves us in spite of our faults.

03040 I missed it. I hated staying home. I felt blessed, so the least I could do was go and worship God.

03044 n/a

03046 I love the Lord. I am inactive in church activities but haven't stopped being a Christian. What hampers my return is embarrassment/difficulty of returning to church with my child and not my husband, simply because I want to avoid speculation.

04003 n/a

04007 Social factors; i.e., if I can find good friends there.

05002 That I have moved and found a church nearby to attend.

05004 Not back in church, but I still follow God's Word.

05023 1) Adventist/religious interaction aside from personal devotion at home.

2) Invited and aided to attend with my small family.

05035 Reduce the amount of doctrinal commitments. Especially those related to church history. I want us to unite around the "Jesus" who is with us now, not the "Jesus" who will be there tomorrow. My own family thinks the most important doctrine is the Sabbath! I know it is that Jesus is God, third person of the Trinity.

05051 More or better teachings on doctrine. Seminar on the Book of Revelation.

05052 n/a

05054 I realized my life went better with God in it, and I believe in this church.

05061 Maybe the reasons were: getting older, my parents, and wanting to spend more time with them.

05062 n/a

05065 Need for spirituality and sense that I am not alone.

05073 n/a

05083 Maybe I would be more comfortable with others who are active in the church.

05086 I recently moved to Florida, and with this move came a change in attitude. I realize the importance of Christ in not only my life but my son's as well.

05110 n/a

05112 Fellowship with other members.

06001 I love the Lord.

06002 n/a

06007 n/a

07005 I know it is the right thing to do, and it is right for my life.

07012 For my 2-year-old son.

07013 n/a

07014 Basically my mom. She kept asking me to go, and I do now, occasionally. I definitely get more of a blessing when I go now. We have a new pastor and the above mentioned members have left.

09003 n/a

09011 n/a

09015 Returned to an Adventist college campus.

09021 n/a

09023 I want my family and I to be saved, if all of what the Bible says is true. I love whom I believe to be God. The "classic picture" of the Father and the Holy Spirit. There may be many things that are of unexplained phenomena, but I do still pray. Thinking of God gives me peace.

09028 n/a

09029 n/a

09036 n/a

10006 My brother's death made me realize that life is short and time here is precious. Being unhappy with the way I was living.

10010 n/a

10016 n/a

10017 The minister has great sermons and good Bible study lessons.

10019 The Lord gave me my wife. She definitely was not a party-goer. So we eventually left that scene. The Lord worked hard on me. Fortunately I had people praying for me.

10022 n/a

11001 n/a

11002 n/a

11003 n/a

13006 n/a

13019 n/a

13027 n/a

13039 n/a

13041 n/a

13042 I have two children, therefore, I started attending to raise my kids in an Adventist environment.

14003 The reason for my re-commitment is that Jesus loves me and wants to save me. I don't care anymore about others who backstab (because as devil followers, it is their duty). I want to be saved, and I will help anyone who also wants to be.

17047 n/a

17048 n/a

17049 n/a

17050 n/a

17059 n/a

17063 First of all, God is always in my heart and soul. The reason I will return to church is to become a member of the church family.

17065 I know this is the true church, and I want to be a part of it.

17067 Right now I am making an effort just to attend church regularly. I will probably become more active when I have gotten back into the "swing of things." I have missed going to church and am committed as often as possible (even if my husband does not

want to go).

18001 n/a

18013 I knew in my heart and mind that is where I needed to be.

18037 n/a

18039 n/a

19002 n/a

19009 n/a

19010 When I realized that I didn't really know God and that time was short, I began to study our doctrines. It's been four years since then, and I'm thankful to say Jesus is my Friend and Savior.

19011 Closer walk with Jesus.

19018 n/a

19019 I have a lot of hate to heal before I can start coming to church.

19021 n/a

21001 Emptiness

21003 I was not active during my pregnancy due to complications, but I plan on becoming active once again.

21012 I became in great need of God and was reunited with Him. Naturally I went back to the church I was raised in. I am a disciple of Jesus foremost. I don't believe individual denominations besides personal preferences. God is bigger than our petty disagreements.

21015 n/a

22006 Holy Spirit worked on my heart.

22008 n/a

22009 n/a

22010 Someone included me in a Bible study group, and I was able to rethink why I was an SDA Christian. Then, I wanted to tell everyone about how to be an enthusiastic Christian.

22016 I never planned to leave the church, and I didn't lose my beliefs. I just needed a break from the academy and college attendance requirements. It needed to be my own choice.

22018 Need an extra place to go and feel God's presence.

22019 n/a

22020 n/a

22021 n/a

22022 Finding people who find the same things to be important as I do.

23011 n/a

23012 n/a

23021 I found a church that offered me something and, more importantly, got me involved right away.

24003 Tony Marrakos seminars--he is fantastic. I decided it was time to make it my church, my God, and not just my parents' God.

24006 n/a

24007 Realization that I needed the fellowship of people with similar beliefs.

24009 n/a

24010 n/a

24015 n/a

24021 n/a

24026 My daughter. I believe in the church. I always supported it inwardly, and I never left it in my heart.

24028 n/a

24029 n/a

24030 n/a

24031 My mother's hope for me.

24032 n/a

24037 -

24038 n/a

24035 I visit the _____ Church sometimes with my sister, who has had her membership transferred to this church. The people there are a lot friendlier and seem to be more spiritually alive. Pastor _____ and his wife are wonderful people. He can really preach God's word.

24041 n/a

24042 n/a

24068 n/a

26010 n/a

26019 Came back because I knew I should go, and ever more so because my boyfriend (now husband) was a good influence on me.

27006 n/a

27007 n/a

27008 I know I need Christ.

27012 n/a

27015 n/a

27016 n/a

27017 n/a

27018 n/a

28010 I found a church I can relate to for young adults.

28029 I missed serving the Lord; also I truly missed my friends, and I really missed singing.

28042 Unsure.

29002 n/a

29007 -

29008 Good Christian friends.

29009 n/a

29011 n/a

29012 n/a

29016 n/a

29017 Children. Felt my life needed to be more connected with God.

29019 I found a church that I fitted in and where I was loved and made part of the worship program.

29031 n/a

29020 n/a

29021 n/a

29025 n/a

29026 I missed working with youth.

29029 n/a

29030 n/a

29032 n/a

29033 n/a

29039 n/a

29041 n/a

29043 I returned because I believed in the basic doctrines of this church. I returned because I have small children whom I wish to teach the basics. I have a deep relationship with Christ now, and I want to pass this to my little ones.

29044 I was rebaptized when my husband joined the church, and together we have learned a lot. He used to be Catholic, his parents still are, and we hope to get through to them.

29045 I felt funny about not going. I knew I needed to be there.

29046 n/a

29049 n/a

29050 n/a

29051 n/a

29062 I have not really re-committed. Since I got married and moved to my husband's hometown, I have begun attending church at least twice a month. I attend only because my husband wants me to and my in-laws expect me to.

29063 n/a

29068 n/a

29071 My faith.

29074 The help of evangelist Dan Collins and his wife, Kay.

29075 n/a

29077 n/a

29079 n/a

29082 The further I drifted from Christ, following my belief that spirituality came from within oneself, the closer I came to evil spirits and their influences. I may have lost my faith, but I didn't give up my morals of right and wrong or good and bad. So when witchcraft, magic, and the occult seemed to be waiting for me around every turn, they caused me to have an almost tangible faith in God. It's an everyday struggle against the devil that wants to ruin me.

29085 I transferred to another Adventist church where the people accept you for who you are and the pastor is your friend.

29086 n/a

29087 n/a

29088 Beliefs of the church.

29090 n/a

29091 Changed churches; found a pastor who helped fulfill my needs.

29094 n/a

30001 The world doesn't have enough. I began to feel a spiritual emptiness that needed to be filled.

30011 I realized that you have to look to God and not at the people of the church. Growing up in an Adventist family, you hear many things over and over, and meaning has been lost, until one day you come to a full awareness of the true meanings.

32005 n/a

32014 Needed a sense of community and support. It made sense even though I have not read nor studied the Bible.

33008 n/a

33010 n/a

33016 n/a

33017 More unity in the local church, and I read more spiritual material.

33020 n/a

34001 n/a

34002 n/a

34005 I felt a lack of structure in my religious life due to a few organized smaller groups being available which was allowing me to get apathetic about my religion (apart from my faith which was always strong).

34008 n/a

34014 n/a

34015 n/a

34017 A humbling of my spirit and independence to understanding that the Lord has watched over me all along. The realization that my choices were going to be dangerous for me, if I didn't give in and let God "drive the car."

34025 I would like to go back now that my husband is out of the picture. I would like to

get involved. I am hesitant/nervous. Maybe I don't feel vested anymore. I'm not sure I really have any friends there.

34026 n/a

34030 n/a

34036 n/a

34039 n/a

34040 n/a

34046 I feel that the church would bring a lot more peace of mind back into my life. I just don't know how to go back.

34051 When I first became committed to the Lord, I became very active in the SDA church. I helped lead youth classes, organized homeless dinners, and participated in the fledgling women's ministry. Growing up in Adventism, it was the natural place to "go home to." After so many years of being taught that we were the only ones with "the truth" and that all others were under Satan's delusions, there didn't seem to be any other choice. In truth, I felt little personal commitment to the SDA establishment, I was merely seeking a place where I could serve the Master.

34052 I became active again after moving to a small church where there were more opportunities to participate. Before, I attended a very large church (in college) where opportunity was not so great, and so I attended church only.

34053 n/a

34054 n/a

35006 I attend church whenever I can get a Saturday off.

35009 n/a

35012 n/a

35014 n/a

35016 n/a

35019 I met someone through the local conference, and he got me involved in a possible missionary trip, Bible studies, and some church. However, when personal problems arrived, I was basically ignored by church, pastor, conference--so I left again.

35022 Prophecy seminar. I was baptized again into the SDA church.

35023 n/a

35025 Because my children and I needed to attend church and worship the Lord.

36002 Positive influence from a friend.

36005 I go sometimes for my son.

36006 Felt I needed to grow closer to Christ.

36008 n/a

36013 Something was missing, I discovered it was God in my life. Unfortunately it took my disease and hearing loss to get me to realize this, but I'm glad it happened.

36014 Moved closer to my home church and friends and family.

36015 I felt the need.

37005 n/a

34007 n/a

37008 I will not return until a fundamental change has occurred. Namely, being Christians and not judgmental.

37013 I felt like something was missing in my life.

37014 My girlfriend attended church--provided motivation.

37019 Because I believe Saturday is the Sabbath and because of wonderful human beings such as _____. However, I am about ready to seek out another church.

37031 n/a

37040 n/a

37043 n/a

37045 n/a

37054 Wanting to draw closer to God, so I can raise my child in a godly home.

37056 n/a

37057 Increased personal Bible study. Hanging out with friends who were also active Adventists.

37060 My daughter wanted to go to Sabbath School.

37061 Friendship.

37062 n/a

37064 n/a

37066 I am not active. Occasionally, I go to church with my parents. My children and my mother ask me to.

39001 I have always been a "good" member, but over the last 3 years, I have become active in reaching out to others. The things that made the difference was ministry of some kind. Sharing experiences and studying with others have reinforced that.

39004 Family and kids.

39005 I realized that the SDA church had more truth than any other and that GOD is the reason for being there, not impressing other people.

39006 n/a

39007 n/a

39009 Couldn't find another Saturday-keeping church.

39010 We go as often as I can persuade my husband to come.

40002 n/a

40010 Would take my family (kids) to attend.

40013 n/a

40014 n/a

40015 I haven't become active yet. But now that I've graduated and moved on, I hope to become a more devout Christian/Adventist.

40018 I need church for my own mental well-being.

41002 Knew what was best for me.

42006 n/a

42007 Started to define my own value system and realized God is an important part of it.

42008 n/a

42011 I got clean from drugs and gave my heart to Jesus.

42016 n/a

42018 n/a

42025 I tried going back, but the services were either too "entertaining" and unholy or too overly "holier than thou" or at a level somewhere below my intellectual ability. I especially have a problem with mission stories that show little respect for existing primitive cultures and credit the church for bringing them western technology that seems magical, so they think it must be from a stronger god.

42013 n/a

42031 I just came out of depression and got motivated to be active in life. I felt very thankful towards God and wanted to do something for Him.

42035 n/a

42037 n/a

42033 n/a

42038 n/a

42039 Because I truly believe in God, SDA, and how important religion is in life.

42045 I found out who God was. I found a friend in Jesus as well as a Savior. I didn't and don't want to be on this earth any longer. There is a place for me in heaven, and I found that I want to be there. I had to decide for myself to follow Jesus. My family can't make that decision for me. Even though the SDA church isn't perfect, it is the closest to the way the Bible teaches, and it doesn't matter that the people in it are not perfect, since no one is except Jesus.

42048 Realized something was missing in my life.

42051 To compare the teachings of the church to the Bible and Jesus' teachings; they are not the same the Holy Spirit showed me. He opened my eyes and my ears that I may see and hear the truth.

42053 n/a

42054 Haven't been back. It is between God and me, not the church.

42061 n/a

42066 n/a

42068 Brother died. Reminded me of what really is important.

42072 n/a

42073 n/a

42076 I love Jesus very much and realize I need to look past people's hypocrisy.

42080 1) My wife. 2) Looking to fill a void in my life.

42086 Felt that I needed something that I wasn't getting.

42097 I wanted it, and another group of people loved me.

43005 n/a

43006 n/a

43007 n/a

43008 n/a

43010 n/a

43021 n/a

43023 I know that I should be attending church, and I know which one I should be attending. I feel guilty when I'm not there or when I'm doing things I know I shouldn't. But it's very difficult to stray from what you've had engraved in you since you were born. I don't think I could ever totally leave the Adventist church.

43027 Husband.

43030 n/a

43033 I figured out that I was doing a lot of things I didn't believe in and decided I really needed to get back to my roots. I started digging in, going to Sabbath School instead of being 1/2 hour late for church. I'm glad to announce that I finally made the decision I'd been putting off for years. I'm human and the flesh is weak, but the spirit is finally willing.

43035 n/a

43037 I have not yet recommitted. I am interested in learning more about what some other churches and even other religions have to offer.

43039 n/a

43050 The main reason we have been attending more regularly is because of my children. We want to expose our children to the benefits of the church social structure.

44020 n/a

44041 1) New pastor. 2) Friends.

43044 I worked through my bitterness and was able to forgive the things and people that I had previously been upset with. Also there was a new pastor who is absolutely wonderful.

43045 I want a better relationship with Christ. And I have found a church which accepts, nurtures, and involves me.

43048 I had children and felt I should be a better example, and I want them to grow up with the same values I had.

43053 n/a

43060 n/a

43064 I attend cradle roll because of my baby, but that's about the extent of it.

43066 Most likely it will be the need for spiritual fellowship among like believers.

43068 I became active in the church recently, holding an office because they asked me if I wanted to. They trusted me.

43069 n/a

43071 My son.
43075 Re-affirmation of beliefs after inspirational seminars.
43076 n/a
43082 I haven't really come back--as a member--but I think I'd like to.
43084 n/a
43088 n/a
43089 My close friends in the church said they needed me to stay and that they are my church family.
43093 n/a
43094 n/a
43098 n/a
43099 n/a
43100 I was asked to do a certain job--hold an office. I had a purpose--I fit in.
43019 Realized religion was important. New friends with strong faith.
44001 n/a
44005 n/a
44006 n/a
44011 Needed the church family and doctrines to help me through my divorce and reconstruct the commitment to the Lord. Never really went away in my heart.
44012 I wanted my children to learn about God in a church setting.
44013 n/a
44014 n/a
44015 n/a
44018 -
44019 n/a
44031 n/a
44040 n/a
44047 n/a
47048 1) Re-examination of my life. 2) Friend with whom to attend church.
44048 Realizing worldly ways/things don't bring fullness, happiness, and fulfillment to life. Realizing life has no point without God--no purpose. Without God life is hell.
44052 n/a
44056 n/a
44057 n/a
44059 n/a
44060 n/a
44064 A friend from college returning. New and old members.
46002 Social activities.
46003 n/a
46009 Guilty conscience, missed the fellowship, recreational activities, youth Bible

studies, etc.

46018 n/a

47002 I was going back to church for a while, but I don't like going to "my" church (started there at four) because the new pastor isn't very nice. He ignores certain members and puts down other ones. The secretary drinks alcohol on a regular basis. It just isn't a very good church anymore.

47003 I still don't attend regularly, only once in a great while.

47004 Wanting to introduce my husband and new baby to a church environment.

47006 I have not come back to the church. I feel that the church is important for my relationship with God, but I continue to have bitter feelings.

47008 n/a

47011 n/a

47015 Christ's sacrifice for me.

47025 I plan to start attending church regularly now because I want my boyfriend to understand my beliefs.

47026 I felt like church somehow "re-connected" me with God. It was an environment in which I felt I could simply start off where I had left.

47029 1) Seeing something I wanted changed and working on it. 2) Felt needed.

47031 I attend once a month in a church.

47039 1) The diligence of a loving pastor who understood me for who I was, and not what I was. 2) Consistent loving attitude towards everyone.

47047 I'm still not consistent with my church attendance and etc., but I have many friends who encourage me in my spiritual life.

47051 Personal belief.

47053 n/a

47054 n/a

47055 Moved back to hometown where people know me and felt comfortable. Also another young enthusiastic couple invited and energized us to get more involved. And we have a great pastor who addresses real concern in a very meaningful way.

47057 n/a

47058 n/a

47060 Looking for a church that contains Christians.

47063 My new husband and baby. I want them to know about and learn about the Adventist church.

47066 Realized that it was not what a church has to offer but what I can get from it. I also went back to [Adventist college]. Being around people with the same beliefs helps.

47076 n/a

47085 I do plan to become active in my church again, because I realize that I cannot make it a second priority anymore. It is a vital part of one's relationship with God.

47092 n/a

47104 My relationship with God. But I don't need a church to have one. God loves me regardless.

47114 n/a

47118 I'm working on my re-commitment.

47121 Being in a church environment that allowed me to share my talents freely.

48006 The Holy Spirit's impact on my life.

48008 n/a

48014 n/a

48022 n/a

48028 n/a

48029 n/a

48040 n/a

48042 My true belief in the SDA religion and teachings and because I want to. I find comfort, peace, and completeness.

48043 Re-examination of my life. Parents continue preaching God in my heart.

49002 I usually end up going to church when I have the time, and then sometimes when I just don't feel like going, I force myself to because I realize how important it is to maintain my religion and also to see Christian friends whom I rarely see anymore.

49006 n/a

49007 My mother made me go.

49011 n/a

49014 n/a

50001 n/a

50004 Family and personal desire.

50005 n/a

50007 I know the Lord is in my life and want Him to know I am grateful. I also want my children to be a part of my church.

50008 I have come back after being away to visit a few things. But only after time had passed and not many people remembered.

50020 n/a

50026 n/a

50028 We "came back" and attended Sabbath School at a church 2 hours away because it is a study of the Bible with the goal of finding out what kind of God, God is.

50034 I was attending for sometime due to my son's birth. I felt it was important for him. But then we moved and were gone for sometime. Now that we are back, I just haven't taken the time.

50037 n/a

50040 n/a

50041 I come and go to church as I feel like there is no reason to be there except as a social means.

50043 n/a

50050 Believe in God, Jesus, and the Bible (as the Word of God).

50053 n/a

50056 Searching for the truth, inner peace, and contentment.

50058 n/a

50061 n/a

50064 I am not recommitted. My membership is still at a Baptist church. We moved, and I will always try an SDA church first because of my children. My oldest starts school this year at the SDA school. And I take them to Sabbath school. But both girls like Sunday school classes better.

50072 Fear of the Second Coming.

50073 Just decided that I needed to go to church.

50074 n/a

50078 I never returned.

50080 n/a

50085 n/a

50086 My husband. My marriage. Worldwide Dream Builders.

50087 n/a

50089 I didn't want to throw it all away.

50094 n/a

50095 n/a

50104 n/a

50105 No re-commitment. Just missed going, the people and the atmosphere. I go quite irregularly.

50106 n/a

50107 I may go back some day when we have children to take to Sabbath School.

50108 n/a

50109 n/a

50116 n/a

50123 I am happier when I attend church. It sharpens my focus on life and lessens my stress. Feel closer to God. Feel that there is hope.

50124 Realization of Christ will always keep a church/group going, and fellowship is necessary.

51003 I need to find the Lord again!

51007 Sorry to say, a girlfriend or looking for one!

51009 Churches are too big. I believe to stay an SDA, people must separate their church from their faith. The church must give a solid basis for the faith. The church becomes a more social place to renew yourself if you feel a part of the family.

51016 That I can't do anything without God, and it was time to come back to church.

51020 n/a

51021 n/a

51024 If I increase attendance, it will happen because I find a congregation which is active in addressing present day issues (homosexuality, spirituality instead of just religion, practical Christianity, work in communities, etc.).

51026 -

51028 I wasn't going (physically) to church. I listened on the radio and so forth, but I came into taking care of my niece and nephew, and I started going back to take them to Sabbath School.

51040 n/a

51046 n/a

51047 n/a

51048 Nostalgia.

51049 I did once, but it was because friends were singing. I've never re-committed.

51051 -

51057 n/a

51058 n/a

51061 My husband and I have become active members since our son was born. I play the piano for cradle roll, and he teaches the lesson there sometimes.

51066 In the old church I was attending the pastor believed the young people should be seen and not heard, so I left and attempted to find a new congregation.

51068 Need sense of balance.

51069 Realize that I do need Jesus Christ in my life.

51070 SDA is my heritage. I felt a responsibility. But I attend a non-denominational Christian church on Sunday now. Many people my age--great accountability.

51073 Holy Spirit, lack of completeness in my life. Something was missing.

51098 A stranger needing and yearning for spiritual revival. Personal growth. Obtaining short-term mission projects.

51099 n/a

51102 Looking for a different church.

51112 I moved and found a church in which I felt comfortable.

51119 To keep connected to the church, and to see what my gifts are so that my talents may be used for the Lord.

51124 n/a

51131 n/a

51137 n/a

51140 I felt a desire and need to attend.

51142 n/a

51155 The void, without Sabbaths, weeks after weeks and months after months. My life needed a spiritual lesson, view, or scripture. I got so caught up with life that I lost daily and eventually monthly fellowship. I need that weekly reminder of time out from life, but

it's so hard to actually do it now.

51175 n/a

51187 n/a

51191 I felt like I was hurting God by not attending.

51194 n/a

51196 Needed for church duties.

51203 The reason for not totally deciding to leave the church was that I began to realize we're all not perfect. And sometimes we "act" like we are, but each of us sin in different ways, and we can't expect from others what we don't expect from ourselves. So I came to the reasoning that church isn't just for the "pure," but we all need church for spiritual involvement and growth no matter where people are.

51204 n/a

51206 n/a

51209 I love the SDA church, and I always knew I would be back as soon as my priorities were in place.

51215 n/a

51217 n/a

51222 n/a

51223 n/a

51225 n/a

51228 n/a

51231 I've never come back because I see the church (around me) supporting a false environment. It has become institutionalized, and now it seeks only to preserve itself. Very little church doctrine is based on principles. Instead, we entrust our belief to oddities of Biblical interpretation and recent prophecy.

51232 Love church. Needed consistent weekly family of God. Enjoy good and joyful churches. Decided to avoid politics.

51239 We had a huge traumatic experience in our life. Moved to a new place. Friends invited us to their church. It was a small and very friendly church. We felt instantly accepted. The people were very caring and helped us heal from our traumatic experience. Plus we are certain God had a hand in helping us relocate and rebuild our lives.

51240 Up until recently, I was attending church only with no real results. Only within the past few months, have I re-committed myself to the church because I decided that I was in the right church for my beliefs, and if I were to change anything, I would have to be involved first.

51241 n/a

51244 Attended when visiting hometown with family and friends.

51248 n/a

51253 n/a

51255 n/a

51257 n/a

51258 n/a

51259 n/a

51262 n/a

51266 n/a

51267 n/a

51273 n/a

51274 I realized that my faith was an integral part of my life. I felt empty without it.

51280 n/a

51281 A need for fulfillment of something empty in my life. A hope that needed to be nourished. Build up my reassurance of a life with Christ and peace of mind and soul.

51282 n/a

51283 I decided that I want to show my commitment to the church and let those few loud and opinionated members know I cannot simply be ignored and written off for being a black sheep. As a member I should be listened to and treated as Christ would have treated me.

51284 n/a

51285 n/a

51287 n/a

51289 n/a

51291 I was a missionary in Russia for 2 years, and that re-committed me. Also I'm at my home church now where my dad is an awesome senior pastor.

51293 n/a

51294 Haven't found a new church since I moved out of _____.

51297 n/a

51298 n/a

51305 n/a

51307 n/a

51309 Increased association with members my age.

51318 Knowing I could go back without anyone being too religious, people talking about other people, in competition with other church members, mean, etc.

51323 n/a

51325 n/a

52001 n/a

52002 Miss the church.

52004 n/a

52005 Grandmother asked me to go.

52006 Trust in the Lord led me back.

52008 n/a

52014 It would be because I wanted a consistent ritual to pray, to talk about God with a group of people that believed in the same thing. However at this point in my life, I do not agree with a lot of the SDA guidelines of how a person's lifestyle should be.

52016 n/a

52124 n/a

52126 Missed weekly chance to re-affirm relationship with God.

52134 n/a

52141 n/a

52147 The hope that one of these days I will finally "get it."

52155 n/a

52161 My job allowed me the schedule needed to be involved.

52162 n/a

52167 Re-baptism.

52172 n/a

52176 Guilty. Felt like I needed more spiritual influence in my life.

52177 I didn't like anyone, so I didn't ever go back.

52179 I attend when I'm in the area visiting my parents.

52183 I'm not an active member yet, but I do want to go back because I've been inactive for 3 years. Recently, Mormons taught me their gospel, and I was baptized into their church. But I studied their beliefs and started to compare, and I realized I've made the worst mistake in my life.

52184 I came back home to my home church.

52187 Even though I never stopped going, I don't feel committed any longer.

52188 God is a powerful God, and that He could make waves move to those who allow Him to make such changes.

52191 n/a

52198 n/a

52199 I transferred my membership and feel much more fulfilled.

52210 I began attending church regularly about 6 years ago. I wanted or rather needed to have a spiritual connection somewhere... to someone. I quickly learned the difference between spiritual connection and religious connection.

52214 n/a

52215 n/a

52216 Need for religion, spirituality--feeling a need for "something more" in life.

52219 Missed going. Felt I needed to show my love and appreciation to God.

52229 n/a

52233 n/a

52234 I was invited to a new young adult bilingual SDA church out in _____.

52235 An old friend sent me a Christmas Card. The only one I got that year. She did not judge nor question why I had left nor condemn me. She was just my friend.

52243 n/a

52247 n/a

52251 The warmth and acceptance of the church family.

52252 Knew that God was the only one who could fill my hole inside: the empty lonely feeling.

52263 In need of spiritual relationships with other SDA's and participating in church programs.

52267 n/a

52268 I will never stop worshipping God, and no one will stand in my way of worshipping the Lord on His Day.

52269 Still struggling.

52277 n/a

52278 1) Realization that in church felt at least some peace. 2) Best place to be. 3) Trying to change.

52279 n/a

52281 I've never stopped or plan on leaving. But if I were to return, it would be because I know that without God on my side or in my life, nothing is worthwhile or blessed.

52299 n/a

52302 n/a

54004 n/a

54007 n/a

54014 n/a

54015 n/a

54018 n/a

55001 n/a

55005 n/a

55007 To hear the Word of God and to be saved.

55009 n/a

55014 n/a

56005 n/a

56006 n/a

56022 n/a

56023 n/a

56030 n/a

56034 I was unhappy after breaking up with my girlfriend. I found new friends at church and realized that church was the lifestyle I desired.

56036 n/a

56044 Down deep inside I knew that I was doing wrong. Several experiences have made me realized that God is the only person who can love with purity and give me a sense of peace deep inside. Anything is conquerable with Jesus by your side.

56045 n/a

56048 n/a

56053 n/a

56054 n/a

56056 n/a

56058 n/a

56059 Can't live without having God in my life.

56064 Despite how I might feel for brief periods of time I can't get away from the fact that Jesus should be my #1 priority.

56065 n/a

56067 I am currently pregnant and will probably begin taking my baby there.

56069 n/a

56072 n/a

56079 n/a

56082 n/a

56089 Had more time and found warm church.

56090 To serve the Lord as best as I can.

56091 Jesus Christ is in my heart.

56104 Revival meetings. Realizing that I wasn't going anywhere in life without God.

56120 Switched churches, made new friends, began participating in more activities.

57002 n/a

57005 The sign of Second Coming. I missed worshipping with others on Sabbath and the fellowships.

57012 n/a

57020 Missed my friends. Felt a need for spiritual food. For my child.

57022 I went through a hard time in my life, and the local pastor helped me with it. I also realized that Christianity was between God and me, and what others did in the grand scheme of things didn't matter.

57024 To see my friends and family when I was in town.

57027 I was looking for social contacts in a new town. I had moved. And I found the Lord through friends and through Jack Secquieras (Beyond Belief). I had been searching again. I was ripe and I fell in love with the Lord, as well as with a Christian man.

57038 n/a

57039 n/a

57041 Missed the spiritual enrichment from sermons.

57043 n/a

57046 n/a

57049 Change in work schedule and treatment for depression. Encouragement and admonition from my parents and close friends.

57050 n/a

57051 n/a

57055 After not being very active, I became more involved when most of my friends did. It was more fun that way.

57059 I really missed it. I missed singing mostly and studying passages. I also want to have this in the family life I set for my children when I have them.

57063 n/a

57065 I just wanted to get involved. However, I do not feel involved in the ___ Church because they won't let you participate. It is only certain people that they use and let participate.

57068 My love for God.

57069 n/a

57070 I know I need a higher power in my life and came back to church thinking I would be able to stand it now that I'm older. However, it was as unbearable as ever.

57071 The Holy Spirit working on my conscience.

58016 Because I believe the SDA teachings, and I think I should continue my personal relationship with God and not let others upset me.

58017 I was saved in another church (in another community) which loved me unconditionally, and, moreover, they expected me to teach primary Sabbath School and play the piano every week.

58019 n/a

58022 n/a

58028 Church seems to make the week complete.

58029 Family's activity in church, family friends at church, personal dissatisfaction with the worldly friends.

59018 n/a

59020 There was an emptiness inside that drew me back (the Holy Spirit).

59022 The Lord was not happy with my life style and my attendance at church; I knew I was not right.

59026 n/a

59027 n/a

59028 n/a

59033 On occasion I will visit other churches only to listen to the uplifted voices of gospel music which is the only thing that inspires any real sense of spirituality from church and is the only thing I do miss by not being a regular member.

59034 n/a

59036 n/a

59040 I always feel committed to God, and I guess I don't feel I need the church for that.

59042 I was never inactive. Even though I struggled, I still hung in there and continued to go to church.

59044 A new look on life.

60023 I would not return!

60043 Knowing that the Lord loves me, no matter what I do. My love for God and desire to do His will and go to heaven.

61012 n/a

61013 n/a

61019 My family was still attending. I quit my job.

61022 I felt my children should know the Word of God.

61032 The knowledge that the church is the true church and tried to follow most of the laws. However, I've never been out of the church.

61033 My boyfriend who is SDA counseled me and helped me build up my self-esteem. He told me to ignore gossip, especially when it's not true.

61040 The realization that time is short and I have to get ready. I have a button that says, "Jesus is coming, look busy."

61042 God called me back.

63002 n/a

63004 n/a

63009 I felt like other people can't decide whether I go to heaven or not. Only I can choose the roads I take.

63015 n/a

63026 n/a

63038 -

64001 n/a

64002 n/a

65004 n/a

65008 My mother. She knows the truth when she sees it and hears it. She believes this is the peace we all need to have, now that we are living in the last days. I believe this, and I need to be closer to God right now, so I enjoy the church and the people.

65020 Close to a congregation.

66001 I feel like this is the true church. I want to live right and go to heaven.

65021 College professors and church friends.

66005 My children. I want them raised in the church.

66028 My undying personal commitment that there is only one true Sabbath day and my unending love for Jesus Christ. My faith is bigger than any pastor or institution can convey. I have learned that my relationship with the Lord is personal, and I will be responsible for my actions and be held accountable at the end of time.

66035 n/a

66039 n/a

66041 n/a

66052 n/a

66054 n/a

66056 n/a

66058 n/a

66060 n/a

66061 Have not returned except to visit due to mother's request.

66062 n/a

66074 n/a

66075 I never left, though I've come close many times. I've stayed in the Adventist Church because I believe in God, and until He calls me to another church, I will remain an Adventist.

66078 n/a

66079 n/a

66080 n/a

66085 n/a

66082 n/a

66088 Realizing God is coming soon, and I need to help myself and others to have a more personal walk with Jesus.

67002 n/a

67004 I wanted my boyfriend to learn about the church, and I wanted my daughter to be in a religious environment.

67007 My love for Jesus.

Question 68: If you have always remained an Adventist, what were your major reasons for staying with the church?

03004 n/a

03006 n/a

03007 My dad.

03008 Might go back one day.

03014 My major reason is the "love of God" and His importance in my life!

03019 n/a

03021 n/a

03024 n/a

03025 Because I believe it is the church that follows the Bible most completely.

03032 Reason for staying an Adventist because I believe it is the true church. The Bible supports most of the doctrines.

03033 I know that the Adventist church is the right and true church. I know that the world has nothing to offer.

03040 Research indicating it is the true church.

03044 My faith with God.
03046 n/a
04003 Personal beliefs.
04007 n/a
05002 I want to continue serving the Lord and learn a lot more.
05004 There will be a little more understanding and less not understanding each other.
05023 Though I'm not attending now, I do believe that Adventism is correct in its teaching.
05035 n/a
05051 n/a
05052 The truth in Scriptures, school, and parental guidance.
05054 n/a
05061 n/a
05062 I could never see myself out of the church. I feel God has always had His hand on me, so I would feel weird if I even missed two consecutive weeks of church.
05065 n/a
05073 I believe in the SDA Church.
05083 I feel that church is an important part of my spiritual life, and I feel that's one way to remain in connection with God.
05086 I never completely left church. I've always considered my self Adventist. I simply did not always attend church.
05110 -
05112 The church is the remnant.
06001 I believe it is God's remnant, and I want to be a part of it.
06002 n/a
06007 So far in my personal study, I find its doctrines to be true.
07005 I know that is what God wants for me. I believe 100% in our church.
07012 n/a
07013 n/a
07014 The beliefs I have been taught since childhood are Adventist ones. They will always be a major part of my life and who I am. Even though I left for a time my beliefs stayed with me.
09003 There didn't seem to be better alternatives.
09011 Nothing better to do. Didn't want to hurt my parents. Met an Adventist wife.
09015 Habit. I was raised in this sub-culture and would find it difficult to leave.
09021 n/a
09023 n/a
09028 n/a
09029 It is the only church that follows the Bible that I have found.
09036 Belief system and most of my contemporaries belong to the SDA Church.

10006 n/a

10010 n/a

10016 Because I believe the doctrines of the church and know them to be true.

10017 I found the belief of the Adventist is the closest to the Bible truth which I compared with the teachings of other denominations.

10019 I went to all the Adventist schools. I knew that what they taught was what the Bible said.

10022 Not sure.

11001 I believe Adventism is the right faith to believe in.

11002 I still believe in what the church teaches; I just don't attend services.

11003 I believe the Adventist doctrines, and I always plan to be a Christian so I might as well stay with this church.

13006 Bottom line, I believe it is the truth. Nothing in the Bible has proved its doctrines to be false.

13019 I still believe in the Adventist church because there isn't any other church, or rather denomination, that holds the beliefs that I believe in. There is really no point in leaving. One should just become an atheist if he/she wants to leave the Adventist church.

13027 There is nothing outside in the world for me. Also I heard a pastor during a sermon say: If young people are having such a hard time deciding with matters, issues, and temptations and they are in the church, imagine what it would be like if they were outside the church.

13029 My reasons for staying in church is to meet my Master and my King.

13041 The doctrines were backed up by the Bible.

13042 I have always been an Adventist. I just couldn't get myself to go to church. I would never consider being anything but an Adventist.

14003 At first it was my parents because my father is a pastor, and we, his children, had to set an example. Afterwards, it was the realization that we have no more time to live here on earth; Jesus is coming.

17047 I attended Adventist schools from academy to medical school. My closest friends are Adventists; my close family members are Adventists. Most of all, I just truly believe in the Advent message.

17048 1) Sanctuary message. 2) True Christian lifestyle.

17049 I believe that the SDA church is the vehicle that will take me to heaven. Its doctrines are biblical, and I don't see any other way.

17050 I believe it's the truth.

17059 I believe in the teachings and standards of the church. I also had a good foundation which came out of good family upbringing. I believe there is strength in numbers, and where two or three are gathered together, you will find the Lord.

17063 n/a

17065 I know it is the true church.

17067 This is the only faith I've known. I've never had a strong desire to try any other religion.

18001 n/a

18013 I was raised in an Adventist church.

18037 To possess a stronger relationship with God! That should be everyone's focus!

18039 n/a

19002 Is "remaining an Adventist" and "staying with the church" the same? Can I be an Adventist by myself? Can I witness to people without identifying with "I belong to this church in town or that church..."?

19009 Staying in the church wasn't for "what the church could give me." It was because I loved God and knew that's where he wanted me.

19010 1) I knew the SDA church was the true church.

2) I knew I wanted to someday know Jesus better.

3) I couldn't ignore the early traditions my parents instilled.

4) The people more friendly/like family.

19011 The fellowship. And because I have the Lord and want to worship in His house.

19018 Strongly still believe this is the true church.

19019 I believe in the church doctrines 100%. Thanks to my parents, and in my heart I know what is right.

19021 n/a

21001 n/a

21003 I know that the Adventist church has the truth. Unless someone can prove otherwise, with the Bible, this is where I'll remain.

21012 n/a

21015 n/a

22006 Felt safe, felt the presence of God always around me.

22008 I believe it is God's true church and wish to follow Him. I have never found another church that had more light.

22009 I believe we follow the Bible, and I love the people.

22010 Because the message is right no matter what the problems we blame on the church!! You can always find problems if you look and find good if you look.

22016 I believe that the Adventist church beliefs are the most true to God.

22018 n/a

22019 n/a

22020 I like it.

22021 My reason for staying in the church is because I believe the Adventists have the true message. The church makes mistakes and is not perfect, but I believe this is where God wants me to be.

22022 n/a

23011 Bible-based doctrines, its history, and the Spirit of Prophecy, particularly *The Great Controversy*.

23012 No problem with doctrine. Big problem with other members.

23021 n/a

24003 n/a

24006 Don't believe in any other religion and their practices.

24007 n/a

24009 1) Habit.
2) Desire to maintain closeness with God.
3) Seventh-day worship.

24010 Believe in the church doctrines.

24015 n/a

24021 I believe in the doctrines of the SDA church.

24026 My daughter. I believe in the church; I always supported inwardly. I never left it in my heart.

24028 Family, morals, lifestyle, friends.

24029 The fact that my father is an Adventist, and the fact that I was raised Adventist.

24030 I strongly believe in its teachings.

24031 Because of what my parents shared with me.

24032 n/a

24037 n/a

24038 Family and friends.

24035 Know in my heart that it is God's true church, and nothing or no one can tell me or show me differently.

24041 Because I believe it is the true church and what the fundamental beliefs are.

24042 I grew up with this religion, after my own study, and I agree with its doctrines (most of them anyway).

24068 Because I feel it has the correct doctrines. I know it has problems, and being a member doesn't "save" you, but it's on the right track.

26010 A lot of it I suppose was habit and tradition. Now, working out of the church it means more. I know my life is too empty without God. He is life, and I want a full life. Now, my doctrines have been questioned by my co-workers. I am learning a lot more. It is exciting. I see the truth in our doctrines.

26019 Because I do believe SDA are the true church.

27006 -

27007 n/a

27008 n/a

27012 n/a

27015 I believe the church's doctrines follow the Bible 100% of the way, so I have made a commitment before God to never abandon the ship.

27016 Grew up in church.

27017 I believe the doctrines and think the Adventist lifestyle is the best way to live.

27018 n/a

28010 n/a

28029 I believed in the Sabbath, and that was all I had ever known. Nothing else makes sense to me.

28042 n/a

29002 n/a

29007 n/a

29008 I believe (still) that it's God true church.

29009 Relationship with God and my friends.

29011 Being involved and feeling needed and important.

29012 1) Belief in the doctrines.

2) A feeling of emptiness and loss without it.

3) Great pastor.

4) An obvious forward movement of the church.

29016 n/a

29017 I still feel I am an Adventist even though I do not attend church. I believe in our teachings and I try to live by them.

29019 n/a

29020 The belief that the church is true.

29021 I may not agree with what each individual believes, but as a whole the SDA church holds truest to the Bible and whole truth.

29025 Remaining close with God more than church. Not forsaking the fellowship.

29026 For some reason, even with all of its problems, I still know that the basis of Adventism felt right.

29029 n/a

29030 I'm convinced it's the true church--God's remnant. My faith has been strengthened to remain in the church.

29031 Habit?! It's home. Friendly/Family atmosphere. Convinced of some major truth.

29032 -

29033 Raised to believe it's the true way.

29039 Personal commitment. Partner willingness. Parental support. Other Adventist friends. SDA background--the way I was raised. Church in the town where I live.

29041 I believe in the fundamentals.

29043 n/a

29044 Because with God you have hope for the future. I lost a sweet sister, and even more my goal is to see her again one day.

29045 I believe in Adventism, and I couldn't imagine what my life would be like without church and God.

29046 n/a

29049 n/a

29050 n/a

29051 The SDA church doctrines are the closest of all the churches to what I believe on important issues such as the Sabbath, clean and unclean meats, state of the dead, baptism, etc.

29062 While I have strayed from practicing Adventism to some degree, in my heart I believe that the Adventist doctrines are Bible truth. I hope someday to find my way back. My mother died this past Christmas, and the desire to see her again is what makes me want to make things right with God.

29063 n/a

29068 Probably habit, unfortunately. Although I don't feel particularly active in the church, there is no other church that would take its place.

29071 My belief.

29074 Adventist church teaches from the Bible. The Bible is the only authority that a church should use.

29075 I'm convinced of the doctrines; they're Biblical. I'm drawn by our theology and heritage. I'm convinced that EGW was a prophetess and has special knowledge for us.

29077 Believe in the seventh day as Sabbath.

29079 Because my relationship with God is what keeps me in the church. I try not to base my membership on the actions/beliefs of other church members.

29082 n/a

29085 I believe the SDA teaches what the Bible says.

29086 Because I believe that the Adventist church is the end church.

29087 Being raised an SDA has left me with very strong, secure principles. I want to live a good life, helping as many people as I can and doing good things. I always want to be a part of or close to the church for these reasons.

29088 n/a

29090 I believe that it is the true church.

29091 Felt the Adventist teachings were correct. The church helped me keep my connection with God and helped me realize how important love is in my life.

29094 I need the church for support. Knowing God gives me hope and purpose for life.

30001 The Adventist religion holds the truth.

30011 I fully believe that the Adventist church is the right church. Even if I wasn't Adventist, I couldn't be any other religion. It's what I grew up with.

32005 I knew it was the right thing to do. Never had another desire.

32014 Comfort, raised in the church, familiarity with doctrine, and it made some sense.

33008 I believe in the church beliefs and have a caring church family.

33010 Even though I attend another church occasionally, I have remained Adventist because I believe that the doctrines are correct.

33016 Habit. I enjoy it socially, but also because I definitely feel it is the right church. I realize that I do not have as close a personal relationship as I should. I put my schedule, etc. above personal study even though in my mind I know which is most important.

33017 1) Consistent with the Bible.

2) Always very caring members.

3) God's principles and teachings from the church practices.

33020 I continued to agree with the doctrine of the church and have made some very dear friends that I seldom see outside of church-sponsored activities.

34001 n/a

34002 I believe in the beliefs; however, cannot call myself an Adventist due to not following the rules.

24005 Never really left Adventism, just not always in church.

34008 n/a

34014 n/a

34015 n/a

34017 Expectations of my job and family. Now, I am there because of my relationship with the Lord.

34025 Just because I haven't gone to church regularly, doesn't mean I stopped being an Adventist. Adventism is a set of beliefs, and I still believe. And God never left me. He followed me wherever I was.

34026 I believe it to be its right church, and no one tried to force me to stay or judged me and my family.

34030 I agree with the major doctrines, and overall it is a loving and supportive church that has helped bring me closer to God.

34036 I agree with fundamental beliefs.

34039 I believe the teachings, and it is the true church.

34040 I have always loved the church and am now pastoring in Texas.

34046 I feel that the church would bring a lot more peace of mind back into my life. I just don't know how to go back.

34051 I have not, as yet, removed my name from "the books" and am still, officially, a member. At first, I believed I could make a difference. That I could help someone get past the rules and see Jesus. As I became disillusioned, I asked the Lord if I could drop out and join the local church that fed me the Word on Sundays. He said no. To quote an old phrase, you can't throw the baby out with the bath water. Apparently, the Lord has a few babies left that need Him. So I have stayed, attending my local SDA church most weeks and studying with a small group.

34052 I believe that the Adventist church is the remnant church that will stand until the end, and I believe that Christ's second coming is very soon.

34053 n/a

34054 I believe it is the true church, but I have to find somewhere to fit in.

35006 I still believe the church teachings and see no reason to leave the church membership permanently.

35009 I was raised an Adventist and currently work near one.

35012 Although I don't agree with all of the people of the church and all of the ways the church says you have to live your life, I believe in the fundamental doctrines of the church. No other church completely follows the Bible.

35014 n/a

35016 Tradition. It is good to belong to a community of believers.

35019 n/a

35022 Always Adventist because raised into it. Respected my parents' decision in going to the SDA church. SDA Sabbath is the day to worship God and rest.

35023 n/a

35025 Even though I stopped attending for a long time, I still believed the church's teachings.

36002 n/a

36005 n/a

36006 Family. Felt it was the only church/religion I will believe in.

36008 Never found a church that has as much truth or follows the Bible as closely.

36013 n/a

36014 I believe it to be the true church, according to scripture. The thought of going anywhere else seems odd.

36015 n/a

37005 Conviction of the truth.

37007 Friends.

37008 n/a

37013 It is the church I was raised in.

37014 n/a

37019 n/a

37031 n/a

37040 n/a

37043 Conviction of the church as being the true church with correct doctrine.

37045 That is where my family attends church.

37054 They have the truth about the Bible.

37056 This church in general follows the ideas I have found in the Bible. I tend to agree with most of the ideas.

37057 I believe it has the truth and is the closest to the Bible of any other church, as far as I know.

37060 I believe in the doctrines.

37061 n/a

37062 It's a lifestyle as much as a group of believers. Those in the church share my basic life and views, and they are able to relate to me.

37064 n/a

37066 n/a

39001 God has never let me down. The church (or at least mine) has had plenty for me to be involved in, as long as I will take initiative. It is exciting to be a part of an alive, growing church, and even more so knowing I've had a part in creating that.

39004 n/a

39005 n/a

39006 n/a

39007 Because I love the Lord, and I want to be ready for when He comes again, and I think everyone needs the support of the church family.

39009 n/a

39010 I've always agreed with the basic 27 teachings of the church.

40002 n/a

40010 I know it's the right church.

40013 I remain an Adventist because I believe this church pays proper attention to finding the truth.

40014 n/a

40015 n/a

40018 The beliefs and how they structure my lifestyle.

41002 Knew it was right. Wanted to go to heaven.

42006 1) My Bible study is leading me to the truths the church teaches.

2) I like the culture.

42007 Always was--that was what I knew.

42008 Mostly sentimental reasons and my parents. I do enjoy tradition.

42011 I believe the doctrines prove true with the Bible.

42016 I believe in the Adventist teachings based on the Bible.

42018 n/a

42025 n/a

42013 I believe that the truth and beliefs the church holds are true.

42031 Because I believe its mission is the closest to what is in accordance with God's will and the truth of the Bible.

42033 n/a

42035 The Sabbath--including both the worship service and the day of rest. Also, I've never really known anything else and haven't had any reason not to be an SDA.

42037 No particular reason to request a name drop. Adventist beliefs make more sense to me than those of any other church.

42038 I believe in the basic principles of the church even though I don't agree with some people's general outlook and ideas.

42039 They follow the Holy Bible. Health awareness.

42045 Even though I stopped attending for awhile, I have stayed an SDA because it is a church that is the closest to following what the Bible says. I agree with its doctrines for the most part.

42048 Except for not attending a few months, I've always been an Adventist because I saw what other people were missing in their lives. And I always believed in the Adventist church.

42051 n/a

42053 I was baptized an SDA, and I do believe in the main things our church practices.

42054 Just going to church won't get you to heaven.

42061 n/a

42066 n/a

42068 n/a

42072 I believe the message of the Adventist church is true and that we are the remnant people placed here by God with a responsibility to the world. The division and problems in our church are a result of the wrath of our enemy.

42073 Have not gotten around to dropping my membership.

42076 Never found a church that followed the Bible as completely.

42080 n/a

42086 n/a

42097 I never quit.

43005 I believe that the Adventist way of life is good. I agree with what Adventists believe about the Bible. I never got mad at it or had any reason to leave it. I'm happy with it.

43006 Because I believe that the seventh day is Sabbath and that the Bible is the rule for living as a Christian. The SDA church has followed these ideas so I stay.

43007 n/a

43008 I believe strongly in the Adventist truths because they closely reflect the Bible's teachings. I have felt the standards and guidelines we hold are what Jesus desires for us, and my deepest longing is to share the joy of heaven with Jesus. I do not feel the standards are restrictive; rather they provide freedom to live a Christian life without the worldly distraction.

43010 n/a

43021 Habit.

43023 n/a

43027 n/a

43030 n/a

43033 Because I believe in what the church believes. The Sabbath is a big thing for me. Here, in Guatemala, my regular, very regular attendance also has to do with spite because at first people really didn't accept me because I'm American. But I stayed

because I love God and His church, if not the people.
43035 I was raised an Adventist, and I believe in the Adventist doctrine.
43037 I am still a member; I guess for the socioeconomic benefits as much as anything.
43039 n/a
43050 Comfort, familiarity, and no local desire to consider other options.
44020 n/a
44041 Belief in God and that He loves and cares for me.
43044 n/a
43045 I've always been an Adventist because my parents were, and it is the church I grew up in.
43048 n/a
43053 n/a
43060 I believe the Adventist church has the right doctrines, even if not the right attitudes in presenting these doctrines.
43064 Most of their beliefs are true.
43066 I believe most of the theological doctrine to be correct.
43068 It's the "right" church, even though it's not the "perfect" church. My parents, mom in particular, have been the greatest influence for continuing in the church.
43069 Bible and Ellen G. White.
43071 Never gave up being an Adventist.
43075 I believe the majority of their doctrines are correct.
43076 n/a
43082 n/a
43084 My mom and dad raised me in the church, and as I grew I saw the truth and proof for myself. It became my church by my choice. It is the true Bible church and will always be my church.
43088 n/a
43089 n/a
43093 n/a
43094 I knew there was no other right place religiously.
43098 No need to make the effort to withdraw my membership, though I do not ever attend.
43099 The beliefs.
43100 Because that was how I was raised.
43019 n/a
44001 There aren't any better alternatives.
44005 n/a
44006 Friends and habit. A few of the doctrines I firmly believe. Many of the social and archaeological doctrines are absurd.
44011 I believe the church doctrines and love the Lord, and they are very important to

me.

44012 n/a

44013 Have not remained an Adventist.

44014 First, it is my culture. Above that, there are certain points which are good about Adventism--health, the Sabbath, a sense of community (although I find myself increasingly excluded from that community).

44015 n/a

44018 n/a

44019 A relationship that I had with Christ, that even through difficult times (questions about who God is, theology, etc) seemed worth it and, therefore, kept me attending church.

44031 The truth establishment and enforcement, encouragement of good morals and healthful living, friendly and supportive church congregation.

44040 Because of my experience with God as my father and Savior.

44047 -

47048 n/a

44048 I compromised my faith--never left the church. From past experiences I knew God is real. I know SDA have the truth, I could see without God and church how unhappy people are. My family and some friends would be greatly disappointed and let down. Expectations from others.

44052 I have stayed with it because it is a place for me to look for the truth even if I don't agree with everything the church does.

44056 Family and personal beliefs.

44057 Strong upbringing in the church. I have always believed in the doctrines of this church and have always felt God leading in my family's lives.

44059 1) Felt at home.

2) Believe it is important to have religious background and to gather together.

44060 I believe the Adventist church and its teachings. I also think that church attendance is part of keeping spiritually happy.

44064 n/a

46002 n/a

46003 n/a

46009 n/a

46018 n/a

47002 I truly believe in the Adventist way and beliefs.

47003 n/a

47004 n/a

47006 I continue to feel that I am an SDA, but I do not attend church.

47008 I was brought up in the church, and I think I need one constant thing in my life. It just seems like the right thing to do. I hold three offices and do the ground keeping at

our church. Sometimes when I think about not going to church, it makes me feel guilty for dumping my responsibilities on the other four people.

47011 An outlet for my faith. Fellowship with like-minded people. Refuge from the world.

47015 n/a

47025 I have always remained Adventist. I just haven't always been an active member.

47026 The values, principles, and beliefs that SDAs uphold.

47029 Nothing better came along. We're not perfect, but it's home.

47031 n/a

47039 I don't know anything else. Perhaps I should venture elsewhere.

47047 n/a

47051 I never withdrew membership.

47053 n/a

47054 Beliefs in Adventism.

47055 It's the only church I know of that follows the Bible this closely and worships on the day on which God asks us to worship. Also parents are SDA's, and I wanted to fill their expectations at least until I started feeling my own internal motivation to go to church.

47057 Faith. A need to believe in something.

47058 My beliefs mostly fall within the SDA doctrines.

47060 n/a

47063 True faith and belief in the SDA church.

47066 n/a

47076 Belief in God and that Saturday is the Sabbath.

47085 Although I do not attend church on a regular basis like I should, I do believe in everything for which the church stands.

47092 Did not stay with the church. I am now attending the _____ Church, and I love it.

47104 Haven't stopped being SDA because I love being one.

47114 -

47118 n/a

47121 Because I believe that this message is the true message, but not the only church group that will be saved. Saturday is the right day of worship.

48006 n/a

48008 I feel the SDA church is the "right" church, and I never want to disassociate myself from it.

48014 1) Wanting to work for Jesus--witness, save a soul.

2) Raise children in a Christian atmosphere.

3) Fellowship.

4) Blessings (sermon, music, etc.)

48022 SDA church is the true remnant church!!

48028 I believe the Adventist doctrines and beliefs, and staying in the church helps and encourages me to grow spiritually.

48029 This is what I have always believed.

48040 -

48042 My true belief in the SDA religion and teachings and because I want to. I find comfort, peace, and completeness.

48043 Know that it is the true church. My family influence.

49002 Because I accept the Bible as the Word of God and as the true way to live. The Adventist religion doesn't contradict or try to add to what's in the Bible.

49006 n/a

49007 n/a

49011 I have held on to much of my spiritual teaching and firmly believe in God. I'm not certain that Christianity is the only truth.

49014 n/a

50001 I believe in our doctrines, especially #1 the Sabbath. However, I do not believe that the Adventist church is the church necessarily. There are some incredibly awesome and inspiring Christians out there, of different faiths, who are witnessing and sharing God's love a lot more than we are.

50004 I have not yet found beliefs I feel as strongly about or that would prove Adventism to be false.

50005 I shall stay with the church because it is the doctrinal system that I claim. I am neither a legalist nor liberal, but I view myself as a middle-of-the-road Christian. I see the church as a relationship in which you have to work, struggle, and play at times; that is what makes a relationship.

50007 I believe the way they believe is right, and if I disagree it's okay with them.

50008 n/a

50020 I believe the Adventist doctrines follow the Bible. It is a church full of loving Christian people. Sure, there are some that don't seem so loving. But on the whole they are wonderful people.

50026 I enjoy the Sabbath. It is how I was raised, and I believe in it.

50028 We have maintained our membership because it is easier than leaving. Also, the SDA church is the church with the closest "doctrines" to my beliefs.

50034 n/a

50037 Agree with the beliefs, and I'm naturally a more conservative person so it does appeal to me (lifestyle beliefs).

50040 My relationship with God; my belief that this church has the right doctrines and beliefs, the support and friendship.

50041 Though I am a member on the books, I do not refer to myself as an SDA. The church faith does not parallel my own. My profession of faith is "I'm a Christian with a

personal walk with God."

50043 I don't particularly agree with any organized religion. Everyone says the other people are wrong and we're right.

50050 n/a

50053 I believe in the SDA faith and have a personal relationship with Jesus.

50056 n/a

50058 Because I didn't want to look for another church, and no other church I liked worships on the Sabbath which is a big thing for me.

50061 I feel it is the closest thing to the truth.

50064 n/a

50072 n/a

50073 n/a

50074 Because I felt I needed to be active and learn more.

50078 n/a

50080 n/a

50085 n/a

50086 Believe that it is the right church.

50087 Believe in the doctrines and the Sabbath.

50089 I believe the Sabbath.

50094 I believe in the church, even with it's imperfections, and it is an important part of my life. I would feel like something was missing, and it helps anchor me to solid ground. The fellowship of those in the same belief. But I'm not going to an Adventist school anymore because none is teaching my profession.

50095 I believe that the Adventist religion is important to my progress through life.

50104 I'm still with the church, but I rarely attend.

50105 I agree with the doctrines and teachings mostly. I think it's pretty naive, self-serving, and conceited to think only an Adventist can go to heaven.

50106 -

50107 n/a

50108 1) Christ like-mindedness.

2) Training my children in Sabbath School.

50109 n/a

50116 Because It's the real message. People are friendly, good health message (vegetarian). It's fun. I will always be an SDA.

50123 n/a

50124 Understanding Christ Himself had to deal with Judas, yet he never turned him away.

51003 My children.

51007 n/a

51009 I believe the basic doctrines of the church are correct, i.e. Sabbath, health, Mrs.

White, etc. I do think the church has a tendency to overdo rules and regulations.
51016 n/a
51020 My belief in the church doctrine.
51021 I know it is the right place to be. But I think some people do the same things, and when we are "just there," we are being lukewarm.
51024 I believe that the church is on the right track and has a lot to offer in terms of principles and health, etc.
51026 Believed in the teachings.
51028 I've never doubted the validity of the Adventist truths. I got married to a non-Adventist, and I've had to search for answers as to why I believe what I do, and it has made my belief more real and stronger.
51040 I still think it is the most Biblical church. However, we are still legalistic. Let the youth/young adults have their say.
51046 I believe in our principles, and I believe above all things that one should remain part of the church (even if you have problems with members, etc.) because it is important to leave yourself open to receive the spirit--also important to fellowship.
51047 n/a
51048 n/a
51049 I see no need to withdraw my membership. I continue to believe in core principles of the church.
51051 n/a
51057 n/a
51058 I believe in the doctrine. The church seems to be a stronghold for me. It provides me with a great sense of security.
51061 I have always remained an Adventist because our church has always been helpful to me in my spiritual growth throughout the years.
51066 I know that what I believe is true. God has never failed me (only people do that).
51068 n/a
51069 Feel at home and believe in the teachings.
51070 n/a
51073 Church family, my family, guidance, and wanting to fellowship with people that have the same beliefs. We have a very liberal, accepting church.
51098 Encouragement from fellow believers in my faith. Inspiration and personal enrichment to my life.
51099 n/a
51102 Upbringing.
51112 I have always been an Adventist. Just haven't always gone to "church." I truly believe in Jesus Christ and the beliefs of the SDA church.
51119 n/a
51124 n/a

51131 I enjoyed socializing with others, meeting people with many things in common, and I have remained in an active relationship with God including going to church.

51137 -

51140 I feel it is a way of life and believe in its doctrines.

51142 Friends and family.

51155 Yes, I have gone to many different types of religion, but I feel and know that SDA is right for me. It is true and right because it gets me closer to God.

51175 I believe it is God's church, and I will never leave God. Prayer is what keeps my relationship with God strong. He is always guiding me and deciding in my life.

51187 I actually do think that the SDA church is following the Bible closer than other religions.

51191 Feels good to know the Lord and talk with Him.

51194 I believe the Adventist church is the true church. I believe all that I have learned and been taught, and I know that other churches contradict or don't agree with our doctrines.

51196 Family.

51203 Never look at others but only to the example that Christ has set.

51204 n/a

51206 n/a

51209 The church members and my belief in God.

51215 I believe the SDA church has the correct beliefs.

51217 This is the true church.

51222 Fellowship with God and with other Christians.

51223 I believe what the basic premises are, and the teachings about the healthful lifestyle are important to me.

51225 I believe it to be the true church of God.

51228 n/a

51231 n/a

51232 I remained an Adventist! Just chose not to worship in a very unhealthy, non-Christian environment.

51239 n/a

51240 n/a

51241 n/a

51244 I believe SDA's core beliefs and doctrines, but I feel these lose strength, power, and credibility when in practice; many SDA's can be not caring to others or accepting.

51248 The main reason why I remain an SDA is because of the Sabbath.

51253 I felt accepted and that it was where I should be and belong. Most of my friends and all of my family belong as well.

51255 The community I found among my classmates and friends in the church. Also, I am particularly drawn to a good sermon. ____ at ____ is right on target.

51257 Major reasons: The SDA community of believers is one with whom I, for whatever reason, share a set of common concerns about what it means to love and serve God and to live a good life.

51258 As I looked at other religions, I found that a lot are very similar to SDA's and that in my view still were closer to the SDA church than any other.

51259 n/a

51262 I believe in the basic beliefs of the church. But some of the practices just don't do it for me.

51266 Being able to be involved in church.

51267 Family lifestyle. Faith. Wanted to stay.

51273 Most similar to my beliefs.

51274 n/a

51280 I firmly believe in the Sabbath and the idea of whole- person care.

51281 n/a

51282 n/a

51283 n/a

51284 I believe most of what they believe.

51285 n/a

51287 Being an Adventist is what I believe in.

51289 I believe the doctrines, but I don't attend church regularly.

51291 No other option has appealed to me.

51293 Habit, social ties.

51294 I believe Saturday is Sabbath

51297 -

51298 Support, hope to see my Father soon, friends, family

51305 -

51307 I love my church--I agree for the most part with its doctrines/principles, etc. I enjoy the message, belief in the lifestyle, and so on.

51309 A lifestyle choice.

51318 n/a

51323 n/a

51325 I have no reason to switch religions or renounce my faith.

52001 I know that it is the true church.

52002 Beliefs

52004 I believe that this is the true religion.

52005 Don't want to attend any other church.

52006 I believe that it is the day for me to worship.

52008 n/a

52014 -

52016 Since I was raised Adventist, the church is familiar and comfortable to me!

52124 -

52126 The church's doctrines most closely fit and agree with my own beliefs and Biblical interpretations.

52134 I believe that the doctrine of the church is most correct out of the churches.

52141 I know the church is where I should be.

52147 n/a

52155 Mom and Dad had always taught me to focus on Jesus and my life would always have joy and happiness. God would help me raise my children.

52161 No other church has provided me such assurance for the last days as this one.

52162 I found out that God is real. I want a viable relationship with Him and the church. It teaches what I understand the Bible to say.

52167 -

52172 -

52176 The upbringing in the Adventist Church. Family beliefs. Personal belief that Saturday is the Sabbath.

52177 I haven't found or looked for a suitable replacement.

52179 -

52183 I do want to be baptized into the Adventist church again, and I want my children to attend the SDA church.

52184 It is a part of my identity and family. It is also part of my job.

52187 My main reason for going is my parents.

52188 It was the only religion that I know other than Catholicism or other Sunday-keeping churches.

52191 Just because I'm not actively going to church doesn't mean I haven't remained an Adventist. I have.

52198 I love the Lord and I believe in the Second Coming.

52199 I think a lot has to do with upbringing. I was born an SDA so to go against it's beliefs just doesn't feel right.

52210 n/a

52214 Good social atmosphere

52215 Personal convictions and desire to be with people who adhere or believe in the same thing.

52216 -

52219 Believed in most of its teachings and beliefs.

52229 Agreement with doctrines, the Sabbath, fellowship.

52233 I need God somehow, someday. This is the best way for me.

52234 I know Jesus is the only way, and He loves me so very much He died for me on the cross.

52235 n/a

52243 At first I attended because I didn't want to let my parents down and because I

wanted to see my friends. Now I stay in church because I believe the Adventist message and because I feel good about it.

52247 I have a personal commitment with Christ, and I don't believe that I should let one person or a group of people's attitudes dissuade me from my beliefs.

52251 Doctrines and beliefs of the church.

52252 -

52263 The Seventh-day Adventist Church always seemed like the true church.

52267 I need God in my life, I see God through my parents, and I know of their love for Him.

52268 -

52269 It's hard to break away because I believe in God. The way I've been raised, my parents, their love for the church. I'm struggling.

52277 Because I believe it's the true church.

52278 It's the real church--can't give it up. I grew up practically in the church. My parents, God, and myself.

52279 -

52281 I enjoy being in the presence of my God. I find peace and enjoy participating with all that goes on.

52299 -

52302 Knowing the truth and trying to live by it.

54004 n/a

54007 Family

54014 n/a

54015 I believe this is the true church. I believe the teachings of EGW. I also enjoy the fellowship of our churches.

54018 -

55001 Believe it is the true church with the truth about Jesus Christ, the plan of salvation, and the Second Coming.

55005 -

55007 n/a

55009 -

55014 n/a

56005 I feel it is the only church that believes and keeps the word of God.

56066 Being with God.

56022 My belief that it is the true church and that through it I can find my way to a better relationship with God.

56023 Although I have not always attended service regularly, I have always believed that the SDA church is the true church and that its doctrines are sound. I am not an active member.

56030 Friends and family

56034 -

56036 n/a

56044 -

56045 Jesus

56048 n/a

56053 -

56054 Because it means a lot to me. It's a way of life that makes sense.

56056 Fellowship, SDA world-view, education.

56058 -

56059 Without God in my life, I feel empty inside. He's always helped me and guided me.

56064 Despite how I might feel for brief periods of time, I can't get away from the fact that Jesus should be my #1 priority. Plus good parental influence.

56065 My family, friends, schools which I have attended.

56067 It is how I was raised to believe.

56069 Biblical truth is important to me, and I wasn't treated as poorly as many of my peers were.

56072 n/a

56079 Belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I have attended other denomination services, but it (their beliefs) just doesn't click.

56082 I believe that our church is the true church. I believe that all the rules and laws of the church are to be kept because of our love and relationship with God, and they make total sense to me.

56089 -

56090 I believe that the doctrines are true.

56091 My faith in God.

56104 I hold a position with one of the NAD conferences. I left a very lucrative job and moved to help out this conference in need. After five months and after I managed to get them into a profitable situation, they let me go.

56120 Strong Christian mother who taught me well.

57002 No matter what I do in life, I truly believe the SDA church is the right one.

57005 A strong up-bringing in SDA religion.

57006 I believe Jesus is my example, and He never turned His back on the Christian Church although He rejected some of the leaders.

57012 I believe there is no other church that has the true message.

57020 Believe our message, love the Lord, and Saturday worship.

57022 I believe they have the best interpretation of the Bible.

57024 n/a

57027 I never really left the church per se. I still pretty much claimed Adventism, although I didn't live it. But it always seemed to be the truth. The right religion.

57038 When you are spiritually fed on the Bible and Ellen White's writings, there is enough information to not leave.

57039 I truly believe that the Adventist Church is the true church. No other religion has offered me evidence that would cause me to doubt this.

57041 I believe the SDA is the remnant church.

57043 -

57046 Most all of the beliefs that the church teaches makes the most sense of any church.

57049 Our doctrine follows the Scripture most closely. More complete and connected with Christ. My family is in the SDA church.

57050 I've never dropped out because a few older people always made sure I was involved while I was younger. I got used to that and had fun so I stayed even when I thought of leaving. Also because my parents and grandparents are/were strong Christians as well as being SDA.

57051 I stayed involved because I had leadership and involvement opportunities available. Also my closest friends were and are interested in spiritual things and wanted to get involved. The whole focus of my friends was God and His promises.

57055 I strongly believe the doctrines.

57059 I truly believe that Adventism is the right way. The teachers and pastors I've known have answered a lot of questions other people raised that had me wondering.

57063 The doctrines and the truth behind them.

57068 The beliefs

57069 Friends and believe strongly that it is the right one.

57070 n/a

57071 I was raised in the church and believe in the doctrines.

58016 I believe 99% in the SDA teachings.

58017 I stayed in the church because it would not let me go.

58019 Know and understand truth but not active.

58022 I believe the Adventist Church is the true church and family.

58028 My firm belief in the church.

58029 -

59018 I know that this is the true church with the true message.

59020 n/a

59022 I never stopped being an Adventist. I just didn't go to church.

59026 Belief in God and the Adventist Church as His remnant church.

59027 Christ

59028 I feel its a true religion.

59033 n/a

59034 I believe in the church's doctrines as a whole.

59036 Solely because I believe in the church's teachings; however, many pastors don't

follow the procedures correctly.

59040 -

59042 To me, I have always been an Adventist even though I was disfellowshipped, and I have remained here because I believe in the Adventist doctrine. Also, I continue to learn each day.

59044 I was raised in the Adventist beliefs.

59065 Because I love the Lord, and I am trying to live a Christian lifestyle. Sometimes it gets hard, but I remain in constant prayer.

60023 n/a

60043 Because I know that this is the truth and where God wants me to be. If I walk away from the truth, I will be condemned to hell!

61012 I believe the Adventist church is the remnant church.

61013 n/a

61019 n/a

61022 I believe in the Bible, and my church teaches from the Bible and nothing else.

61032 Knowledge of the truth; there is no better alternative. The Muslims come close, but teach too much hatred.

61033 n/a

61040 Fear of being lost. Knowing that this is the right church.

61042 n/a

63002 I know that this is the true faith, and I want to renew my relationship with Christ and influence my family in this positive direction.

63004 n/a

63009 I have always remained an Adventist because I know we have the truth.

63015 I believe it is the true church, and nothing will ever keep me from what I believe in.

63026 I feel that the Adventist church is the true church, and I strongly agree with its teachings.

63038 n/a

64001 n/a

64002 The influence of my parents and deciding not to marry outside of Adventism. I married an Adventist, and we've been together for four years.

65004 n/a

65008 The people were the best, and the pastor here in _____ is a great person. He teaches in a way that young and old understand the Word of God. Now I believe and understand Him a lot better than I did a year or two ago, and I'm happy.

65020 n/a

66001 Raised an SDA--never "left." Just slacked off.

65021 n/a

66005 This is the true church. It follows the Bible in all its forms--both Old and New

Testaments.

66028 I can't say honestly that I always stayed with the church, but I never left Jesus, and my basic beliefs always stayed with me, even through the toughest times of my life.

66035 That was just where I was supposed to be. The church was where I was raised, and it didn't seem right to be anywhere else. I chose to stay in the church because I knew it was the right place to be. I could find God there better than other places. We are to place ourselves in an environment where we are not tempted to do wrong.

66039 Jesus revealed in the gospel of His sacrifice and His love for me. Jesus, the Truth (John 14), revealed in the Word of God to my heart by the Holy Spirit convincing me of the integrity of the message, mission, and purpose that He has given the SDA church.

66041 -

66052 n/a

66054 n/a

66056 n/a

66058 n/a

66060 I believe the SDA church holds to remnant doctrines, and I want to be a part of it.

66061 n/a

66062 n/a

66074 It's the sub-culture that I have always known (I'm 4th generation), and I have friends and family that provide support, and I believe in the doctrines.

66075 God, and God alone.

66078 n/a

66079 Habit.

66080 I stayed with the church because I believe what it teaches.

66085 I believe in the Bible.

66082 I believe in it and believe it is the true church.

66088 Because I know this is God's true church, and when he comes I want him to say "well done."

67002 -

67004 n/a

67007 n/a

Question 69: What are the most important things that the church provides for you personally?

03004 A family oriented environment.

03006 They provide nothing.

06007 Not sure.

03008 -

03014 My major reason is the "love of God" and His importance in my life!

03019 -

03021 -

03024 -

03025 An organization to support the efforts of educating young people with a central emphasis on Christ.

03032 The fellowship with other believers.

03033 Spiritual nourishment and Christian fellowship.

03040 Release, encouragement.

03044 God and the people.

03046 Sometimes just hearing what the Lord has to say to us personally. The right sermon or the right song.

04003 -

04007 At this point, nothing.

05002 A place to serve the Lord and the help that the members have for one another to help me keep strong.

05004 They are always there when you are in need, just like God.

05023 Right now, nothing.

05035 -

05051 Hope.

05052 Personal witness from members, encouragements from peers, and social outings and functions.

05054 Support, guidance, comfort.

05061 Stability.

05062 A family I can count on. A praying family.

05065 Sense that there is more than earth; peace and fellowship.

05073 Friendship.

05083 I feel that church is an important part of my spiritual life, and I feel that is one way to remain in connection with God.

05086 The church provides an escape to a safe haven from the hassle of life.

05110 -

05112 Renewed hope and faith in God. Good moral standards for the young people.

06001 Friendship and worship.

06002 -

06007 Provides social contacts and promotes spiritual growth.

07005 Caring, loving, and non-judgmental.

07012 -

07013 Constructive insights into the quality found in a well-led life.

07014 Provides security, hope, and acceptance.

09003 Doctrine and social support.

09011 Nothing that I can think of.

09015 Most of my friends are Adventists. I've attended Adventist schools. It has given me a mind set, which is both positive and negative in some respects.

09021 -

09023 They provide fear, unrest, mental abuse, and stress.

09028 -

09029 A place to get to know God better.

09036 Stimulating my feelings about my relationship with God and how this affects others. Feeling of belonging to something bigger than just me.

10006 Support; others who share a common goal and interest.

10010 -

10016 A Christian family to which to belong.

10017 -

10019 Growth. A place to rest in God's love. To forget about the long work week and just sit still and be with my family in Christ.

10022 Sometimes the pastor has some really good thoughts.

11001 Fellowship with other Christians with the same beliefs as mine. People with whom to share views.

11002 Communication with others of my faith.

11003 Fellowship with other people who believe as I do.

13006 Reminds me about Christ and all He does for me. (It's easy at times to let this slip your mind through the week.)

13019 The church provides me with a formal place to worship. I agree that it should be something more than that, but that's about it for now.

13027 There is nothing outside in the world for me. Also, I heard a pastor during a sermon say, "If young people are having such a hard time deciding matters and issues and being tempted even if they are in the church, imagine it would be like if they were outside the church."

13029 Security and stability. Help with my spiritual life. Being a family.

13041 Occasional good sermon.

13042 A faith in God. A hope for eternal life. Thankfulness for God's protection.

14003 The church does not provide anything for me. We are all sick people in this hospital called "church." The experience I receive and I see what others go through is what strengthens my faith in God.

17047 An opportunity to meet others with similar values and beliefs as mine. A place to receive encouragement and a spiritual blessing.

17048 Biblical doctrine.

17049 Bond with all SDA members on the globe.

17050 -

17059 Inspiration and encouragement. A base of support.

17063 Church provides me with a Christian foundation so that as an individual I may grow and develop my personality and lifestyle in the way God wants. I feel even though I am not a member of a church, I still am a kindhearted, strong-minded individual.

17065 A chance to fellowship with my family and friends.

17067 Spiritual self check. Encouragement to walk in the Light of God!

18001 -

18013 A peace of mind sometimes.

18037 A family where everyone shares the same morals, values, and beliefs.

18039 -

19002 A sound doctrine. The Bible is the basis for all truth. What else does one need? E.G.W. has many, many valid and helpful points and good advice. I read her writings, but too many people place her above the Bible. That is a potential problem. Even she says not to place her writings above the Bible.

19009 The church doesn't provide for me; God does. And if we keep our eyes on Him and not on the church congregation, He will see us through till the end.

19010 The truth about Jesus and His commandments. Christian fellowship.

19011 An extended family of like believers. Fellowship and renewal.

19018 Christian fellowship.

19019 The church does not provide me with anything. My hope comes from God.

19021 -

21001 Stability.

21003 The end of time is very near, and now is the time to change and become consecrated to God. Our lives need polishing.

21012 Its beautiful and true health message, simple living, intellectual spirituality, and kind people in our local church. Biblical church. Truth seekers.

21015 -

22006 Spiritual family.

22008 Some spiritual guidance, some social interaction with other Christians. Encouragement.

22009 Spiritual encouragement and friendship.

22010 A place and community to fellowship and train people to be the happiest Christians possible.

22016 Christian family, support, and learning.

22018 Adventist church at the present time nothing.

22019 -

22020 Friends.

22021 Fellowship with other believers who can and do pray with me and for me.

22022 An understanding of where this world came from and where it is going.

23011 Christian fellowship and accountability.

23012 -

23021 Friendship and support.

24003 Friends with same beliefs. People with insight into similar problems. Spiritual learning place.

24006 A "get-away" from the world.

24007 Friends; a place to go to learn about the Lord from a variety of people with different experiences.

24009 Fellowship and support.

24010 Spiritual guidance and social interaction.

24015 -

24021 A sense of community with fellow believers.

24026 Fellowship.

24028 Emotional support.

24029 A place to go that is quiet, and you don't have to worry about other things when you're there.

24030 -

24031 Nothing right now.

24032 -

24037 -

24038 Friendships, spiritual life, extra curricular activity.

24035 I haven't been attending on a regular basis in many years.

24041 -

24042 Fellowship and the opportunity to worship.

24068 Christian activities and friends.

26010 Focus. Reminder of what's important. Insight from others. Social support.

26019 Biblical proof for beliefs.

27006 -

27007 -

27008 Deeper knowledge of scriptures.

27012 -

27015 We have recently moved after finishing college and have not found a new church. But our little home church in _____ is so emotionally supportive. My husband and I were very tight in finances last year, and to top it off a February flood rendered us homeless for a short time. The added financial burden was way out of our pocket book. But without us even asking for help, our home church took up an offering and sent it to help us. The Lord opened the store houses of heaven. What the wonderful folks did for us was living Christianity. May the Lord forever bless them!

27016 -

27017 A sense of stability and a secure future. I know death is not the end, and that gives me hope for the future.

27018 -

28010 A better understanding of the Bible and God.

28029 It provides a spiritual revival weekly also gives me time to reflect on things that I could improve in my daily walk.

28042 It's something good in my life.

29002 -

29007 Encourages personal spiritual growth.

29008 A good question.

29009 Fellowship and spiritual food.

29011 Worship and social interaction with fellow believers.

29012 -

29016 -

29017 God.

29019 Friendship, cohesiveness, and a feeling of a common purpose and mission.

29020 Nothing right now.

29021 A place to worship God formally.

29025 Fellowship.

29026 Friendship.

29029 -

29030 Christian fellowship and a sense of worshipping God corporately.

29031 A home base. Opportunity for involvement. Spiritual friends. Reminder of religious importance to life.

29032 -

29033 -

29039 At this point I find that the church offers to me room to grow spiritually, not necessarily through a church service but with stimulating conversation, timely reading material, and a place to put into practice my desire to reach out to others and become involved with my mission.

29041 Women in touch. Excellent pastor.

29043 -

29044 A haven for my children. It's a place where they can learn about Jesus.

29045 An extended family.

29046 Nothing.

29049 -

29050 A sense of hope.

29051 Support in beliefs that are not accepted by the majority of the world.

29062 At this point in my life, I don't feel that the church itself offers me much at all. I treasure the few friends I have in the church, but I don't gain much by attending.

29063 -

29068 Reminder that there are things bigger than we are--there is a God, and

regardless of what we get distracted by in this world, He is always there.

29071 Faith and reassurance.

29074 Fellowship and spiritual education.

29075 Spiritual direction and outlet; a way to reach out. A learning and teaching atmosphere and a spiritual feast.

29077 -

29079 A pastor I know I can approach with my needs.

29082 A shelter from the world.

29085 When I go to church, I gain a better understanding of Jesus and His love for me.

29086 A place to worship on Sabbath.

29087 It provides some stability and comfort. If I ever were to need anything and my family wasn't available, I feel I could go to the church for help.

29088 Preservation for the Sabbath, doctrine, and friends.

29090 Spirituality and spiritual principles stimulator.

29091 A feeling of togetherness with other Christians.

29094 Spiritual blessing with common believers.

30001 Some members of the church are too judgmental.

30011 I plan to become more active again and hold an office. It gives me a sense of belonging. I enjoy being surrounded by people with the same goal; having an organized worship with others.

32005 Constant knowledge of the truth.

32014 Sense of community. A support group reaching for the same goal and information on how to obtain it.

33008 Friendship and a chance to participate in church offices and activities.

33010 None, no one cares.

33016 Social family; wonderful pastor/wife support.

33017 Godly behavior, fellowship, and learning experiences.

33020 A time and place to renew my relationship with God and a time to get away from the pressure of everyday life.

34001 Stability and routine.

34002 Peace.

34005 A place to meet where the discussion of faith and belief is the reason for belonging there.

34008 -

34014 -

34015 -

34017 Socialization. Net '96. Corporate worship.

34025 I don't know. I want friends, true friends that are healthy SDA's.

34026 Religious study. Insight of Jesus' life.

34030 Support from members. Helps me further my personal study through ideas

gained there. An overall reinforcement in my belief.

34036 Nothing personally.

34039 A place for my child to learn about God.

34040 The church provides a place to worship and communicate with fellow believers.

34046 Peace of mind and comfort of the Lord.

34051 A place for our small group to meet and talk freely of our relationships with the Lord.

34052 Opportunity to participate and to learn more about God.

34053 -

34054 Knowing there is a God who wants only the best for you and wants to show you a better way.

35006 The members of my church family are always there if I need them.

35009 A place to be close to God and fellowship with other believers.

35012 It helps me refocus each week on what really matters.

35014 -

35016 Friendships.

35019 Nothing. There was only one church where I actually felt God's presence, the _____ Church.

35022 Love and friendships. A feeling of being accepted.

35023 -

35025 Views of others, a place to learn of Jesus, a place where my children can learn of Jesus, and friends I can count on.

36002 -

36005 Peace.

36006 Socialize with other Christians.

36008 A place of worship.

36013 We have an excellent pastor now who has helped my family a great deal when we desperately needed it.

36014 A common denominator. Have almost always been near my home church. See everyone I grew up knowing.

36015 -

37005 Nothing at the moment.

37007 -

37008 Christ provides me with everything. The church only reaffirms how far it is from these ideals.

37013 Hope.

37014 Fellowship.

37019 -

37031 -

37040 Security; just knowing that someone will always be there no matter what

happens.

37043 Friendship and good spiritual association.

37045 Fellowship with friends and family.

37054 Friendship with people who believe like I do.

37056 A place to worship God and somewhere I can always find a friend.

37057 A place to worship and fellowship.

37060 When I go to church I can sit quietly and talk to my God. I feel I can meet Him there.

37061 Fellowship.

37062 A stable "center" for people and a weekly gathering that are consistent in my rapidly changing life.

37064 Nothing. My father shot that to hell.

37066 Nothing now.

39001 Network of friends for support. Opportunities and resources to reach out to others. Training and books on how to grow closer to God.

39004 Stability.

39005 A husband. I married an SDA pastor. Now the church is my life. The church doesn't give me what it thinks it should. I get that from God. Everybody should get it from God. If the church tries to do it all, why have God?

39006 -

39007 The caring of the members and the pastor. Being around people who really love God.

39009 Interaction with other Christians and provides support group.

39010 Fellowship and encouragement.

40002 -

40010 -

40013 It provides a group of people with a common belief system and a chance to come together and remember what's really important.

40014 Something to believe in--reassurance.

40015 I know that the church is there for me. You can always find a warm person in a church. It also makes me realize that God wants me to return.

40018 Hope and praise to God--helps me rely on Him more and realize His blessings when they occur.

41002 Responsibility.

42006 A place to fellowship, worship, and praise.

42007 A place to grow spiritually and be with other like-minded people.

42008 The fellowship of great friends and activities.

42016 Spiritual rejuvenation and association with church members.

42018 A place for social gathering and no spiritual growth.

42025 A church should provide for me a holy place where I can feel God's presence and

focus on my spirituality.

42013 Fellowship, rejuvenation, and a place to worship my Lord.

42031 A chance to hear and learn more about God and to develop relationships with other believers. It is also a place to get involved in service for God.

42033 -

42035 An attended family and an avenue for worship.

42037 Shipping (GC trips).

42038 Fellowship with people who love the God I do and a place to worship Him.

42039 Guidance, answers, something and someone to believe in.

42045 A place to fellowship with people who believe the closest to the way I do. A place to worship the way I believe. A place to get closer to God and learn more about Him.

42048 Helps keep my life goals in the right direction. Keeps me involved with other young adults that believe as I do.

42051 "But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus the Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

42053 -

42054 You put more stock in E.G.W. than the Bible. That's not right. It's like writing your own bible.

42061 -

42066 -

42068 A reminder of a focus on Christ.

42072 A place to minister and encourage others to grow spiritually. A place where God is molding and shaping me into His child.

42073 -

42076 Nothing; well, except a spiritual blessing once in a while.

42080 Chance to recharge. Social interaction.

42086 -

42097 Love, friendship, spiritual growth.

43005 Social: Other people to talk to, to keep my faith strong

Health: A day of rest, someone to turn to (God) to relieve my stress.

Group: A sense of belonging no matter where in the world I am, even among those I don't know.

43006 A family. Anywhere I go that has an SDA church, usually I feel welcomed and accepted into the church as a visitor.

43007 -

43008 It provides continual further study about the Bible and how we can draw closer to Jesus. It is a support network when I am struggling with issues. It is a meeting ground for spiritual Christian friends who believe like I do. It allows me to share my talents with others and they with me so we all receive a greater blessing.

43010 -
43019 Spiritual uplifting. Similar social crowd.
43021 Small group. Bible study.
43023 Morale. Hope.
43027 -
43030 -
43033 Not companionship. I've been excluded from almost everything in my new church. I think mostly it provides a place for me to do what I should do anywhere and everywhere but am too weak to do.
43035 A home base where people believe the way I do. A place to praise the Lord.
43037 Community.
43039 -
43044 A feeling of belonging and a place to be involved in activities as a youth leader and Sabbath school superintendent to teach others of God.
43045 A support group of people headed for the same place (heaven) and a relationship with Christ.
43048 Friendship with people who believe the same as I do.
43050 A social form of work for the development of morality.
43053 Social interaction with people that believe very similar to me and a place to go to learn about God.
43060 A shelter from the world to help refocus on Christ.
43064 Morals.
43066 Fellowship.
43068 Social contact with believers. My church is very uplifting spiritually in their services. The best thing is I fit in with them. I feel accepted.
43069 -
43071 Morals and values for my son.
43075 Reaffirmation of views.
43076 Nothing.
43082 -
43084 A family in Jesus. Friends. A place to worship and a base to work for Jesus.
43088 -
43089 Opportunity to relate to others who have lost their place in the church and have strayed. Some caring, Christian faculty.
43093 Frame of reference.
43094 Involvement with the youth group (Pathfinders). Children look up to me.
43098 Socializing; but not very interesting people.
43099 Fellowship; comfort in knowing I'm not alone.
43100 Friendship and fellowship.
44001 They show me love and support.

44005 Basic moral fiber.

44006 The church does nothing for me. But my friends are Adventists who think similar to me. They are my church.

44011 Fellowship and knowledge that challenges me to learn more and keep the yearning to learn more.

44020 -

44012 A place of learning for my children.

44013 -

44014 Occasionally, a sense of worship. Also occasionally a feeling of belonging. In studying the history of the church, I know where I come from.

44015 The truth of God.

44018 -

44019 A forum in which to be presented with thoughts and ideas about God. To some extent it's a social setting to mix with friends and meet people new to me.

44031 The establishment, enforcement, and encouragement of God's morals, healthful living, and friendly and supportive.

44040 An opportunity to worship with like believers.

44041 Happiness and love.

44047 Fellowship.

44048 A place to learn to be fed and increase my relationship with God. A place to fellowship and pray with fellow believers who have similar struggles and to support each other. A place for me to be involved and share with others. Work with a group to share God's love with unbelievers.

44052 I don't know. I feel it is my job to take care of my personal spirituality.

44056 Friends, recommitment.

44057 Stability.

44059 A moral standard to which we are responsible. A goal in life.

44060 Friends and fellowship. Sense of connection. Augmentation of spiritual life.

44064 Fellowship.

46002 Friends.

46003 Education.

46009 Relationship with the Lord; sharing my faith with others.

46018 -

47002 Nothing. It used to be a kind of safe house where I could go.

47003 It's constant. It's always there for me to go if I need it.

47004 Social environment of people with similar beliefs.

47006 The church provides a means to worship God.

47008 Every once in a while I hear a good sermon that I can relate to in my life.

47011 Faith. Stability. It gives me a reference point in this fast-paced, ever-changing world. Also, community--friends of like faith.

47015 Spiritual relationship and friends. A better way to raise my child.
47025 -
47026 The church provides security--a reinforcement of God's love--an atmosphere where I feel close and connected with God.
47029 Belonging; I can contribute my gift and by doing so add to the service and be appreciated by them.
47031 -
47039 Every once in a while the pastor preaches stimulating sermons.
47047 Fellowship and new insight on God and the Bible.
47048 A spiritual environment. Meet people who share same faith. Answers to my questions regarding Bible and life.
47051 A sermon.
47053 Nothing.
47054 Communing with God.
47055 Fellowship with those of common values. A place to worship on Saturday. Spiritual guidance through sermons.
47057 Spiritual support.
47058 A place to worship. An environment with others who believe similarly.
47060 Structure.
47063 -
47066 Provides me with reason for life. There must be a reason for everything.
47076 -
47085 A place to learn about God and His love, grow personally and spiritually, and fellowship with people like me.
47092 None.
47104 Nothing. It has become a social playground.
47114 -
47110 -
47121 Fellowship. Friendship. Support.
48006 Peers to talk and socialize with.
48008 -
48014 Tips on spiritual life. Messages in sermons that usually affect my life.
48022 Spiritual as well as emotional needs. Brings me closer to God.
48028 The church encourages me to maintain my relationship with God. I also find that fellowship with other members inspires me to keep my faith strong.
48029 Spiritual awareness and growth.
48040 -
48042 Family membership in a general, religious way. We all come together to worship and serve.
48043 Support, fellowship, and education.

49002 Experience and an opportunity to hear new things which present Biblical truths in an enlightening way.

49006 -

49007 It makes me think about my life and what I want for the future.

49011 -

49014 Friends.

50001 Fellowship.

50004 I don't attend because it doesn't help me personally with my relationship with God.

50005 A stable Christian environment where I can learn more and more. It is also a place of rest and comfort through some of the sorrow and pain.

50007 A closer feeling with the Lord.

50008 None at this time, but in the past a place to visit and be close to God.

50020 A place to worship God. Christian friendship. Hope for better future in heaven.

50026 Support (for my job and in my life). A chance to get together religiously and socially.

50028 My husband's paycheck. Nothing except that it helps me think and decide what I don't believe.

50034 I think it makes me feel whole. Most everyone is friendly, and it's nice to socialize with them. But I don't like having to do it all the time.

50037 A meeting place to fellowship with others. A sense of security.

50040 Support for my spiritual growth and companionship.

50041 The church provides nothing for me except potlucks.

50043 Nothing.

50050 -

50053 Community of believers--social activities. It makes the Sabbath special.

Sometimes it doesn't feel like Sabbath if I don't attend church.

50056 -

50058 A wonderful pastor who always has a good sermon.

50061 Community.

50064 -

50072 A focus in life. Friends. Help in parenting.

50073 -

50074 The feeling that God has given me a purpose in life. That I can help others be better people by just being a good example. Showing them Jesus through me is my goal.

50078 It used to provide fellowship and helped me stay closer to God.

50080 -

50085 -

50086 Inspiration. Help stay in focus.

50087 Believe in the doctrines and the Sabbath.

50089 My friends go to Sabbath School, and we encourage each other spiritually.

50094 Interaction with others who believe as I do. I've just finished my first year of medical school in a non-Adventist environment, and it has brought into light how helpful it is to interact with people of the same faith.

50095 A purpose.

50104 -

50105 -

50106 -

50107 -

50108 Likemindedness--Christ-likemindedness. Training my children in Sabbath School.

50109 Belief that someone more powerful is in control of my destiny.

50116 Spiritual, social, moral, intellectual.

50123 Comfort. Information on the truth.

50124 Fellowship, Bible study, friends, and the hope of Christ's second coming.

51003 I'm still looking. I feel good.

51007 Support from other members.

51009 The church provided my private SDA school education and in turn lifelong friends and a feeling of belonging to something.

51016 A sense of peace and faith that if you believe in God, everything will be fine.

51020 A sense of belonging to a group. People to associate with that have mostly the same ideas about religion.

51021 Social, Bible study, learning more about Christ. Chance to use talents such as musical and working with kids.

51024 A foundation structure. A culture.

51026 Word of God.

51028 A very good Sabbath school class for my niece and nephew.

51040 A chance to meet with fellow believers. I do get blessed. It's just that my pastor is boring and "high on himself." I see lots of love.

51046 A fulfillment spirit by a good sermon, good music, and spiritual friends.

51047 A network of people, good Christian education, good friends from high school and college.

51048 Fellowship.

51049 Culture.

51051 -

51057 -

51058 As I said before, the church provides me with security, and it gives me a great deal of strength.

51061 Comfort, a sense of belonging, and a wonderful worship experience at my

current church.

51066 A place where I can grow spiritually and also help others grow.

51068 At present, nothing.

51069 Fellowship with others.

51070 -

51073 Stability, direction, friendship, comfort. A chance to learn and be spiritually recharged for the week.

51098 Learning faithfulness and truthfulness.

51099 -

51102 Fellowship and friendship.

51112 Commune with other Christians.

51119 A loving family in Christ. Positive role models.

51124 The church doesn't really provide me with anything right now, but when I was growing up, the church gave me a sense of family, security, and love for God.

51131 Information about God, how to be a Christian, socialization with people my age with similar interests and background.

51137 -

51140 A sense of family and a helping hand with my relationship with Christ.

51142 Good social environment.

51155 A place I can go regardless of my present life. A place to retouch the real me or my roots. A place I can go refresh my life and get a blessing.

51175 Perhaps what my local church provides is friendships and an opportunity to share with the children what I know about Jesus.

51187 Who hold the same beliefs.

51191 A place to feel God's presence.

51194 It provides an opportunity for me to come together with others who believe like I do. It continues to reaffirm my faith.

51196 Security.

51203 Friendship and spiritual nourishment and comfort.

51204 -

51206 -

51209 The association to be with other people who believe the same things I do.

51215 Focus on God.

51217 A sense of who I am, why I am here, and where I am going.

51222 Spiritual growth.

51223 Support and answers.

51225 Friendships.

51228 -

51231 A direction in which I don't want to go. Although my current life is less than satisfying, at least I feel I have free will.

51232 Consistent praise of Christ. Word of God preached.

51239 Fellowship. An extended family. An enjoyable way to worship God on a regular basis.

51240 It should provide a warm, caring atmosphere where people care what happens to a member. I got that.

51241 Not a member, but at the time I was member, church was a place for socialization.

51244 The support of a caring, understanding God with whom I can have a very personal relationship.

51248 Support from other church members.

51253 A place to worship with others who hold common beliefs. A place to which to look forward.

51255 A place to maintain relationships with other Adventists.

51257 The SDA church provides a context through which I can connect with diverse groups of people who share, with me, common concerns and who help nurture my religious life.

51258 A way to listen to the Word of God and friendly people.

51259 The church doesn't provide me with anything now.

51262 At this point in my life, the church doesn't give much to me. I don't attend on a regular basis.

51266 Being able to be involved in church.

51267 It is a time to worship with family and friends. I enjoy the music and hearing the sermon (others' point of view).

51273 Sense of community.

51274 Fellowship with believers. Strength of faith. Outreach.

51280 Christians' fellowship and reorientation to heavenly values.

51281 A place to bring my troubles and burdens before God and to let Him take them. A place to reiterate my spirit.

51282 Maybe some health issues.

51283 A basis for beginning outreach programs. A platform from which to build a personal relationship with Christ. And a place of support.

51284 A sense of belonging.

51285 Nothing.

51287 New insights into the Bible.

51289 -

51291 Family and trustworthy people wherever I go.

51293 Friendships. Interaction.

51294 Sense that others believe in Christ's existence. Often I've felt comfort that I can seek advice from pastors or other members (few).

51297 -

51298 Support, hope, fellowship, friendships, lessons for daily life.

51305 -

51307 Not the church, but Adventism as a religion provides me with a strong foundation in all I do in life. It is a center of focus; provides strong ground always.

51309 -

51318 Gathering of people who are real and not hypocrites. People who are caring, sharing, kind, and loving.

51323 Peace of mind.

51325 A place to interact socially with old friends.

52001 That they are always there for me.

52002 Spiritual growth.

52004 -

52005 Spiritual growth.

52006 Rest from my weekly labor.

52008 -

52014 Structure, a weekly ritual.

52016 Other Christians to be with.

52124 Nothing, really.

52126 Connection with God and people with same belief.

52134 Fellowship is probably the most important aspect of the church experience. Education is probably the second most important aspect of my church encounter.

52141 A love relationship with God. Social interaction with people that have similar values.

52147 Nothing. The influence that proves strongest is that from my parent's commitment to God and SDA doctrine.

52155 Comfort, love, reassurance.

52161 Solace during times of spiritual turmoil; friendship with individuals who are going through the same.

52162 Fellowship with persons of like mind.

52167 Inspiring sermons, opportunity to discuss Sabbath School study, and theological debate.

52172 The church does not provide anything for me.

52176 Spiritual conviction. Fellowship with Christian people.

52177 Fodder for wicked humor.

52179 -

52183 Now I know that they carry the true gospel.

52184 Some support.

52187 A time and place to regularly see my friends from the church.

52188 Financial support at times when needed or available.

52191 Nothing right now. Before, it was somewhere I could smile, be happy, and feel

safe.

52198 In provides fellowship.

52199 It's nice to get together with people who believe similarly; who are there to be supportive.

52210 -

52214 Somewhere to explore religious curiosity.

52215 Opportunities to get closer to God and opportunities for witnessing.

52216 Comfort; memories of childhood.

52219 Time to reflect about where my life is.

52229 Music concert, a place to worship God with other believers, a peace.

52233 Acceptance.

52234 It should provide support, Christian friendship, and "feeling of belonging."

52235 -

52243 Spiritual uplifting, hope, friends, and God.

52247 Fellowship and family.

52251 The truth about Jesus, the Sabbath, and Satan.

52252 An output to express how God blesses my life with good and healthy fellowship.

It is wonderful to be among friends who love Jesus. I am fortunate; I finally found a youth group that is strong and feels like I do. We don't have to give up being us to belong in it. We sing our songs and have fun even though we are adults.

52263 In the past, it provided me with a church family and sense of unity with God.

52267 Friends (that are strong).

52268 -

52269 Friends.

52277 Strength to keep going.

52278 Is not so much that the church provides but the idea that Jesus is present, and I go to hear about him.

52279 -

52281 People that care about us for who we are and not who they want us to be.

Pathfinders. My mom and people that care.

52299 -

52302 Some security for me and a lot of security for my son.

54004 -

54007 Social gathering. Reaffirmation of belief system. Practice religious ritual.

54014 -

54015 Fellowship.

54018 -

55001 Spiritual guidance and motivation. Place to come apart and worship and praise God. Fellowship with other believers.

55005 Faith, peace, and rest from day to day stress.

55007 Nothing.

55009 Personal growth.

55014 -

56005 Love and help when in need.

56006 Fellowship on Sabbath and potluck

56022 -

56023 Witness that my faith and belief are not in vain.

56030 A chance to grow together with other members.

56034 Friendships that help me be a better Christian.

56036 Sense of belonging when I was active.

56044 A sense of belonging, sharing, and wholesome environment. Many people who care.

56045 Sense of belonging, direction, and truth.

56048 -

56053 -

56054 Moral support; comfortable place to worship and encourage me to remain true to my Savior!

56056 Spiritual fellowship, growth, and identity.

56058 -

56059 Makes me feel closer to God. Teaches me more about God and the Bible.

56064 Connection with fellow believers.

56065 Spiritual growth, friends, and a positive social life.

56067 Worshipping the Lord with others. Singing and praising His name! Our pastor is enthusiastic!

56069 Community, consistency, and communication with God.

56072 -

56079 Prayer and peace from the rest of my hectic schedule.

56082 The church provides a sense of family. I belong there. A formal way to worship God with other Christians.

56089 Knowledge of God.

56090 Not very much.

56091 God is the only one that provides everything for me and my family.

56104 Church is here to provide fellowship for me; a place to go and worship with my peers. However, I've lived all over the USA in small towns and major metro cities, and I haven't found a church that meets my needs and in some cases didn't even want to try.

56120 A sense of peace, love, and acceptance.

57002 Feeling of spiritual fellowship.

57005 Support and spiritual strength.

57006 Spiritual enrichment and growth, fellowship, and help me keep focused on the truth instead of worldly values.

57012 I believe there is no other church that has the true message.

57020 Friends and encouragement.

57022 Somewhere to go to be around and worship with other SDAs.

57024 Fellowship, spiritual guidance, and morals.

57027 Social support and fellowship. Spiritual nourishment and nurturing. Opportunity to serve and minister.

57038 Spiritual food and friendship.

57039 It provides me with a sense of community with others who have the same beliefs as I do. After attending a large non-Adventist university, this feeling of community is very comforting.

57041 A weekly recharge that helps me stay focused on God.

57043 A basis of moral standards.

57046 -

57049 Scriptural basis of faith and support. Wonderful Christian education.

57050 An environment to minister to others, especially kids. Friendship and sense of belonging and a source of encouragement in my own spiritual journey.

57051 -

57055 I strongly believe in the doctrines.

57059 A healthy "family" atmosphere that really boosts my spirit and makes me feel closer to God.

57063 Truth and fellowship.

57068 Fellowship.

57069 Support.

57070 I don't find it provides anything so far. That's why I don't go but once every blue moon.

57071 A place to feel comfortable with my religion.

58016 I think it should provide fellowship with other believers and friendship and support. But it doesn't unless we fit their "ideas."

58017 The church lets me praise God in my own way. It gives me an avenue of communication to my God and my fellow church members.

58019 -

58022 Fellowship with other Christians.

58028 The comfort of knowing there's always someone available to talk to.

58029 Nice people, smiles, and good intentions.

59018 Spiritual uplifting and other Adventist friends.

59020 Nothing.

59022 All of my friends are Adventists, and we all try to keep each other together. They help me a lot.

59026 A sense of meaning and purpose.

59027 Christian environment and truth.

59028 I feel it's a true religion.
59033 -
59034 Christian fellowship with others who have similar morals and beliefs. It is also a source of encouragement.
59036 A place for encouragement and support by people who believe as I do.
59040 -
59042 Personal strength and togetherness; spiritual growth.
59044 Mental peace.
59065 Spiritual growth.
60023 Nothing.
60043 The church is a place to fellowship and restore my strength when I have had a hard day or week that has drained me.
61012 Fellowship.
61013 -
61019 Security; stability.
61022 The knowledge of the Bible.
61032 Affiliation with like-minded believers.
61033 It's a place to renew, refresh, and reiterate my relationship with God.
61040 Hope for salvation; brings me back to reality of what is to come and what I need to do to be ready.
61042 Teaching of the Bible.
63002 A little peace when my world is so busy and crazy.
63004 Group support and social interaction.
63009 A place to go on Saturday mornings. I, however, have started a program for the youth on Friday nights and have a regular attendance of about 100.
63015 A sense of belonging and a close relationship with God.
63026 Right now I'm attending a church that doesn't really meet my needs. I don't feel being part of the congregation, but I continue to attend because I don't want to get out of the habit of attending church weekly.
63038 -
64001 -
64002 A place to meet and worship with like believers.
65004 -
65008 Security, peace of mind, guidance, fulfillment of the Holy Spirit, and getting to know the Lord even better and a closer relationship with Him.
65020 -
66001 Religious guidance.
65021 Sets goals and standards for my life.
66005 Encouragement and fellowship with others of like faith.
66028 When I lose myself in the hymns and sermon, there is nothing else like it. I love

the wonderful feeling of peace in the Lord.

66035 Church family.

66039 Interaction and communion with the members of the body of Christ. A sense of corporate involvement and corporate responsibility. A place where I can receive and give encouragement, instruction, and correction (exhortation).

66041 -

66052 -

66054 What did not happen was personal support and love during the divorce that happened to me also. The church needs a team to work with people going through divorce and seek people out--be friends, etc.

66056 -

66058 -

66060 A time to get into a social environment, other than school, with other Christians.

66061 Faith, emotional support when needed, spirituality.

66062 -

66074 A support group; biblical guidance.

66075 Spiritually and personally, I get fellowship, insight, ideas, praise, and encouragement.

66078 -

66079 Fellowship.

66080 -

66085 Faith in God.

66082 Spiritual benefit; friendships from other members who believe the same as I.

66088 Seeing other people worshipping God makes me feel good, and in my church almost all the members are people I grew up with since I was a little child so I like to see them every week.

67002 -

67004 -

67007 Fellowship, encouragement, and a sense of belonging.

Question 70: What do you find most disturbing about the church?

03004 Not enough diversity; not as supportive and too busy to care.

03006 How the church feels it has the authority to cast judgment and disfellowship members.

03007 The people.

03008 -

03014 Too much politics, and we went too far on this women ordination. Conflicts between members! We're missing the point of church, not to argue who's preaching but

to get the "message"!

03019 Lack of love. Rules.

03021 The rate at which the youth are leaving. The church isn't even beginning to reach us.

03024 I cannot say the problems are with "the church." I can only speak for my church. I haven't felt comfortable there since I was a child. I watched people being turned away for dressing wrong, associating with the wrong people, doing things at low points in their lives that they have since stopped doing. It seems that right when they needed someone the most, the church said, "Okay, time's up. We've given you a chance and you've let us down. You're out of here." I honestly heard an elder say to someone in the foyer, "She is wearing earrings and her dress is too short." This was about a visitor! I never once heard anyone say or imply that people were welcome regardless of who they were or what they were dressed like. Is this what our church has come to? I wish someone out there could reassure me that the church isn't about the surface of a person, and that there are indeed congregations out there that are warm and caring and willing to agree that they should work on a person from the inside out. Please, whoever reads thus, whatever you do in your life, treat people with respect. SDA may have the truth, but remember to use it lovingly. I think our job should be to show how to let God into your life. Let Him fix the inside, and let the rest take care of itself. I was brought up believing that we are better than other people, and that's not right. I want my children to go to church and to go to Sabbath School, but I think I would rather them have a healthy relationship with the Lord than have a good attendance record at the church.

03025 An organization to support the efforts of educating young people with a central emphasis on Christ.

03032 The politics of the church, conference, union, etc.

03033 The hypocrisy of pastors and members alike.

03040 The mind-set of some adults and young people. The lack of wholesome social outlets and activities.

03044 Nothing.

03046 It isn't perfect, not until the Lord separates wheat from tares. So, I've learned to put into perspective the fact that the devil is hampering about. What disturbs me the most would be the politics that occurs among leaders.

04003 -

04007 It's intolerance of differences.

05002 Nothing.

05004 When members act like they love the Lord when in reality, they don't.

05023 Cliquish. It was hard for my former spouse and I to find acceptance and assistance when we needed it because we felt like "outsiders."

05035 We baptize only for membership.

05051 That churches should not be divided by ethnic origin.

05052 Hypocrites--finger pointing.

05054 The fact that we are so intolerant. Yes, we have the truth, but we are so quick to find faults of others instead of being loving.

05061 The corruption with finances and the people who insisted on gossiping.

05062 Hypocrisy and lukewarmness.

05065 Strict rules that must be followed.

05073 Hypocrites, gossips, ungodly-like behavior.

05083 How people react to others and try to portray themselves as someone they are not.

05086 The politics. I have to remind myself that although we are Christians, we are also humans.

05110 -

05112 The church still is judgmental and quick to demean some members.

06001 The bickering and desertion. I wish the people could look more to Jesus and follow His example.

06002 Judgmental nature, legalism, lack of tolerance for other religions and lifestyle, and isolation from society.

06007 Very little straight truth is being taught or lived. Pastors are preaching comfortable sermons. Members are living comfortably and not taking stands for the right or better ways of life.

07005 Some people think they are better Adventists than others.

07012 Gossips and cliques. I don't feel included or being talked to.

07013 The level of control which the church tries to wield over an individual's life. God, if there is a God, and not the church, is the only one who can command and coerce me.

07014 Its stand on movies, make-up, jewelry, and mostly interdenominational (religion) messages.

09003 The politics--for crying out loud, we're supposed to all be on the same side!

09011 All the questions I have that no one answers for me.

09015 That it is not more active and alive. Also that our church organizational structure is too heavy, and we get caught up in menial matters.

09021 Dogma versus thought.

09023 SDA's are the only ones to be saved. 144,000? Relax. Be more open-minded. The Bible could even be a novel!! What if 100 years from now, all that was left to archaeologists was the book of Mormon? Everyone would blindly believe. Also the rules about dancing, movies, being a "heathen." Blind faith that the Bible isn't just an ancient "novel." The appearance of being "brainwashed."

09028 Inflexibility.

09029 The cold feeling when you walk in the door.

09036 Backward thinking. We let our decisions be influenced by money--the all-time evil. We are so afraid of losing the tithe and dollars because some might be offended.

Do you think God really needs their money?

10006 I find it most disturbing that it seems as though there has been too much compromising lately instead of standing for what God has asked us to stand for.

10010 The unfriendly members.

10016 Lack of good administration at local levels (conference officials, etc.)

10017 If the membership is too large, there will be too much gossip, and the quiet people and minority will be left out. Also, too much assumption on first impression.

10019 Nothing!! Some people may have their own far out ideas, but the doctrines, EGW, Sabbath, and the church are gifts from God.

10022 It seems the impact of Christ should affect us much more profoundly than it does.

11001 The church members, not the church, are very legalistic. We condemn others for what they wear, and we don't have the right to do that.

11002 The critical doomsayers--they put limits on God's love. They give you the feeling that no matter what, you're not good enough to be with Christ.

11003 Lack of warmth. Lack of community involvement.

13006 The older generation's adamant reluctance to change. Certain groups being hypocritical and non-supportive.

13019 What I don't like is the preoccupation with money, finances, and the leaders putting extreme pressure on the members to contribute more money when times are tough for everyone. It burns me because I know that the GC has so much money they don't know what to do with it, and there we are with the burden of providing for the church.

13027 Church members' hypocritical attitude about matters and other church members. SDA is just a label--a lot rarely live up to that label.

13029 Gossip. Not realizing the effects of the world on the youth and young adults of the church.

13041 Lack of courage to go beyond the traditional way of always doing its service.

13042 The decreasing numbers of white people in church.

14003 The members not being transformed according to God's will and thinking that they are saints.

17047 Hypocrisy. Lack of dedication to young people. A majority of the churches' resources should go for the young people from the academy and college.

17048 It's Republican ideas.

17049 There are members in the church who are extremely legalistic. They turn people off from God. Their emphasis is on the SDA church and not on Jesus Christ.

17050 My church, specifically, has recently suffered from a riff over the divorce issue. Ever since the issue came up, the church has been divided.

17059 The church doesn't deal directly with the issues of today. It may not necessarily concentrate on where we are in time and the events of the last days. We are losing our young people because we ignore them. We do not speak to them in the language of

today.

17063 When I was a member, I could not understand why the elderly did not want youth to be too involved with service. Some youth did not feel like they belonged. The elderly did not like changes and often criticized each other's faith.

17065 Lack of true love and concern for those not belonging to the church or who have left the church.

17067 Cliques; separation attitude! The lack of true love and acceptance of everyone.

18001 My experience growing up. The church focused too much attention on telling kids what not to do rather than supporting their real world accomplishments (in school etc.). The church should not focus on isolating its members from the rest of the population.

18013 The hypocrites.

18037 How only certain rules apply to certain people. Also often times as Adventist we tend to weigh sins; a lie is just as great as drinking.

18039 The way some members turn their noses down at backsliders.

19002 I think the true goal needs to be polished. It's easy to lose sight of our mission with all the political stuff and petty differences. I have the problem too. It's something we all need to work on.

19009 The church has let its standards down--all the ones you listed (#20-#29). The devil knows that if he can get us to bend these rules, that we will break the rest.

19010 Judgment of others.

19011 Not enough personal evangelism. The members are dead in the pews. We need to wake up.

19018 Non-consistency.

19019 The most gossiping crowd I've ever met. Why can't people mind their own business?

19021 Losing values within the church. Dropping moral values and principles so the world "will come to our church."

21001 Hypocritical people.

21003 I see many changes in the way some of the members think and behave. I also see many people feel comfortable and without any concerns. This is disturbing because it's too close to the end.

21012 The concern for new SDA converts rather than focusing on Christ and Christian converts. Too much emphasis of EGW and not enough on the Gospel!

21015 The looking down on the youth. Judging them for what they look like or what they wear. Yet most of the people who spread the gossip have just as many things wrong with them. I don't think the majority of Adventists know what being a true Christian is anymore. They are too worried about appearances.

22006 Not enough youth. A lot of our youth are gone.

22008 -

22009 People leaving, people being mean, putting tradition over Christianity.

22010 The people who look for problems rather than doing God's work. Or those who are too busy figuring out the theology of something and never find Jesus. Theology comes as a result of Jesus and the cross.

22016 The way some people get alienated for being "sinners." The church is for sinners.

22018 They don't try to make young adult Christians feel that they belong to the church, and they look at a young mother with two kids absurdly.

22019 People seem to love to gossip and talk about people's shortcomings but can't seem to see their own, and yet they don't help the people they are gossiping about.

22020 People's guilt for being people.

22021 One of the biggest burdens I have is the amount of "entertainment" in the church especially in the worship service. Who are we kidding? No amount of entertainment will change the heart. Only the Holy Spirit can do that. Why not worship God and ask for the most precious gift of His Spirit?

22022 A lack of interest in bringing spiritual matters down to a personal level.

23011 Political positioning. Hypocrisy. Apathy in NAD. "Holier-than-thou" attitudes. Poor financial management of our schools and hospitals. Seminary professors who don't teach Adventist doctrine but instead instill doubt about our doctrinal positions.

23012 Lack of importance. No funding for the youth.

23021 Lack of people my age.

24003 I work at the General Conference. I see some power-hungry people. There is too much power and control in the conference and not enough in the local church to pick appropriate pastors for their needs.

24006 Racial tension.

24007 The older members don't seem to accept younger generations because there is a lack of understanding. Also there are subjects that seem to be avoided such as demon possession or harassment.

24009 Politics, hypocrisy, hospital system (serving meat--are they operated and managed by SDAs or others?).

24010 Too much emphasis on dos and don'ts and not enough on Christ and salvation.

24015 When I was attending, mainly Adventist schools, I noticed people in church tend to look down on those who are not Adventists.

24021 Resistance to change.

24026 The sleeping members. Need outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

24028 Lack of communication between members.

24029 They don't seem to care about people when the church is too big.

24030 -

24031 Materialism, aloofness towards those who don't behave like them. Inconsistency with the life of Jesus--simplicity!

24032 -

24037 -

24038 Not willing to change musical views and too opinionated on beliefs such as jewelry, dress, and music in church services.

24035 Some of the churches need a spiritual makeover or awakening. They need to show the other members and visitors that they really care about one another as individuals and as a family.

24041 Just as in real life, it is all about politics (who you know) and all the backstabbing and gossiping. If you can't say something to someone, don't say it behind his/her back.

24042 The seemingly slower growth of own church and the mistaken view that we are a cult.

24068 The differences and arguing among everyone.

26010 The acceptance of doctrines without knowing why.

26019 Most young adults my age aren't very active. At least in certain regions of the USA. Also it seems SDA is more careless of lifestyle change than it was in previous years, and people just attend church and that's all for the week. Campmeetings and prayer meetings seem fewer and fewer.

27006 -

27007 The church seems concerned (seven years ago) with trivials and is not concerned about teaching love. The ring issue along with other slight doctrines not only discourages but tears apart churches. Love of Jesus should be the goal, and church doctrine should be secondary.

27008 Some people.

27012 Its rigid standards which tend to obscure the real motives of Jesus.

27015 Politics. Greed in leaders. Loss of the vision of what we're really here for--to love people because Jesus first loved us and to show them a better way of life.

27016 How the members are two-faced and the biggest gossipers known on this planet.

27017 Judgmental, hypocrisy, fake emotions.

27018 -

28010 -

28029 The fact that our youth are so distant and disrespectful. Also ignorance of the Word of God and the sanctity of the Sabbath.

28042 Hypocrisy.

29002 -

29007 Inconsistency.

29008 My own attitude towards it. Life-long negative "inclining" along the way, etc.

29009 -

29011 Lack of active ministry and involvement in that of the youth.

29012 That drugs, dancing, and the entire health message have become moral issues rather than health issues.

29016 The non-accepting attitude for those who are not "perfect."

29017 Hypocrisy among its members! They taught us one way and in so many cases did not abide by their own teachings.

29019 A "holier-than-thou" attitude towards new members in the church, especially those that are less fortunate. It's cold, especially at _____ Church. I always go to the international congregation.

29020 They are more concerned about outward appearance and judging than what's in the heart.

29021 People who are liberal can't accept conservatives and vice versa. We all love and worship God. We should accept that.

29025 Lack of dedication of its members--not wanting to be involved.

29026 The hypocrisy. The idea that we can chastise people for smoking, drinking, sex, or anything else but conveniently forget that overeating, gossiping, and trying to judge others are equally sinful.

29029 People judging what others do and how they live their lives. They generally are the ones in need of the most help.

29030 Poor, blind, and naked liberals.

29031 Right versus left and lack of tolerance. "Peter Principle" exhibited in leadership. Apprehensive about similarities between a church and a cult.

29032 -

29033 How judgmental Adventists really are.

29039 My current reference is the small church I attend: 1) Older members unwilling to change. 2) Older members unwilling to be involved: "I'm retired." 3) Dislike and hate among members. 4) Mental illness played out in the church with no boundaries. 5) Non-supportive pastor. 6) Our hierarchy seems contaminated with power-seekers. 7) SDA schools seem more concerned with rules than academics.

29041 Stuck in traditional values that haven't a biblical basis.

29043 The people. I dislike what feels to me like snobbishness. I don't want to teach my young ones to look down on those who are different. If my mate came to church wearing his black leather jacket, rode a motorcycle, and sat in the front row, 90% of the congregation would be shocked, and at least half of them might begin plotting to win over the "heathen" man. Much Adventism seems to be rules, rules, rules. "If it is fun, then it must be BAD!" Let us not snuff our joy wherever we go. Being a Christian should not be depressing. The God I know is not like that at all.

29044 The separation of the older adults and the young adults.

29045 The number of hypocrites attending. People who go for the status.

29046 The thing I find most disturbing is that independent thought is discouraged. You receive only "programmed responses" to your questions and are never encouraged to seek out the answers yourself. One day someone asks you "Why do you believe . . ." and you say, "Because that's what I've been told." And you don't have any answer. At

that point you have to question it, and you may not like the answer you get. Also, how can you, in one breath, preach the love and understanding of Jesus and tell how He accepts any and everyone but on the other hand recommend someone to be disfellowshipped from the church.

29049 Belief in the time of trouble and second coming. Preoccupied with trivial matters (i.e. dancing, rock music, sex).

29050 It's focus on things like rock music and jewelry instead of God's love.

29051 The refusal by GC leaders to re-examine doctrines that they know to be false, such as the "cleaning of the sanctuary" and 1844. Also the glorification of EGW (she is a God-fearing woman, not a prophetess).

29062 It has been my experience that the Adventist church in general is very cold, very judgmental, and a very proud church. It troubles me deeply and makes me fear for the future of our church that our members are so quick to judge and so slow to accept those who come in search of a Savior but find critics instead.

29063 -

29068 "Active" Christians without enough love to overlook other Christians' faults or help someone in pain.

29071 Its unfriendliness.

29074 -

29075 Our apparent lack of interest in saving souls.

29077 -

29079 The apparent inability to create a unified congregational environment that stresses non-judgmental acceptance of individuals regardless of their current beliefs or actions.

29082 Phrases that create an artificial religion of rules that have transcended God's plan.

29085 I don't feel like we need a GC to tell us what to believe. All we need to do is to obey Jesus' commands and to have the faith of Jesus. The disciples didn't have a GC.

29086 Its lack of responsibility and its wishy-washiness.

29087 It's always pointing out what we shouldn't do. Such a big deal is made out of trivial things. Many people are not willing to accept others who are not or don't try to be perfect.

29088 Isolation among themselves. Shut off non-SDAs.

29090 Politics. Also the church should use the publishers to complete the work, not as money makers!!!

29091 Constant bickering about different committees and who to elect for what office and why that person isn't qualified for a certain position.

29094 So many are willing to compromise and rationalize important issues away.

30001 Some members of the church are too judgmental.

30011 Some churches tend to lack unity and togetherness. It's discouraging.

32005 The "tares" of the church. But I know that this must come to pass.

32014 People's negative attitude (it is to be expected). Diversity of belief within our denomination.

33008 Politics in the leadership of our church and separation of congregation over petty issues that are not worth arguing over.

33010 It is so superficial. I have attended the same church for the last three years, and not once has a pastor, elder, or any other church member approached me and welcomed me or tried to know me. Medical school is stressful, and my friends, the Nazarene church members, take time to find out what's happening, send us letters of encouragement before exams, and even invite us to dinners in their homes during exam weeks when they know we are stressed and do not have time to take care of ourselves.

33016 Rigidity, criticalness, laziness.

33017 Attachments to past arrangements--not willing to improve on new ideas that are necessary. Unfriendly members.

33020 In the churches and evangelistic seminars that I have attended, there seems to be a tendency towards teaching new believers all of the doctrines but very little about building a successful relationship with Christ. If you want the relationship, you have to kind of work it out on a trial-and-error basis.

34001 Its treatment of women and minorities. Its "holier-than-thou" attitude towards non-SDAs.

34002 Pressure to keep coming back, to stay for potluck, for vesper, etc.

34005 Too big, judgmental, and conservative.

34008 -

34014 How everybody acted like it was a social event or a beauty contest, instead of really being there for what they should be.

34015 Fanaticism.

34017 The lack of Christian behavior towards each other. We claim to be following Christ, but Christ would have watched his actions towards another.

34025 That some people go to such extremes. For example, those who isolate their children from life by home-schooling, making all the decisions for them, no TV, no friends. I have seen several families like this, and it has been truly destructive.

34026 Anti-abortion stand. The judgmental attitude of people. Not many people my age and education level.

34030 Church has some hypocritical position views. Tends to pick on little, non-consequential issues like jewelry and drive people away because they focus on little things and miss the big picture and people as a whole. People should be more accepting as God would want us to be. We shouldn't isolate people and exclude them over cosmetic reasons.

34026 Lack of interest in other people besides other Adventists.

34039 Small congregation compared to other religions. Not many young people.

34034 By far, it is the politics within church. I knew they existed but not to the extent that I have had to deal with them.

34046 In order to be a member and be accepted you have to obey the Sabbath, and in my and my family's case, it seems impossible.

34051 EGW was, I believe, inspired by God in many of the things she wrote. But we did not listen to her when her teachings were most applicable. We sent her away, built on our own choice of property, and have since edited her writings to fit our taste. Now that she is gone, she cannot defend her own humanness. We proudly recite her orders not to elevate her writings to that of a Bible while preaching her from the pulpit. We should be talking about The Man she served. A prophet is never respected in his hometown, Jesus said. Civilized people build memorials to them years later. We did not listen to her while she was with us. How then, can we be so bold as to conceive that we are listening to the Lord's mouthpiece now? Or that we would even recognize one? We, like the Israelites, must learn to open the eyes of our hearts and hear the Lord.

34052 That the church is not ready to carry the message to the whole world.

34053 How some members are judgmental.

34054 Not accepting people for who they are even if their beliefs are slightly different.

35006 The lack of growth and the lack of real enthusiasm for the church. The boring hymns don't help.

35009 The friction between members.

35012 The way we treat each other. Two-faced shallowness. How we tend to make some issues into issues of morality when they have nothing to do with morality.

35014 -

35016 Lack of mental diversity in the "front" that the church promotes. Black and white split conferences in the USA.

35019 The snobbishness. The SDA church is a rich church; there aren't very many poor people.

35022 Some folks may be too fanatic, which may scare others away.

35023 The Bible clearly states that one should not judge. However, the members of the church I attended must have felt they were the almighty God and, therefore, had the power to judge everyone in the community.

35025 Worries too much about outer appearance instead of what's in our hearts. Too judgmental.

36002 Snobby and felt unwanted.

36005 The double standards. Hypocrites. A "holier-than-thou" attitude.

36006 Quick to judge. Not accepting of those who don't fit. Adventist critiques--no jewelry or make-up.

36008 Everyone else in the church trying to pound their way of thinking into your head and insisting that there is no other right way to do things.

36013 The way some people that have grown up in the church look at people within the

church, not at God, and become discouraged because of this.

36014 Politics in individual churches. Also the exchange of pastors is very annoying to me.

36015 No young people.

37005 Young people are not involved. I stopped attending church when Connections at _____ College was canceled.

37007 Age of members.

37008 All doctrines with no faith. No spreading of the word. They tell me I'm bad because I enjoy earthly luxuries in moderation. Cast the first stone.

37013 Fakes, unhappy people, too many rules, judgmental people.

37014 Adventists tend to think they are perfect and no one else measures up to the standard.

37019 Those who believe they are the "chosen." Those who tell others they should not be adorned with jewelry, eat meat, dance, see movies, the manner in which they go about converting others, etc.

37031 -

37040 -

37043 Conference inconsistency and the way the church hierarchy operates.

37045 The extreme of the vegetarian diet.

37054 The way non-Adventists know more about the rules "no movies, no dancing" than they do about our beliefs.

37056 People who look only at the outside and judge you by what you look like rather than who you are.

37057 The members. I just have to remember to look to Christ as my mentor and not humans because he will never let me down.

37060 That they are so grumpy and uncaring. And that there are no people my age.

37061 -

37062 We are all so comfortable and so used to what is and don't hope or expect more anymore.

37064 There wouldn't be enough paper to discuss this issue.

37066 I feel uncomfortable there.

39001 The large number of people who are still satisfied with status quo, and who think it is someone else's job to reach out to others. But there is hope! I've seen some pretty dead people come alive.

39004 Rules change from church to church. It is inconsistent with its values of what is right and wrong.

39005 The lack of balance between having a Savior and having a Lord. We need both, but we have divided ourselves into two groups, and each group thinks it's right. They both are! Doesn't anybody read the whole Bible anymore?

39006 No one has unconditional acceptance or love.

39007 That it seems that some churches are becoming more and more like Sunday churches (anything goes).

39009 The *Church Manual*. It's a joke, and most of it is taken out of EGW writings and has no biblical foundation.

39010 Intolerance of differing opinions on theological matters. If I even hint an opinion that might disagree with EGW, people either fight with me using EGW "clubs" or refuse to talk with me.

40002 -

40010 -

40013 The "legalism"--paying too much attention to the rules while ignoring the principles, particularly when using the rules to judge and cut down others.

40014 -

40015 The church sometimes seems too political. Also sometimes members seem to go not for a blessing but to brag, gossip, or show off.

40018 The conference personnel. I don't trust very many of them. I've known too many of them.

41002 Close minded people.

42006 Complacency. Business incompetence. The "We have all the truth" attitude.

42007 The lukewarmness in a lot of churches.

42008 Inability to discuss the big issues: The problem of evil (inconsistent triad), etc. Mostly logical problems with fundamental beliefs.

42011 Some people are judgmental and don't want to forgive others if they "mess up" with something.

42016 Hypocrites.

42018 Church and members hypocritical. Judgmental to others. Jesus would never treat anyone like that. I'd rather be an atheist than belong to the SDA church.

42025 1) Meddling with my life. 2) Constant effort to attract converts by being entertaining and modern. 3) People trying to perfect and protect their image rather than their attitude and integrity. 4) Discouraging youth to think for themselves and develop their own opinions.

42013 All the bickering and double standards.

42031 That it is not doing more to get involved in the local community. That there are not more people in my age group to fellowship during the week.

42033 I am disturbed by the fact that this church and most others preach that they and only they are correct and the only ones that God supports. I can't bring myself to believe that the SDA are the only ones that are going to be saved. All other religions have their prophets. All other religions can quote Scriptures that "prove" theirs is the only religion. I have talked to the people of other religions who are just as adamant in their beliefs as anyone in the Adventist church. I have also attended other church services; i.e., Mormon and Catholic. Other than some minor differences, they are all

preaching basically the same things as the Adventists. I can't believe God would be petty enough to damn someone for such minor differences.

42035 Complacency for one thing. It doesn't seem like too many of us want to be really involved, even to just make people really feel welcomed at church. I think we should all be a lot more overt in our caring and concern for one another in addition to wanting to bring more people into the church.

42037 Everything--lifestyle and beliefs seem to be taken for granted. It doesn't seem that people have the courage to ask whether their beliefs are true. I realize that's a general statement, and I don't know how true it is.

42038 The attitudes that all other religions should convert to ours and that all the young adults and teenagers need to conform to more traditional views. Also I feel sad that we don't seem to talk about Jesus as much.

42039 How older congregations don't believe in change, yet staying within your beliefs.

42045 The hypocrisy of the people in it. I'm sure I've been hypocritical myself, but I see people who don't seem to care that they are being that way. Also some people seem to think that if you are an SDA, then you will be saved and no one else will be. It bothers me that some people believe that the SDAs will be the only ones in heaven. (Jesus wasn't an SDA.)

42048 They are so concerned with do's and don'ts. (Jewelry, make up, vegetarian, etc)

42051 They concentrate too much on law and not on Christ and what He has accomplished. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1

42053 Our church was too self-righteous. They seemed to condemn everyone else and were much too superficial. Really, why does wearing a wedding ring mean you can't hold a church position?

42054 Hypocrisy and putting too much emphasis on EGW.

42061 The doctrine and the threatening tactics used on children--if they are bad, they will go to hell.

42066 -

42068 Pseudo Christians. Those who use the church to feed their power hunger or attention-seeking nature.

42072 The inactivity of its members. I'm a new pastor and would love to see my members actively involved in ministry for their own spiritual benefit and growth.

42073 They are very similar to the Jews in the temple when Christ had to turn their money tables over.

42076 The meanness of the people and the hypocrisy.

42080 -

42086 -

42097 Gossip, hard feeling, people wear their emotions on their sleeves. You can say something, and it goes ballistic.

43005 Most recently, the proud attitude and competitive need to put down other religions. Not so recent, the need to entertain the congregation, use of flowery sermons, and the need to increase the size of congregation without taking care that their hearts are secured.

43006 The tendency toward judgmental response to anything new and different or toward anything that makes people think about why they believe the way they do.

43007 -

43008 I feel that there are some leaders who are not following what we believe and teach, but God will have a body of unified believers in the end, and He is in control of the church. I feel there is some shaking yet to happen in our church.

43010 The condescending and judgmental attitudes of the church members. I think that they are not only rude but tend to drive young people that are on a faith journey away. They should be more tolerant of personal expressions of faith and supportive even if they do not fully agree or understand them.

43019 Not accepting; can turn people away without realizing it. Too judgmental.

43021 Speaking against money, when that's what the church needs most. Close-minded legalists who fear of being deceived by reading any controversial materials or books. With a solid relationship with Jesus, you have the freedom to be more open minded with all subjects.

43023 Hypocrisy. Sometimes it seems like Adventists think they are better than everyone else. They don't always practice what they preach.

43027 -

43030 Blindness to social issues. Dependency on unwise ideas. Teaches people not to take responsibility for their actions or to try to make changes in their lives by themselves.

43033 Gossips. A lack of holiness during God's social time. Business. The church should be non-profitable, with a non-profit attitude.

43035 That many times we can be like the Gentiles and try to predict the future.

43037 Superstition, taking the Bible too literally, close-minded dogma, hypocrisy, disturbing elements which are found in all religions.

43039 -

43044 The focus on outward things when God only looks at the heart. Legalism at its worse. Focus on being SDA and not on being a Christian or how to get to know God.

43045 How some get caught up in legalism as a focus rather than Christ. How some entities of the church do business.

43048 Too judgmental and we don't allow our schools to compete in sports with other schools. I think we need to inspire a competitive spirit in our students.

43050 The lack of care and concern for specific problems faced by people who are in the poor and lower middle income socioeconomic brackets. I get the sense that most North American SDA churches welcome people in the upper middle income and rich

brackets and tolerate and patronize the "less fortunate."

43053 The way the majority of the people seem more worried about what to do to be saved and, therefore, become judgmental instead of communicating and figuring out what should be done.

43060 Many Adventists have gotten so caught up in doctrinal truth that they have lost sight of the love of Christ.

43064 The pastor and the mucky muck!

43066 A real sense among some of the members that the SDA religion is the only true religion and all others are counterfeit.

43068 I don't see people very often who are my age. People who are between 18-30 are usually not around anymore.

43069 -

43071 The judging of others.

43075 -

43076 I don't know. I don't go.

43082 That it's so legalistic and people aren't warmly welcomed if they aren't wearing the right clothes.

43084 How it seems that we keep letting go of standards little by little and try to be more like the world and Sunday churches so that we can attract more members. But if this is why they come, then it is for the wrong reason. We are not showing the whole truth.

43088 People closed their minds to God's teachings and condemn others.

43089 The leadership lust for power as the mess over pastors, teachers, and others in the church when those people need them most.

43093 The intellectual differences between its members and me.

43094 All the backstabbers and hypocrites.

43098 Brainwashing without any real scientific reason for beliefs. But I really don't care enough to be disturbed by anything.

43099 Politics; unacceptance of alternative lifestyles and people who are different.

43100 The way some people treat others.

44001 That the church doesn't seem in touch with what is going on in young people's lives.

44005 Such a narrow vision. Only as good as the judgmental people who run it. That makes me sad.

44006 Its lack of ability to meet the needs of the real world. Its ridiculous sectarianism.

44011 Normal human shortfalls such as gossiping and judging.

44020 -

44012 -

44013 Nothing. The church is just a facet of a larger world.

44014 The recent shift toward an exclusive evangelism with the concomitant narrowness and intellectual obfuscation that entails. It is this that makes it difficult to

feel at home, when I am not included.

44015 All the rules.

44018 -

44019 People's personal opinions about others that cause conflicts when acceptance would be more applicable.

44031 Sometimes judgment even though we teach not to judge. Too many committees, etc. Sometimes it seems as though the members with money run the church or make all the decisions.

44040 The petty arguing and lack of true love and consideration for others.

44041 All the different social groups (cliches).

44047 Lack of commitment.

44048 People are dead and comfortable with not doing anything to make the church and their relationship with Christ grow. They are satisfied that they know the truth and all the right things to do but do nothing to be on fire and spread the Gospel to finish the work.

44052 The politics and the lack of openness to other ideas and criticism.

44056 Not enough acceptance.

44057 Everybody looks at each other instead of Christ. They are eager to judge by their standards.

44059 Nothing crucial.

44060 I think the greatest fault is either being too permissive or too restrictive. These standards are made by people. Why not let the Holy Spirit do the nagging?

44064 Turn over of members in youth.

46002 No young people.

46003 Unable to meet spiritual needs with changing times.

46009 Its inclination to exclude those who have different perspectives on biblical interpretation.

46018 -

47002 -

47003 -

47004 Rules about alcohol and dancing because in my belief, those things are acceptable in moderation and are even spoken of in the Bible.

47006 People form very tight groups in the church and look down their nose at people not in that group. EGW said that if you study the Bible you don't need her. I have heard some in the church tell me that only SDAs will be in heaven. Why is it that people get so angry when discussing the small stuff like if Jesus turned the water into wine or was it grape juice. Why get so mad if you suggest that it was probably wine?

47008 I notice this mostly in my church, but there is a true lack of involvement from most of the congregation. There are three people who make all the decisions. We share a pastor with another church. We will usually see him for an hour, maybe twice

during a two-month period. He preaches the sermon and then runs out the back door before the closing song.

47011 The slow pace at which change is made, sometimes even a strong resistance to change. The way we cling to cultural norms from the past and talk about them as if they were "Bible truth." The small mindedness I see in nearly every congregation irritates me too!

47015 SDA members unwilling to accept people as they are and a "holier-than-thou" attitude.

47025 The inability to minister to and to cause twenty-something people to want to attend church.

47026 Pastors still trying to play God.

47029 -

47031 -

47039 The business aspects of our conference. I'm not talking about the light bills, but the failed investments and poor stewardship. The "conservative" and "liberal" labels. Will we have these in heaven?

47047 My church seems to be more focused on the ethnic cultural aspect than the religious aspect.

47048 Too much emphasis on rules and not enough on loving each other.

47051 Hypocrisy.

47053 Too many rules for youths! I do not agree with the values of the church, and I think that it is inexcusable to not ordain women ministers, especially when the church believes so strongly in EGW as a prophet.

47054 Hypocrisy.

47055 The ugly politics that go on beyond the knowledge of the average member. The manipulation. Power hungry people, especially men, trying to impose their values on others (especially women). Also some SDAs particularly from ____ blend in with the average citizen in attire and the way they carry themselves. You can't distinguish them from any other person except they are even more bitter and ugly inside. Also the lack of community outreach. We are always worrying about the third world countries; what about right here?

47057 Lack of tolerance. The inability to change.

47058 Overly focused on doctrine and not enough on pure Christianity.

47060 Revelation 3:14 "To the church in Laodicea."

47063 The congregation (their attitudes).

47066 The church belief that the schools protect the youth from problems. They don't seem to address any of these areas such as drugs, AIDS, etc.

47076 People within the church acting like they're perfect.

47085 Nothing that I can think of overall. Each individual church congregation has its own problems, but that is just life. That is why I feel it is so important to look toward

Christ as our example, instead of human beings.

47092 People there are more worried about the old people and how much money you have or don't have. There isn't a good set up for the youth.

47104 Members all think they are perfect, and they spend their time pointing out others' imperfections.

47114 -

47118 -

47121 The many members that fight over things that don't have anything to do with bringing unsaved to God or finishing the work God has called us to do. Lack of belief in the power of the Holy Spirit.

48006 The cliques in it.

48008 The "cliques."

48014 Adventists that know the truth and aren't going out to save souls.

48022 The Adventist church has already been infiltrated by apostate doctrines (I need not say more. If you deny this, you are blind!)

48028 Gossiping and judging. Focusing too much on EGW (it turns people off).

48029 Criticism and judging of other members.

48040 -

48042 Many hypocrites and gossipers.

48043 Hypocritical.

49002 Sometimes it seems very worldly. Sometimes I wonder if I'm just biased or an extremist in saying that, but in general, I don't really find anything particularly disturbing about the church.

49006 Close-mindedness. Organized religion is a completely unevolved concept. The hypocrisy such as being able to wear a jeweled watch but not a bracelet, and fur coats are okay.

49007 How people judge each other and spread untrue gossips.

49011 I see a close-mindedness, and an inability to see what is obvious disturbs me. Along with that comes a faith that has never been really questioned.

49014 Routine.

50001 Our focus on the "do's and don'ts" instead of God's encompassing love for everyone!

50004 The individuals who make up the church.

50005 The constant fact that no one is ever willing to accept you for what you are and where you come from. However, it has gotten better over the years.

50007 Haven't been in a long time so I cannot answer.

50008 I have been to a number of churches, and some have no faith in God. The minority come to church and go home to work, and there is no real commitment.

50020 Conservatives that mean well but chase people away by forcing their viewpoints on others. Some people are so caught up with the rules, they forget to have a

relationship with Jesus. People who judge the church because of a few members and don't take the big picture into account.

50026 The unwillingness to change. The emphasis on petty items (not bigger theories).

50028 Its focus on the individual or church family rather than God. The church is drifting from the Bible. I actually heard a pastor say that his study group was going to discuss a book because the Bible has been done before. Can you possibly learn all that God has to say in the Bible? How many people in the church have ever read the Bible in its entirety. My guess is not many. I also find the focus on the "power of prayer" quite disturbing. I think that communicating with God is important. I do not believe that solely because we pray things will happen. Do we put so much emphasis on ourselves that we actually think we can change God's mind? Scary thought. Also, if we all pray at the same time, are we more influential with God? That doesn't sound very fair to me. I also think that the church is very Jewish-like, similar to the time of Christ. We are so focused on ourselves that Jesus could come in our midst, and we wouldn't recognize who He is. I plan on knowing all that I can about God so when He comes I will not crucify Him.

50034 Quite a bit of discrimination especially for the "not-so-in crowd." Those who do not have a lot of wealth.

50037 -

50040 Young adults my age don't seem to be interested in much church involvement. I don't find many people my age in the church.

50041 Religion is/has been invented my man to control the masses.

50043 I do not agree with any organized religion. Everybody says that the other people are wrong and that we are right.

50050 Hypocrisy. The fact that SDA believe that they are the one true church. To what church did Enoch belong?

50053 Sometimes I don't think it's as warm as it could be. It can be close-minded and judgmental, especially about non-significant things.

50056 Lack of trying to reach out to people that need God and teaching them.

50058 The people who are judgmental and legalistic. Although, I just ignore them because they have nothing to do with my salvation.

50061 Some old-fashioned views and stands on social issues.

50064 I find that most SDA churches are very cold. They think that because they have the "truth," that they'll be saved. I find that most churches preach a watered-down gospel and lean towards a liberal approach because it "feels" good. Churches are baptizing for the numbers not for conversion.

50072 No honest dialogue about issues. Extremes on both sides (conservatives and liberals). Constant paranoia about Catholic infiltration or one world government, etc. It seems people talk more about warning than God's love and acceptance. Also, no one teaches us how to read EGW and understand it in a balanced manner and how she related to the 90's. People are either extreme with her, or they never mention her.

50073 Stereotype and politics.

50074 I feel that the church is becoming more liberal in its views of our original purpose, specifically with modesty and reverence. I also disagree with clapping hands in the church. It is praising the person up front not God.

50078 That they focus more on works and following the rules than on a close relationship with God.

50080 -

50085 -

50086 Some church members focus on petty details instead of taking care of people's needs.

50087 The mixed views regarding jewelry especially the wearing of wedding rings.

50089 The lack of standards. The standards I grew up with have been modified till they are meaningless. The church motto seems to say, "If it's all right to you, it's all right to do."

50094 The judging of others outside of our church and forgetting to apply the principle-- What would Jesus do?

50095 Rampant liberalism.

50104 The way the people judge.

50105 Its pettiness of others actions and unwillingness to accept.

50106 We don't recruit new members. We just breed them.

50107 People are very hypocritical. Does not offer an active college-age group.

50108 Studying the doctrines of the church before baptism and ignoring them during a regular sermon. Ignoring the writings of EGW.

50109 Hypocrisy and judgment of other's actions.

50116 Gossiping, criticizing, lies, and hypocrites.

50123 How judgmental people can be.

50124 Laodicea.

51003 All they care is about money and attendance.

51007 -

51009 The fact that the conferences are doing their best to consolidate small churches into large congregations with numerous church services. How does this facilitate a proper "church family"?

51016 People get in groups and don't want to be friendly with outsiders.

51020 The attitude by some members that SDAs are the only ones to be in heaven. I have a lot of non-SDA friends I feel will be there.

51021 That we care less and are numb to the salvation provided. We are not earnest about our religion. It's not deep and personal, just superficial. I also see more "praise and singing" and more dramas. Guitars, tambourines, and some other music instruments make me uncomfortable. EGW says a lot against it although there are places in the Bible that are positive about it.

51024 I don't find the church very accepting (homosexual, etc.) The church focuses so much on "shoulds" and rules and theology, not enough on actions such as working in the community and accepting those who don't fit in with what the church feels they should. I believe the church uses EGW out of context (especially the compilations). The church uses guilt as a primary motivation.

51026 -

51028 That there are people who work for the church who take it as a job, forgetting to uphold their Christianity in a business situation. First and foremost, they are representing the SDA church.

51040 We have no guts. Time to ordain women and preach the gospel. Too much salvation by works, EGW, and not enough hard core and Bible preaching.

51046 The hypocrisy that seems to exist in abundance. But if you search you can find "true" Christians.

51047 Too conservative! Too legalistic. It is what is in your heart that matters, not about what rules to follow. Being known by other non-Adventists as the vegetarian religion when I am not even one.

51048 Strict rules.

51049 This clearly is different among ethnic churches, but Hispanic churches are clearly 20 years behind schedule in terms of their open-mindedness and views of women's position in the church.

51051 -

51057 The "holier than thou" attitude. The condemning attitude. The snobbishness.

51058 The judgmental people that exist within the church.

51061 Not allowing women to be ordained. Although I will respect the decision.

51066 Politics. Need I say more?

51068 Rigidness.

51069 Judgmental to others.

51070 Often close mindedness, judgmental, no provision for single young adults, and not enough emphasis on personal relationship with Christ.

51073 People who are judgmental and gossiping.

51098 Gossiping. Too strict on rules.

51099 n/a

51102 Cold. Not enough activity and socializing. Loss of young people. Hypocritical. Too segregated.

51112 Seems they are more interested in getting bigger and better than in spreading Christ's message of love and joy.

51119 Segregation.

51124 It would be a congregation open to many different aspects of worship and that wasn't so wrapped up in the doctrine of the church.

51131 Once I moved away from college, I found no one my age to socialize, discuss, or

be with. Older people have many different views than someone one my age. Church members often do not establish the type of environment that would encourage attendance by new members.

51137 -

51140 It's lack of youth attendance and involvement.

51142 Close-mindedness.

51155 The gossip and talking about each other. A place to get updates about each other's lives. Everyone knowing each other's dirty laundry be it through the grape vine or from the mouth they love to share.

51175 Unfortunately my local church is full of people who criticize,, make up rumors, and are envious of others. I feel this is discouraging to our youth.

51187 I find it discouraging that there are few SDAs "on fire" for God. We really are getting lukewarm.

51191 Nothing.

51194 When people in a church have "cliques" and are not warm to each other or to visitors. It seems the people are not sincere Christians and only take positions to be seen.

51196 Judgmental and narrow minded.

51203 I guess you can't find any church without flaws. But I guess the main disturbance is the "pharisee plague." People who look down their noses to find all the bad, negative qualities about others and pretend they are doing God's will. To me it's blasphemy, but Jesus died for them too. So we have to not condemn them, or we'd be just like them. We should be continuous witnesses because God works in mysterious ways and in mysterious times. There is grace for everyone, and God is not biased.

51204 Lately, I've heard a lot about the power-hungry conference and just petty bickering and lack of love from pastors. The church sounds like a mess.

51206 The concern of who pays tithe and how much. Leaders and members not practicing what they preach. Threat of burning in hell to keep you from "wrong" actions.

51209 It really doesn't have a place for young adults.

51215 -

51217 Especially in Anglo churches, the lack of mission/service attitude. No sense that it is our responsibility to get out into the world and bring others in.

51222 Being lukewarm. Only moderate youth participation.

51223 The unacceptance of people who are different.

51225 I don't know how to put it into words except everything feels lukewarm. No one is on fire for God. It feels empty inside even though everyone is friendly.

51228 -

51231 That it never taught me how to make a responsible decision. I was never given the opportunity to make mistakes within the supporting framework of the church. Free will was taught to be less important than church will. I never felt free.

51232 Hypocrisy. Lack of honesty and truth in leadership. Loss of Christ in our message. Too much judgment. Doctrine hiding grace and truth. Too many lives hurt.

51239 The way worldly politics seem to have taken over. Our traumatic experience involved my husband losing his job at an Adventist college over a series of miscommunications. Instead of trying to get the real story and help him through it in a Christian manner, their first response was to call in a lawyer. You might expect that in a non-Christian environment, but in an Adventist school it wasn't right.

51240 Lack of vision of where we ought to be socially, and although we emphasize Daniel and Revelation, no one is talking about how it fits in with our everyday lives.

51241 That it operates as if it were a "money-grabbing" corporation. This behavior, however, is not unique to the SDA church and is part of my general disgust for all organized religions. Spirituality and religion are a personal matter, and no good can come of a group of people.

51244 People do not live the love they preach and the doctrines they so adamantly cherish and incessantly claim to cling to. The most disturbing thing about the SDA church is the lack of love, acceptance, nurture, caring, empathy, understanding, etc. Many members claim to so adhere to being altruistic and selfless while they are actually the most selfish ones. They are so concerned with the gratitude they hope to receive from giving or what they will get in return. They deny responsibilities for themselves by hiding behind the cloak of their pious nature.

51248 People worrying about keeping the law when their focus should be on God and letting the Holy Spirit do its work on how we should live our lives.

51253 Topics such as ordination that divide the congregation. We argue and argue, but everyone seems to keep their own views and bad-mouth those who believe differently. We get so caught up in these types of matters that we lose sight of spreading God's good news.

51255 The cultural barrier holding back the progress in the world church. I am also troubled by groups like the ATS--not good for keeping Generation X in the church.

51257 A misplaced sense of self-importance in regards to Adventism's significance in the American (if not the world's) religious landscape.

51258 The misconceptions and stuffiness of a large majority of people.

51259 I really don't find anything too disturbing now. The church has done a lot of changing and has become more accepting to people my age. I just am not at this particular time ready to decide that the SDA church is what I feel is my true belief.

51262 The church preaches to the older age group (45+). My age group is left out.

51260 Lack of acceptance of other people.

51267 Politics.

51273 The amount of effort spent on certain social issues relative to others.

51274 It's lack of acceptance ostracizes many. The church should be the friendliest place to be found.

51280 I still find the church organization isolationist and elitist. Christianity is a large body of believers, and Adventists (especially in large groups) become short-sighted to their brothers in Christ.

51281 The lack of respect for the church and God (people clapping in church). The church should be more reverent.

51282 The jewelry issue, movies, dancing, and that so much relies on EGW being a true prophet. It's kind of similar to Joseph Smith having visions and creating the Mormon religion.

51283 I believe that most people in the church (or at least those who state their views) see the church as an intricate part of their religious lives and as a means to pass their beliefs and ideas along to future members and generations. I think it should be a place to restart (get help, encouragement, and advice in time of need). Then I think each person should develop his/her own views and relationship with Christ. The church fellowship is great, but it is not a means to get into heaven.

51284 Criticism.

51285 How most of the time it doesn't have much to do with religion.

51287 -

51289 -

51291 The older generation that was raised without a clue. The Adventist ghettos.

51293 The "we are special" or "we are chosen" attitude.

51294 How shallow and non-accepting of others that the members can be.

51297 It has no vision.

51298 -

51305 -

51307 There do not seem to be many kids my age, including myself, who are active or overly interested in the church services. Hence, attendance is way down. I enjoy Adventism, not always the church though.

51309 -

51318 I'm not sure. I feel you shouldn't have to go to church to believe and praise God but to be kind, honest, and true to yourself and everyone around you. Always help others, even strangers, out of kindness of your heart. I guess you can say I'm very conservative, liberal, and very realistic.

51323 I'm not involved enough to accurately answer.

51325 Religious fanaticism, right-wing views, intolerance, and support for causes of the political right.

52001 None.

52002 Individual's character. It does not meet the criteria of being a Christian.

52004 -

52005 -

52006 Politics.

52008 The hypocrisy.

52014 The many "do's and don'ts." I feel that the SDA church puts too much pressure on unnecessary things such as how a person should dress, live, etc.

52016 That they believe Catholics/Catholic church is the anti-Christ. Surely Christians have other more important things to do than to judge and condemn another Christian church.

52124 Many rules are ridiculous. Many claim to be religious, but they seem less moral than I am.

52126 Belief that SDA is the church. Exclusion and tendency to equate some social issues with morality.

52134 Politics.

52141 Social problems between people that cause dissension between members. Changed standards that aren't in correspondence with God's laws.

52147 A lot of politics within the congregation; close-knit congregation tends to leave out newcomers.

52155 Politics.

52161 The lack of youth and, if they are involved, the lack of openness to their ideas or comments.

52162 The ethnic cultural stereotyping and racism.

52167 Its refusal to distribute more power and autonomy to the black church.

52172 People only care about themselves.

52176 Hypocritical attitudes.

52177 Brainwashed, whacked, blind-sheep members of the church.

52179 -

52183 I think everyone sins (of course); just my sin was more visible than others. But I felt bad and unwanted when they took my membership away.

52184 The fact that our church has been too legalistic.

52187 I don't have any complaints.

52188 That it is blind to a binding cycle that does not allow learning or growing in the Scripture but rather in the writings of EGW.

52191 The judgment put upon me for being a single parent. The church is judgmental on certain lifestyles.

52198 The cliques and the gossipers.

52199 The older members are not willing to allow change by the younger members. Many young people have left because of this. We even lost our youth pastor.

52210 Ugly realities of life and the fact that it is happening right in their church. Rape, incest, drug usage, alcoholism, and violence are just as present in SDA's as in any other congregation, if not more so. Any organization that is so invasive (SDA beliefs and standards are to be upheld 24 hours a day 7 days a week), and restrictive is bound to have a rebound effect. Either people will engage in the "forbidden" behavior in secret

(as most adults do) while appearing to be the picture of holy perfection in public, or, like most teenagers, rebel as soon as possible (wearing jewelry, refusing to attend church, hanging out with non-Adventist friends).

52214 Politics, stubborn attitudes, rules/dictates what church will do.

52215 I'm not sure, but I think many are very dishonest.

52216 Has reputation of being too conservative or a cult.

52219 How money seems so important.

52229 That acceptance of people as they are is not practiced. Jesus would be really disappointed.

52233 Tradition.

52234 There are a lot of judgmental Adventist members at church.

52235 The bigotry.

52243 The gossiping and sometimes hypocrisy.

52247 It's too political. The church has become more of an organization rather than people caring for other people.

52251 Not preparing its members for the second coming of Christ.

52252 The rigidity. The jokes about SDAs thinking they are the only ones in heaven is real to me. People who are of other faiths are not bad people!

52263 The fact that jewelry, dancing, and watching TV are bad influences which is not necessarily true. I don't think that just because one wears jewelry, he/she is less Christian than someone who doesn't adorn jewelry.

52267 In many situations, we at _____ Church had an incident in which a pastor who had prior run-ins with other churches was placed in our church. He created "brother against brother" to go against each other (churches).

52268 The blinded notion to follow EGW doctrines.

52269 Hypocrisy. The utter neglect of the real needy. Our church had a crisis where a pastor tried to disfellowship about 20 members.

52277 -

52278 Lack of unity among members. Church hierarchy. Competition for places. We hardly know each other (lack of interest).

52279 Narrow-minded conservatism.

52281 They are quick to criticize, and some of the main leaders are true backstabbers, including their kids.

52299 Member gossips.

52302 Gossiper.

54004 -

54007 Lack of care. Commercialism. Hypocrisy. No youth group that is active.

54014 Not applicable in today's society. Too rigid.

54015 Disrespect of Sabbath. Living one life and teaching a different one. Disuse of EGW writings. Dropping of the standards.

54018 -

55001 We lack a common evangelistic vision. We are too comfortable. We need to be "on fire," spreading the message to those who take a much more active role in witnessing and not just leave it up to a few people in our church.

55005 Preoccupation with religion rather than spirituality.

55007 The people.

55009 Being stagnant.

55014 Hypocrisy and gossiping.

56005 All the fussing and fighting between members. In my church at present, it has become very hard to deal with. As an elder, it is hard for me at times, but I still try to love everyone and have faith the Lord will work it out for the best.

56006 Gossips and cliques.

56022 -

56023 The way it was slowly changing to a more liberal accepting church. I don't believe that we, as a church, should ever begin to tolerate practicing homosexuals, abortion, etc.

56030 -

56034 The extreme segregation from one church to another.

56036 Too many gossips.

56044 People who judge a person by his/her outward appearance and don't even bother to get to know someone inside. When special services and evangelistic meetings are held, and the pamphlets given to the community read: "Meetings held at the religious auditorium, etc..." due to fear of stating SDA church.

56045 Hypocrisy.

56048 Too strict.

56053 Church members have grown cold. We do not practice kindness, patience, humility, etc. We have lost sight of Jesus.

56054 Some of the minor rules with which people are so obsessed

56056 Temptation for conformity to the world (for example: administrative salaries--colleges). Defining where the line is drawn between duty to God and country.

56058 -

56059 Sometimes it's directed more towards older people.

56054 Some lingering unacceptance of some, coupled with a near radical over-acceptance of others.

56065 Negativism and the judging of non-church members.

56067 Hypocrites and judgmental members. People should look for the good in others--not if they are following all the Adventist "rules."

56069 Stubborn to be fully honest, admit mistakes and fallibility. Relevance is 5-10 years late rather than looking for ways to be cutting edge.

56072 The older generation looks down at the younger generation. It seems to be a

fashion show at the church I used to attend.

56079 It is getting too big. Sometimes I feel I am just "one of the crowd."

56082 The inability to make changes. To realize that because of the times we live in, we need to change.

56089 The judging of people.

56090 No youth.

56091 People gossiping. A lot of people like to criticize, but they don't want commitment or responsibilities. A lot of them go Saturday to church, and that's it.

56104 A lack of true caring love.

56120 Critical of newcomers.

57002 My church is big, and sometimes I feel that it is used by some as a fashion place.

57005 Nothing.

57006 Legalism and people looking at outward things or judged as being shallow or less devoted to the truth if your spouse isn't a member.

57012 -

57020 Whispering, back biting, and cold in some people.

57022 Lack of a sense or urgency about the second coming (myself included). We seem to make trivial issues high priority.

57024 -

57027 Legalism. Apathy. Lack of focus on the cross of Christ. Laodicea.

57038 The amount of people who would disagree with questions 22-29 in this paper and yet call themselves "Christians."

57039 What I find disturbing is that many of the church's views remain narrow in this modern time. It sometimes seems as if the church has closed itself off and not grown and changed with the rest of the world.

57041 IT seems to be going to both extremes. On the one hand some churches are very legalistic, and on the other hand some are too accepting of obvious contradictions to the Bible and EGW 's counsel.

57043 The overpowering belief that "we are right and everybody else is wrong."

57046 Nothing.

57049 -

57050 That there are so many factions not focused on Christ or other people in a positive way.

57051 The time, energy, and money spent on arguing about decisive issues. Not that issues aren't important, but we need to be saving souls instead of arguing over women's ordination, jewelry. I think many of these would get in their proper place if we got serious about being committed disciples of Christ.

57055 Nothing about the church. Certain people who claim to be Adventists I have a problem with, but this isn't a blame that can be placed on my religion.

57059 A lot of members now are more worried about money and dress than about the

second coming of Jesus and friends.

57063 The lack of ministry for young adults from 18 through the twenties. After Pathfinders, there is a big gap in the program.

57068 Gossiping; disrespect for God's house.

57069 Need more single young adult groups.

57070 Not sure exactly. Can't put my finger on one specific thing.

57071 The legalism and lack of love.

58016 Some hypocrisy with the church members and the pastor and his wife. Also, I don't like SDA's compromising on diluting the SDA message.

58017 In many ways, the message of the gospel is lost behind Adventist legalism and apocalyptic fear monger. It's been 2 years since I heard a sermon or SS lesson on mercy. Even longer since I heard anything about the beatitudes.

58019 Not sure. I am in no position to judge.

58022 I find it disturbing that many people in my church are so sensitive about things that aren't really that important. People complain loudly about these things such as temperature in the church, order of the service, etc. We should be the happiest people in the world. I don't look forward to being around these people because I know they will be negative and complain about things and other people. I type the bulletin for our church and am often worried that people will be offended by the way I word things or will get upset if I forget something. I guess I just think people in our church should and do have more important things to be concerned about. Again, we should be the happiest and most positive people.

58028 Its lukewarmness.

58029 Lack of fervor, apathy, lack of interaction with community.

59018 Gossiping, backbiting, and putting down those who have not accepted the message.

59020 How some church officials bend the rules for those that are well-known in the church. All the doctrines should apply to all.

59022 That a lot of people that look at you like they are better than you. They probably did the same things I did.

59026 Hypocrisy of members--by that meaning back-biting, lying, and manipulation.

59027 -

59028 Double standards.

59033 -

59034 Adventist have a tendency to be very judgmental and narrow- minded in their thinking.

59036 The church has many inconsistencies. We quote EGW on some things and the Bible on others. The church is still segregated. There should be more schools than churches.

59040 My church spent too much time criticizing people instead of helping people to

know God for what He is and who He is.

59042 People disputing over Bible Scripture meanings.

59044 The way they do the youth of the church.

59065 I see a lot of jealousy, back-biting, and a lot of things slipping in church that was wrong 10 years ago.

60023 The pastor. Members. Church in general.

60043 That most Adventist churches are divided. There is no unity among the members and other Adventists churches. We are really divided when it comes to ethnic background.

61012 Judgmental.

61013 A lack of activity in the school community. Also the segregation of the SDA church. Puritanical version on dancing, jewelry, etc. My ancestors did these things in Africa, why shouldn't I?

61019 SDA's love doctrines, not people.

61022 The separation of black and white churches. The two races do things so different. As if there are more than one kind of SDA.

61032 Its lack of rejoicing and celebration. The church needs a revival and needs to study the Psalms.

61033 How members of the church can have a bad influence on new members and members weak in their faith.

61040 The older generation criticizing the young. Back-biting and gossips. People are too worldly looking.

61042 A lot of quotes and sermons coming from the EGW than from the Bible.

63002 Like me, most church members are too lax about their church morals and standards--believe one thing yet do another.

63004 The wide group between the young and the old.

63009 Their lack of concern for the youth and their inability to see their own needs to do anything about it.

63015 Some of the members can sometimes be negative or condemning.

63026 Very snobbish and cliquish.

63038 -

64001 -

64002 That a pastor has to be shared between two or three churches. Each church needs its own pastor.

65004 Too many regulations, not enough love.

65008 Nothing at all. I couldn't have asked for a better church. I'm just sorry we're moving again, and I have to leave them all.

65020 A lot of talk. But no local action. There are always videos of happenings across the globe, but souls are being lost daily at home.

65021 Racial separations in conferences and city churches.

66001 Lukewarmness of the general church.

66005 The politics involved and the way tithe is put to use.

66028 I see many members engaging in self-defeating acts such as gossip and lies. I don't believe that behavior is very Christian; however, not all the members are guilty of this.

66035 A lot of people are "people-watching" instead of "Jesus-watching." This person is a hypocrite so I'm not going to church, or that gives me the right to do things that are wrong. These are some things people have as ideas.

66039 Our true condition according to Jesus is wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. We have no sense of the danger we are in. We claim to have accepted the true message of righteousness by faith. Jesus says we are lacking both faith and righteousness. We say we can truly discern our condition. Jesus says "not so." If we do not believe what Jesus says, we will ultimately be finally rejected! May God help us.

66041 -

66052 -

66054 -

66056 How the members listen to pastors and sermons with no true Bible study. They must always have a book or lesson guide handy to tell them what the Bible says without searching for themselves. They have sincerity but lack truth and, therefore, are deceived.

66058 The EGW issue. It's proven that some of her "visions" were copied from another previously written book and author. Hypocrisy.

66060 When the service becomes more of a "production" rather than worship.

66061 Too much hypocrisy. They can't forgive without preaching a lecture. They would not listen to points of views.

66062 Its use of guilt and shame to control people.

66074 There's not a lot out there for the post-university and family-oriented people.

66075 After the mission field experience, nothing surprises me anymore. Adventists are people; many follow the way of God fairly well; others just need time to grow up and receive teaching from the Master. At least they're come to the right place.

66078 -

66079 Dogmatic.

66080 That we seem lukewarm.

66085 Nothing.

66082 There are not enough activities, if any, for people my age and post-college people who are not married. How are you supposed to find a mate who is an Adventist if there are no people my age in the church because the church has not done anything to keep them or provide for their needs.

66088 Saying one thing and doing another.

67002 -

67004 Some of the members made me feel left out.

67007 Nothing comes to mind.

Youth 10 Comments: Question 71

Question 71: If you could design the ideal Adventist congregation, what would it be like?

03004 An integrated, genuine, God-fearing, loving, happy, supportive, and united church.

03006 How the church feels it has the authority to cast judgment and disfellowship members.

03007 My dad's church wherever he is.

03008 -

03014 A loving, sharing, and caring congregation!

03019 Peaceful, loving, and caring.

03021 Forgiving, outgoing, accepting of others faults, non-judgmental. One that views religion as a positive thing, not a list of "can't do's."

03024 -

03025 -

03032 It would be multi-racial.

03033 Heaven

03040 Every individual would treat fellow humans the way he/she would want to be treated.

03044 All kinds of people of race and color.

03046 The way it will be when we get to heaven.

04003 People who all get along and treat everyone fairly.

04007 Smart, open-minded, and diverse.

05002 To try and have at least one Hispanic and one American in every place.

05004 The congregation will be filled with freedom fighters for God, who will be following God's word. The right way, not the wrong way.

05023 Though the stewardship ministry exists in almost every church, it wouldn't hurt to stay in touch with those who aren't attending.

05035 The ideal congregation would be a church with lots of different people accepting each other for who they are and not what they want them to be.

05051 Genuine, humble, and friendly.

05052 If I begin to think of the ideal SDA congregation and put it on paper, God would not be pleased. Would I make it to heaven?

05054 There is no ideal Adventist congregation. We spend too much time looking for the ideal and not working with the imperfect reality.

05061 Everyone does what needs to be done and minds their own business. Also, money controlled by an outside company.

05062 One that was consistent with doctrine and could answer questions that young people have. Also I would want members to be non-judgmental.

05065 Non-judgmental, sharing, caring, committed, giving, loving, helpful, and not condescending.

05073 Friendly, sociable, willing to help others without fuss and grudge. Total Christian-like behavior with all members.

05083 How people react to others and try to portray someone they are not.

05086 It would be a congregation that embraced its youth by encouraging and supporting them. It would be a congregation that did not judge its members.

05110 -

05112 Very inclusive and able to embrace diverse members of the congregation.

06001 Loving and kind like Jesus.

06002 I wouldn't design one.

06007 Loving, accepting others but not molding ways of life to the worldly ways. Accepting the persons and letting them grow as the Lord works on their hearts, not conforming to their standards. Active and choosing to live by the best lifestyle standards.

07005 A lot of fun people of all ages that like to get together a lot and do things during the week too.

07012 Welcoming, friendly, and more organized.

07013 Supportive and understanding. Nurturing and forgiving. Convicted but open to discussion.

07014 Liberal-minded people with love in their hearts for God and for each other. No backbiting or hypocrisy. Leaders in the community.

09003 -

09011 It would be one where we did things for and in the community as a means of sharing our faith and none of this preaching and shoveling doctrine down people's throats.

09015 One that the pastor is not responsible for everything but must do everything. One where the lay people are involved in outreach and not just observers. One that does not quarrel over small and important things like the type of pews in the church.

09021 Jesus was a hippie.

09023 Selfless, questioning, open-minded, not fanatic.

09028 No doctrine just spiritual searching.

09029 A congregation that would go to church for help not for show.

09036 Integrated. Like the warmth people feel for each other at Christmas and vibrant.

The youth really do control everything.

10006 The church I go to. Loving, encouraging, making God foremost in all decisions made.

10010 Ideally, I would do away with organized religions as they are today and start a realism that makes you feel good about yourself.

10016 It would be accepting of people from all walks of life and for who they are (unconditional love). Not shunning those who may eat meat, wear jewelry, wear pants, etc. Ultimately asking the question: "What would Jesus do?" Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart.

10017 No gossip. Able to improve communication skills between members and heathens. Able to accept people whose backgrounds or personalities are bad.

10019 A family of believers that could forget about what other members may have done to them in the past and take all of that energy focusing on what we as a church family can do to share these truths. This love God has given us to share with all those around us, so all will hear, and Jesus can finally come to take us home.

10022 Focus on defining the essential principles of spirituality. Focus on saving the environment and world peace. Focus on acceptance of all members. Accept that each person has something to teach and contribute.

11001 People who aren't legalistic. A congregation who believes in love and acceptance first.

11002 An accepting, loving, and caring group of people.

11003 It would be like a family in which all were accepted and valued for who they are and encouraged to grow. It would take care of its members and then reach out to others. It would be based on love not judgment.

13006 A congregation with no prejudice against age or gender or race. A lively church that is energetic and wants to bring others in. A church susceptible to change. A church with lots of youth. Someone once said you can walk in the doors of a church and determine how alive a church is by the number of young people you see. Not one young member of my church attends on a regular basis. Some don't attend at all.

13019 My ideal church would be full of people who realize their sinfulness and attend church because they need that weekly boost. There would not be members who feel they are more qualified to be pickings for heaven than others. I guess I would just like a whole bunch of humble people.

13027 How Jesus was.

13029 No gossips and prejudice.

13041 One that is less concerned about what each other is doing wrong but more concerned with helping the one in distress.

13042 A mix of people from different backgrounds and young families with children.

14003 A unified church where each single person gets along with each other because he/she knows that there is a higher place where Jesus will take His children.

17047 Heaven.

17048 One of total universal and cultural acceptance.

17049 A group of people of all races serving and praising God. Always wearing a smile. Reaching out and helping others in the congregation that are in need.

17050 -

17059 Ministers and their wives who are aware of the concerns of the different age groups and generations (not just the adult population). A church that encourages programs and activities designed to motivate its members and educate those in the communities the church serves. One that promotes a friendly atmosphere and humble attitude.

17063 A congregation that is willing to modify itself to serve humankind and opens its heart to individuals and is not judgmental. To be open-minded and give individuals time to see if this is the religion that suits them.

17065 One that really practice what it preaches. God at the center with aggressive plans to evangelize.

17067 Racially and ethnically mixed. Everyone accepting and loving each other in word and action. The head or leaders of the church not dominated by whites or any race.

18001 It would consist of people who on their own have chosen the church and not indigenous populations that are being lad away from their native culture by the church.

18013 People who said and did the same thing and people who don't put other persons down for their faults.

18037 There would be no criticism, and everyone would be treated equally! The church should be considered a hospital where everyone is sick and in need of treatment and everyone needs help.

18039 Warm, caring, great music, enlightening preaching, youth outreach, and love.

19002 A group of people with a true love for God. Everything else would fall in place. I'm still working on this myself. So I can't say I'm perfect, and the church isn't. I guess we're all in this together. God bless.

19009 People who love and care about one another and who love God above all else.

19010 The characters of the people would mirror Christ's. I know God is doing a sanctifying work in all of us now so that this will be possible in heaven.

19011 A church for evangelism and "on fire" for God.

19018 Christlike: Accepting but "help/guide"; open-minded but firm and loving.

19019 Non-hypocritical, loving, accepting, joyful, and non-gossiping individuals.

19021 A quiet country church of 100 years ago.

21001 -

21003 If this were possible, it would be as Christ asked. We would not be concerned with what others say but simply follow what Christ said in the Bible. Always seeking guidance from above.

21012 Very loving and accepting. Allowing the Holy Spirit to really work in all of us. Community-oriented. Christ-centered. Early Christian mentality. Forgiveness and peace offered. Children's church offered. Exceptional musicians with celebration-style praise.

21015 Where everyone was a trustworthy friend. Accepting with no stipulations where Christianity and fun can be used in the same sentence. All working together toward that single goal where we can all live together for eternity with Christ, the ultimate epitome of love.

22006 Steadfast! Strong in faith, uplifting each other always.

22008 -

22009 Diverse people, all ages, more youth, about 75-100 members and no bigger, involved in out-reach (not just spiritual, but physical needs).

22010 A little of everything. A church with one focus is narrow-minded! All worship types in one, all generation in one, all focused on Jesus and salvation.

22016 Friendly, loving, accepting people. People who are glad you are there and stay that way no matter what you do or have done and who are there to support and help.

22018 Young adult Christian families.

22019 Caring and accepting people.

22020 Loving.

22021 Members (including myself) would be praying earnestly and fervently for the Holy Spirit's guidance in our personal lives, in the church, and in those we need to touch.

22022 Truth-based, evangelical, open-minded, compassionate, full of variety, spirit-filled, motivated, active, realistic, alive, aware.

23011 Bible based. Genuine people who don't put on false fronts. Involved in community outreach and evangelism. 100% paying tithe. Warm, friendly, down-to-earth people who don't have critical attitudes. People who don't try to do the Holy Spirit's job of convicting people but just love and teach through example. People who don't expect the pastor to do everything but participate in the church functions.

23012 People who accept me as I am and not what I am wearing, doing, or saying. Just to be allowed humanity.

23021 Much like _____ SDA Church with a large, professional level choir.

24003 Multi-cultural, families of all ages, away from a city, two pastors, 300 members and not more.

24006 Very diverse group that can be in constant unity. Parents would teach their children respect and reverence. Not one snobbish attitude would be observed.

24007 There is no ideal Adventist congregation. Just one that follows the example of

Jesus (a Christian congregation).

24009 Small, warm, sincere, and nothing fancy in the service but just good solid, strong message.

24010 -

24015 -

24021 Ideally, I think a congregation should be mixed ethnically and have a wide range of ages, with every group's needs being met. One group should not control everyone else.

24026 Friendly, like Jesus.

24028 Non-judgmental.

24029 People would be a little open-minded and understand that just because they feel this way doesn't mean everyone else does.

24030 -

24031 Warm welcomes at the door, Christ-centered preaching--using the Bible, testimony time, lots of singing, programs that reach out to the dirty, poor street children.

24032 -

24037 -

24038 A church who were more like family, and who believed in celebrating God's love for us and His soon return. A church less critical about those slightly more liberal.

24035 Like a true family. Everyone would be concerned about one another and respect and love one another as God's family. They would really concentrate on the children who are our future and who need proper spiritual guidance and also on the elderly and the shut-ins, who can't get out and do the things they used to be able to do.

24041 Being themselves, and being warm and sincere.

24042 Everyone would be there.

24068 An accepting one that helps everyone without prejudice and that has balanced standards.

26010 More people my age. People excited and involved in outreach. Small groups for support and studying, open to new people, loving and not condemning.

26019 Very loving, caring, accepting, involved, open to each person at his/her present acceptance level.

27006 -

27007 I believe church should be a retreat from the outside world, a place to recharge for further spreading of the word and God's love. One should feel better having attended and be thankful for the experience.

27008 It wouldn't be an Adventist congregation because Adventists aren't the only people going to heaven.

27012 -

27015 Very down-to-earth. Would accept new members as part of the family instead of sizing them up, then cutting them down. Would invite new members home for dinner

and involve them in church activities, even if it just meant playing the piano for kindergarten. Find out people's interests and talents, simply love people for who they are. Point all to Jesus.

27016 People who accept people for who they are.

27017 Like a family--honest, forgiving, conservative, friendly, not judgmental or fake.

27018 -

28010 -

28029 It would have to be a mixture of types of people with ideas and willingness to work to keep things in order who are also willing to listen as well as give ideas.

28042 Less hypocrisy and more enthusiasm.

29002 -

29007 Open, loving, honest, cheerful.

29008 Service oriented; not "my needs and dreams first." Definitely no "yuppie" stock market players.

29009 Warm, friendly, open.

29011 Active in outreach and ministry to the community.

29012 Everyone could express their ideas of what faith and trust in God really are and be taken seriously.

29016 Accepting, loving, and truthful.

29017 Live and you learn. People could still be true all though they do not attend regularly. The building itself is not all there is to religion.

29019 Non-judgmental about the type of people who come to join for worship, especially those dealing with personal problems such as drinking, smoking, etc. More understanding and nurturing atmosphere for everyone, especially different cultures and races. More involvement in planning and participation of everyone. A better feeling of family especially like the international churches have more a feeling of family. More singing, joy and praise.

29020 Everyone accepting everyone, enjoying God's love, not so many "don'ts," and make our religion not so black or white.

29046 Unfortunately I can't design the ideal Adventist congregation, but Jesus can if He is right at the center of it.

29021 Full of love and praise for God only. Everyone else will be taken care of if you lift God up.

29025 Excited, not so reserved, accepting of others.

29026 Hold true to its core value but let go of the pettiness. Not use just sections of the Bible to prove what they think is right but ignore the rest of the verse which would raise questions about what they are trying to prove.

29029 -

29030 Humble, happy Christians, "on fire" for the end times. Praising, praising, praising.

29031 -

29032 -

29033 Not judgmental and very accepting of you no matter what your problems or life is like.

29039 A mix of all age groups. Talent: At least 4 musicians, leadership that is matched with personalities, a good communication system among members so that prayer needs are met, etc. United in a spirit of love and a willingness to do whatever it takes; not concerned mostly for tradition but also involved in special projects.

29041 Stuck in traditional values that haven't a Biblical basis.

29043 I would love an unstructured church. One or two, maybe three families who want to learn about God. I like to be away from the routine boredom. I want to see an active interest in religion in myself. I shy away from church offices because I would be tied to them and restricted to what can and can't happen. I would like a small enough church that I could ask questions. I would like to feel a part of the church. I love the singing; there just isn't enough. I think I would like a teacher or a scholar of the Bible rather than a pastor and only approach a pastor if a question proved unanswerable by our group. I don't think I would mind a formal church once in a while.

29044 The members would not hold grudges against each other.

29045 Well, naturally everyone would love God and be perfect, but that's heaven. So I guess we'll have to wait a while longer for the perfect church.

29049 Genuine, varied in age, more spiritual than religious.

29050 Caring for all.

29051 It would be much more open-minded and would challenge people to study, re-examine, and challenge what we've always been told to believe.

29062 Warm, friendly, accepting, loving, supportive, Christ-like and humble. I don't believe the church should lower its standards. I do believe we need to be more like Jesus, who loves us unconditionally. Adventists seem to focus on works rather than salvation by the grace of God. I believe we have the truth. Now we need the love.

29063 -

29068 Multi-cultural, several levels of spiritual maturity, all with an eternal goal, with the "politics" of the church running smoothly in the background.

29071 People that don't judge other people falsely.

29074 People with the need for Christ and the truth.

29075 On fire for Christ and implementing His example through our spiritual gifts. Working together as a body changing the world and quickening His return.

29077 -

29079 A congregation that was more concerned with being like Jesus than making sure that individual members meet up to some standards.

29082 A congregation of Elijah's and John the Baptist.

29085 The congregation would consist of people of many different backgrounds and at

different stages in their spiritual growth. All members would be accepted for what they are. The congregation would sincerely display the love of Christ; it would not be an act.

29086 People who read the Bible and study it.

29087 It would be young and old, all different colors and backgrounds, but it would be all-embracing, willing to accept anyone who loved God and loved all His creations.

29088 More open and accepting of others.

29090 Warm, caring, accepting, giving, like a family, truthful and honest.

29091 -

29094 Diverse in ethnic make up, common goal to serve God and share with others true Christianity.

30001 Accepting every member for what he/she is, and each member would help the others grow spiritually so the church would remain strong.

30011 -

32005 A church on fire for God. Witnessing and winning souls for Christ.

32014 A diverse group of people (socioeconomic, age, race, gender), not political, non-judgmental, and caring people.

33008 One with many different people, different age groups, and who do things together outside of church (like softball or pathfinder activities).

33010 If you've been reading you should know.

33016 Around 75-100 attending members that vary in ages. People that are willing to hold offices (or leadership roles) and others to do the "add-ons" like special music and actually follow through by doing their job. People that are real Christians and care about their "family" in Christ.

33017 Open to accept anyone in their current situation or condition. Adapt to change or move faster to progress in reaching others.

33020 I would not even try because if I design it, it would not be ideal.

34001 Active members (diverse gender, race, ethnicity) who regularly participate in and promote discussion with room for disagreement.

34002 I guess only those who go to heaven will ever know the answer to that.

34005 10-15 people meeting together to experience the Bible and building a relationship with Jesus together. Intimate.

34008 -

34014 Wear what you feel comfortable (jeans, pants, dresses, etc.). Help out the poor people who can't afford going to Christian schools or even pay for their children's elementary education.

34015 -

34017 Equal mix of children, youth, single, young couples, middle age, older members. Boards and head positions would be filled with people that represent all types of people, and there would be something offered for every need--not just the older members.

34025 Very friendly, sincere and genuine, also practical to daily living.

34026 All age groups represented. No judgmental people to make newcomers uncomfortable.

34030 A church that focuses on relevant doctrines and biblical principles which prepares us to meet our Creator. Also is accepting of people and meets them where they are and doesn't expect change except for sincere change of behavior which comes as people develop a relationship with God.

34036 -

34039 More young adults, better youth programs.

34040 My congregation is a very good example. They hold most dearly to distinctive Adventist beliefs, yet they do not offend anyone who is visiting or newly attending our church. They are the friendliest, warmest congregation I have yet encountered.

34046 No judging of people who have to work on the Sabbath in order to keep their job and survive on a small income.

34051 -

34052 A church where people are able to overlook each other's differences and able to carry the Gospel to the community around the church.

34053 -

34054 Happy, relaxed, active, friendly, a variety of different types of people.

35006 A group of knowledgeable people who are not afraid to talk about and discuss difficult subjects and are happy to witness to each other and to strangers. I would like to see more young adults in the congregation and more adults willing to teach and lead those young people into the light.

35009 Only in heaven could we find the ideal congregation.

35012 One that followed the 27 fundamental beliefs and lived life with a conservative open-mindedness.

35014 -

35016 A safe place to hurt, share, and think. Not afraid of questions, not always trying to offer answers.

35019 A more diverse, open-minded church, filled with less judgmental people and more who cared like the way Jesus acted.

35022 People who show their love for others. No one being afraid of singing aloud. A pastor who gets the message across to the congregation. People who are like Him!

35023 -

35025 Perfection is unattainable to us as mortals. Only Christ is perfect and ideal. The only ideal congregation is in heaven.

36002 Open to all ideas and thoughts.

36005 People that really care about and for each other.

36006 Crowds of people who love the Lord and are accepting and loving as Christ is.

36008 More caring, more relaxed and not hung up on traditional ideas. More alive. Worshipers are supposed to be fun and joyful.

36013 More people my age instead of one and more people single like me. A church with excellent sound system for people like me who are hard of hearing.

36014 Everyone would be close friends instead of mostly acquaintances.

36015 -

37005 Active church services. Singing. Non-hypocritical members. Acceptance of all God's children.

37007 Younger congregation.

37008 Christians, not judges trying to enforce the laws.

37013 Unconditional acceptance. Happy people and open-minds.

37014 Forgiving and accepting of people.

37019 People would win others to God by being a wonderful example of joy, love, and happiness. They wouldn't be judgmental. They would sometimes be at church on Sabbath, some days they would be at home. Some days they would be climbing a mountain with their families, and some days they would be at a hospice or zoo. Someday their children would want to be just like them because they were a warm, loving, uplifting example of Jesus.

37031 -

37040 -

37043 Accepting, focused on youth training, friendly, unbiased, musical, outgoing, mission-minded.

37045 I wouldn't want to design the ideal congregation. I believe that God sets up who is in the church.

37054 Warm and caring with a lot of social activities for every age group.

37056 People who are fun, non-judgmental about how you dress or look, and love you despite your faults. Also an animated/interesting pastor who cares.

37057 Extremely caring and non-judgmental. Very open to new members who don't know all the "rules" and might not dress "right" or who wear jewelry. Very involved in the community.

37060 Young people 20-30 years-old; singles and couples and people who really love the Lord. People who are happy and caring. A small church--200 people.

37061 -

37062 Smallish with people not employed by the church and who regularly brought new faces.

37064 It would be like normal people instead of places like ____ where you grow up like you're a cult.

37066 Friendly people that treat you like real friends, help you out, or just go visit. They would respect that everyone is different, strive to keep people there, and inquire why someone misses church with a phone call because sometimes when you don't go, no one calls, and it appears they don't miss you anyway, so why go again.

39001 It would be one where every member knew they had been given the role of

minister and that their number-one job was to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.
39004 People who are there to join together; not there for their social life or to condemn others.

39005 A church that had the spirit of the early church and could also keep the standards as high as God calls them to be. Don't get caught up in one and forget the other.

Legalists chase people away, and liberals don't hold anyone accountable to anything.

39006 Very loving and accepting of everyone's personal views even when not consistent with their own. Who says everyone has to believe a certain way to be able to go to heaven.

39007 I would want the people to be very caring and reaching out to each other and to the people they are around--those non-Adventists. I would like them to all be Christ-centered. But most of all for them to have a love and relationship with God. Then the rest will follow.

39009 It would be like the _____ SDA church, which was wrongly kicked out of the conference.

39010 Like the _____ Church in _____, ____.

40002 -

40010 -

40013 It would be a church where people realize the importance of people to Christianity, and where we would seek to build each other up and not tear each other down.

40014 Friendly and open with more fun activities that include everyone--inside and outside of the church.

40015 A church that isn't political and cares for its members. The Adventist church is still where my faith lies.

40018 -

41002 Accepting, not forceful of beliefs, and not critical of personal beliefs, strengths, and weaknesses.

42006 A church that emphasized personal relationship with God and service.

42007 Very outreaching to others. Accepting of others not like them.

42008 All _____ College professors.

42011 No judgmental people.

42016 I don't believe that there would be an ideal Adventist church while we are still on earth.

42018 There would be no ideal unless the SDA church steps back and takes a good look at itself.

42025 Non-judgmental, non-salesperson like, non-meddling, totally accepting of other people's opinions and yet strong and secure in their own. Also open-minded to the unknown, intelligently and intellectually challenging, and real friends instead of superficial friends.

42013 All the bickering and double standards.

42031 It would meet more often than just Saturday morning. There would be more ministry opportunities and more social events. People of the church would be encouraged to bring in more people. The people of my age group would be the most active participants in the church. They would form committees and small groups and come up with ministry ideas, then follow through with them.

42033 -

42035 It would be a group of people who let the love of God shine through them and who let Him work through them to participate in the running of the church and in reaching out to others whatever their gifts might be. They would be open-minded to ideas from everyone and yet be rock-solid in their fundamental beliefs of right and wrong. They would also design a church service which included lots of music (quality) and a sermon with a substantial message.

42037 There would be room for everyone. People would be allowed to question their beliefs without shocking everyone. Growth would be more important than rituals.

42038 A congregation where members have a deep personal relationship with Jesus and are accepting of other people and respect their beliefs.

42039 Equal: young and adult, men and women.

42045 It would be like heaven on earth though it would have people who don't judge others in any way. They would be willing to witness for Jesus every second of the day. They would be able to get along and all be willing to do jobs that matched their talents. They would be wanting to do anything for anyone.

42048 More young adults in leadership. More involved in spiritual uplifting and positive involvement.

42051 Romans chapter 6. We are saved by grace and not by laws, works, or anything else. Jesus paid the price for our sin. His blood shed granted us the gift of Salvation.

42053 -

42054 Everybody's welcome and to mean it, no matter what.

42061 -

42066 -

42068 Accepting, genuine people who realize that eternal life awaits us and that this is our goal.

42072 One that would help members discover their God-given talents and then affirm the members to use their talents. In turn there would be no pew warming, and Christianity would be alive and real.

42073 People who truly want to be saved, not to show off their Sabbath garb.

42076 All loving, accepting, non-judgmental, and caring towards everyone.

42080 Less sermons; more selection of topics the church would like to hear about. More young people.

42086 -

42097 It would be like heaven.

43005 One in which all members, no matter what their individual personality is like, tries their absolute best to be like Christ in all ways.

43006 Everyone would choose to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and what would follow would be harmony, love, and acceptance. Deals correction with kindness and love without strife, discord, and permanently hurt feelings.

43007 Diversity.

43008 Warm, very receptive to new visitors and members--not just surface friendliness. Consistent standards, sermons based on Jesus and the Bible. Full of happy people. And a building committee in each congregation.

43010 As I do not believe in Adventism and would not attend that church, I do not believe that I could design a congregation. Any advice I would have would be a part of the question.

43019 Accepting. All headed on direction to heaven. Lots of outreach. Put away the petty beliefs such as no jewelry. God looks at the heart.

43021 Where nobody was "set in his/her ways," and they all searched the Scripture for themselves to establish their own solid beliefs that had personal meaning and then went about showing that with others in a meaningful way.

43023 Friendly, accepting, non-judgmental, supportive.

43027 -

43030 People who could think for themselves, live by themselves, and not be dependant on other's ideas.

43033 Heaven. People would be nice, not backstabbing and work together. All would be equal and would have responsibilities according to their talents.

43035 Open to new ideas, and people love each other for who they are.

43037 Open-minded, accepting of many different ideas, willing to look at the implications of modern science.

43039 -

43044 Colossians 3:12-17.

43045 A family with members of different talents and abilities but all working together.

43048 Friendly and non-judgmental about how a person dresses and in what activities it is all right to participate.

43050 They would be as likely to wear jeans and T-shirts to church as they would a suit and tie. They would smile, shake hands and hug a lot. There would be a drum set and a base guitar by the piano. Instruments would rock the congregation in a way that depresses the musician's soul. There would be fire in the preacher's voice as he/she focuses on Jesus' life, mission and example instead of the cleansing of the sanctuary. Instead of potluck, we would bring a sack lunch and spend the rest of Sabbath handing out food and blankets to the homeless, doing yard work for people who are crippled and old. Instead of teaching our children not to wear jewelry, not to go to movies, not to ...,

we would teach them to value life. We would teach them to live life to its fullest and focus on giving them a sense of purpose and feeling of value.

43053 One where there could be small group discussions and a minimum of judgmentalism or legalism. There would be an atmosphere of loving care instead of disagreement.

43060 They would know the truth and present it in a loving way. There would be no division; no condemnation.

43064 Everybody is equal, money doesn't matter, and the pastor ministers to the needy as well!

43066 More open-minded. Segregating ourselves from the world is not the route to salvation or winning any souls over to Christ.

43068 Unity among believers. Strong devotion to Christ. My devotion to Christ isn't what it should be; that worries me!

43069 -

43071 Non-judgmental. Leave judgment to God.

43075 More accepting.

43076 I don't know.

43082 The people would be real and talk openly of their true relationship with God. Not just what they think it should be or would like it to be.

43084 All would love God with all their heart and treat everyone as they would want to be treated. They would spend more time searching the truth and less time trying to justify things they want to do by manipulating the meaning of the Bible.

43088 People willing to keep an open mind and not just accept what they are told. They ask credible questions and are there to learn how to better themselves. They are not just there to pay tithe, follow a religion, and call themselves Christians.

43039 Jesus would be central. More prayers than business at the church board and committee meetings. Love would motivate concern toward someone's sin.

Disfellowship could only occur if three criteria are met: 1) Accuser must have close relationship to the accused. 2) Accusers will be fully investigated for hidden sins. 3) Accusers must be 100% sin-free to disfellowship others.

43093 Satisfied.

43094 The one I have minus the rumors.

43098 If I had it my way, people on this planet would be intelligent enough to realize that there really is no God, heaven, or after life.

43099 -

43100 The people would really enjoy each other and a personal relationship with God was stressed above all else.

44001 One that has diversity in culture and people with different spiritual gifts.

44005 Open, accepting. All would be welcomed, not just those who chose to conform.

44006 A group of deep-thinking Christians seeking and sharing their faith and life stories

instead of just religions.

44011 Loving, accepting, and homey.

44012 A nicely diversified congregation.

44013 I imagine that I would design such a congregation to be as it is now. Otherwise, it wouldn't be an Adventist congregation.

44014 Very liberal; hierarchial with involvement in the community and its local social issues. Basically, one of the college congregations.

44015 The teachings of Jesus Christ without strict regulations.

44018 -

44019 A model of Christ's life with elements of complete caring, instructive, kind, accepting, high energy, and active both within and outside the church body.

44020 I wouldn't want to make an ideal Adventist congregation because there is no ideal congregation. It couldn't be done because we are all sinners. What is my ideal may not be another's, and I am most certain it would not be God's ideal.

44031 Extremely friendly, accepting and open to others, willing to always assist one another, and very much in love with the Lord.

44040 Peaceful, loving, quiet, a sanctuary from the hectic world, a place where God's presence is felt and presents help in time of need.

44041 -

44047 My family.

44048 A congregation which is friendly and reaches out to even those whom they don't know. One that calls people to live the highest standards without criticizing people in a demeaning way, but calls people to high standards in a loving and caring manner. A congregation which loves soul winning and that really works to increase the church and believers.

44052 It would deny all power within itself. The only power would come from God, not the conference office. If members could not accept the behavior of others, they should feel secure by knowing that their own spiritual life was in order. This doesn't mean no talking or disagreeing, but that there must be candor and honesty in any discussions. It must be a dynamic church.

44056 Accepting, friendly to all, non-judgmental, and encouraging.

44057 Always open to all people no matter what they wear or do personally. Everyone has his/her own walk be it strong or weak. Only the Holy Spirit can convict one of sin.

44059 This question begs questions.

44060 Friendly, happy, accepting, but not permissive.

44064 College-aged youth group added.

46002 Lots of fun, activities, and much more modern.

46003 Supportive, loving and, realistic to what goes on in the world and real people problems.

46009 Small (up to 50 members), close-knit, no gossip, everyone genuinely friendly

and interested in the well-being of other members, active recreational groups, and spirit of God.

46018 -

47002 -

47003 An equal amount of people in each age group and participation from anyone and everyone.

47004 It would be full of people willing to accept all believers no matter at what stage of religion development they were.

47006 Bible study, Bible study, Bible study.

47008 It would have more than 20 members; all of them would be active in helping out whether it was with time, money, or both. The pastor would show up to preach more than once every two months. You would not have the same people serving on the church board and holding at least two other church offices.

47011 About 2000 members in the community with one another, understanding their spiritual gifts, using them to edify the body, accepting, caring, loving, solid understanding of mission and beliefs, and making an impact on individuals for Christ.

47015 A more accepting one. "Lead people to the Lord and then show them the way."

47025 I would have all churches be different in order to meet the needs of each unique community, but I would add a separate service that is more casual and addresses subjects of interest to a younger group.

47026 It would entail lots of musical people and non-biased Christians.

47029 It would have the love and freedom of _____'s celebration center with the brains of _____ University and the creativity of _____ College.

47031 -

47039 Humble. A congregation that seeks the nature of Christ and implements it in their own lives. A church with a thriving youth group. A church that agrees to disagree on perceived standards and elevate Jesus.

47047 Small and warm, welcoming, non-judgmental, has many social and religious activities, and very interested in growth of people in church.

47048 People from every where getting together to learn about God and Bible without making judgments about other people.

47051 Full of people who come to worship, not to show off the new car, clothes, and etc.

47053 Open-minded. No gender discrimination. People would be loved for who they are not what they do. No one should judge anybody except him/her self.

47054 Loving no matter what you do.

47055 One that is accepting, even of those who smoke, are obese, or mentally disturbed. One that tries to befriend and get to know individuals first and wait for them to express an interest. One that talks about how God has blessed it personally, instead of preaching to strugglers how they need to change their bad habits.

47057 Accepting, no matter what. Like Christ was.

47058 More like the early church--less bureaucratic and more focus on the local church.

47060 Acts 2:44-47.

47063 A loving congregation that makes everyone feel welcomed and people feel like they belong.

47066 -

47076 -

47085 Dedicated to Christ and spreading His Word, uplifting, loving and sincere, active in the community, serving as positive examples.

47092 A loving and caring church with half old and half young people with a church environment in which you can wear the best clothes you have and not be talked about--just have people be glad you are there.

47104 To be blind. That way they don't use their eyes to judge, but let God work with each person and help that person find a true relationship with Him.

47114 -

47118 -

47121 I have no idea. Even an idealistic situation can be harmful if support is not given to the whole by each one.

48006 Heaven!

48008 Friendly and non-judgmental.

48014 Have fun Bible studies to motivate Adventists to go and preach to the world and to take every sermon personally and do something about it.

48022 Every single member exchanges his/her spiritual gift(s). If this happens, all members will be in harmony working together.

48028 Church not too big or too small. Active programs and participation from all age groups. Mixed race.

48029 -

48040 -

48042 I don't know. We're all humans. We all make mistakes and we all have our own personalities and special experiences that we bring. We're all individuals.

48043 One with different culture and races, and one that lives by examples.

49002 All female. I think the ideal Adventist congregation wouldn't have to be sinless and perfect but rather be excited and eager to help people who need help and to do it in a selfless and Christian manner. I think the church, to some degree, has forgotten its mission, which is especially important in our day and age.

49006 I would not design an Adventist congregation.

49007 I don't know. There would not be abused or neglected children; no jealousy and gossip. Everyone would be there to worship God and not to socialize. I don't think that can happen on this earth.

49011 In keeping with the Adventist ideology, I think that my home church is very close.

49014 The only "rules" would be the 10 Commandments.

50001 Young, vivacious, excited pastors who teach (not preach) and a young congregation that is excited to come together to worship and praise and leaves inspired to share their message of love and hope!

50004 A combination of individuals who come from every religion and background--kind of like heaven.

50005 It would be consistent with the company Christ kept.

50007 -

50008 -

50020 It would be accepting of everyone. It would be friendly and caring. It would work on meeting everyone's need.

50026 Accepting people for who they are. No politics that just don't really seem to matter.

50028 An ideal congregation is not possible on earth. Will there be a church in heaven? The truth is that I don't even care about creating an ideal congregation.

50034 Unsure.

50037 People would uplift others (leaders as well as other members) and pull together to witness and to help those of us quieter members to learn to witness and to help us find our place of service.

50040 -

50041 Each person is at his/her own walk with God. I would not design a congregation. It would design itself.

50043 No hypocrisy.

50050 One that follows all of God's commandments and seeks to become an instrument of His will. As far as I am concerned, the SDA church has many things in its favor, and yet it is as lost as the churches of Revelation if it continues to hold church politics above truly inspired pastors who perhaps are not deemed worthy by the administration. I shall continue to pray for the church to wake up.

50053 Excited active people with interesting programs with lots of outreach being done. Young people involved in planning as well as in the service.

50056 Less hung up on themselves and more involved in helping others if they want to get to heaven.

50058 No one would judge anyone, there would be no gossip, people wouldn't pick on each other for stupid little things, and everyone would be treated equally.

50061 It would be like a rainbow that incorporates all cultures and allows for more debate on controversial issues.

50064 I would design a church that is strong in the community. The church would be warm and loving. The people would be giving to people outside the church and not be cliquish. They would also be conservative.

50072 Loving, caring, accepting, honest, active, encouraging, supportive, and people

my age.

50073 -

50074 A community. My belief is that a congregation should be a large family in which we all help each other instead of hindering our growth. An ideal family that accepts downfalls of others and helps them. A family built on the main principles God gave us. Love God and love people.

50078 People who believe God is the judge of humans, not people who judge each other based on the rules of the church.

50080 -

50085 -

50086 Unselfish, positive, motivated, happy, supportive, strong convictions, singing, honest, and don't worry about what others think.

50087 Loving and accepting congregation. A congregation that is not afraid of witnessing outside the church.

50089 Equal percentages of age groups, genders, and races so that it accurately reflects the leadership and participation.

50094 A family with unconditional love, understanding, support, and open-mindedness.

50095 A warm and sensitive group of individual committed to following the Lord and witnessing to others.

50104 More of a welcoming, family-type congregation. It's hard to feel accepted no matter what's going on in my life.

50105 -

50106 -

50107 People of all ages, families, and young adults. Friendly people not stuck on gossip and on themselves. A pastor who cared for all this congregation, no matter what.

50108 A congregation thirsty and hungry for the bread of life that enjoys digging deep into the doctrines that are basic to the SDA church.

50109 Small and supportive group of friends and family.

50116 Loving one another, caring for one another, having the character of Christ.

Practicing everything we say and being honest. All united and harmonizing with each other.

50123 The way God would want it. More encouraging, warm, and loving. More responsive and understanding to youth.

50124 People of all ages worshipping from the bottom of their hearts and singing praises to God in every pew. Holy Spirit's presence, and no one caring what time it is because we are in communication with our God.

51003 -

51007 -

51009 Small, family-like, caring for one another on a social and spiritual basis,

accepting new ideas and theories as possibilities, and in constant preparation for times of trouble.

51016 Everyone would be so into God that as soon as you walk into the church, you could feel the presence of the Lord.

51020 More accepting of different views.

51021 Loving, outgoing, compassionate, non-judgmental, community-service and youth oriented with no fanatical leaders but fun-filled wholesome leaders.

51024 Accepting, focus on being Christians before Adventists, and an active church that would put into action what it preaches.

51026 Mix of young, old, couples, and singles. Not too big or small.

51028 Young and old. Everyone supporting the other age groups and their activities. Good old fashioned church service with small church and potluck. Church members inviting visitors home for Sabbath lunch. Vespers, so good that no one would want to miss them, put on by the members of the church.

51040 Loving, non-judgmental, multi-ethnic/cultural, acceptance of all people and opinions, Christ-centered, and people-first attitude.

51046 I'm not sure, but I know that I would like to see less judgment and more open-mindedness.

51047 Young people who were more liberal and non-hypocritical. I think my denominational work colleagues are better Christians than a lot of Adventist people. I've talked about God with them more than I ever did on Adventist schools growing up in college.

51048 Complete acceptance of outsiders.

51049 Warm, open-minded, and happy.

51051 -

51057 Open-minded.

51058 Multi-cultural and multi-ethnic with a great understanding of unconditional love and acceptance.

51061 Like the one we have at _____ Church.

51066 The people in charge would be in whom Christ lives, not people who are politically inclined.

51068 I really don't know.

51069 Accepting of all people, but this does not mean accepting of all beliefs.

51070 I'm not sure.

51073 Non-judgmental, selflessness, and everyone desires to be more like Jesus.

51098 -

51099 -

51102 Diverse, open communication, more young people, more social and spiritual activities together.

51112 Full of people who hate the sin but love all sinners and always have their arms

open for them.

51119 One whose members lovingly accepted outsiders and who cooperated in the work of the church.

51124 It would be a congregation open to many different aspects of worship and that wasn't so wrapped up in "the doctrines" of the church.

51131 More active. Actively singing, praising, and "extra-church-type" activities and socializing events. Encourage participation in church. Make church enjoyable and fulfilling rather than slow, boring, and "non-offensive."

51137 -

51140 It would uphold the church's doctrines but still appeal to all ages.

51142 I don't think there is an ideal congregation.

51155 No judging, accepting the people when they do come, and making the people feel missed or acknowledged. A sermon on daily problems and related Scriptures. Friendly and willing to go beyond to help and care for all those around them.

51175 It would be a church where everyone loved each other. Small congregation of no more than 200. A dynamic preacher that the youth would enjoy as well as the elderly. A family that looks out for each other's needs.

51187 Lots of interaction--not just sermon-based services. People who care and not just people who are trying to look good.

51191 No idea.

51194 Everyone would know each other and be warm to each other. They would have prayer groups and support groups.

51196 Accepting, warm, loving, and active.

51203 But it would be nice to see a consecrated people whose main concerns are not petty differences but the souls of the world, for we are but "empty vessels" for His Spirit to work through.

51204 Couldn't tell you because I don't know.

51206 True acceptance of everyone regardless of gender, race, social class, or past history. Jesus accepted the "sick." He said he was here to help the sick.

51209 Very active and lots more activities.

51215 -

51217 Open, caring, friendly, and concerned with spreading the message.

51222 We would all be in heaven already if the congregation was ideal.

51223 Accept all people, preach about love and true caring instead of rules, and follow the basic Adventist principles happily by choice.

51225 I would like the pastors to use personal experiences with God in their sermons more instead of abstract ideas. When pastors don't talk about what God is doing in their lives, then I wonder if God is doing anything in anybody's life. Well, I do know that God is working in my life, but it seems like others don't seem to have the same experience as I have had.

51228 -

51231 Involved individuals who have more interest in living principle-centered lives. Denomination should come second to Christian belief. We should reclaim our sect heritage. We should stop calling our global church "the remnant." That is symbolic of the height of our arrogance.

51232 Open, honest environment where all sinners come together equally to glorify the Lord and where real Christianity is grace-filled.

51239 Just like ours. Very friendly, a wide range of age group that doesn't have to argue about the way to conduct the church services and what types of things should or should not be included in the service, accepting and loving, help for those who need it, a small congregation where you can get to know everyone. Lots of church functions in which everyone can participate, lots of kids. A wonderful atmosphere for worshipping God.

51240 -

51244 Very open, honest, trusting, accepting, interactive, sincere; able to admit weaknesses and fears and talk openly about all that is important to members even if it is questionable to some; fostering understanding, love, acceptance, and mutual growth for all.

51248 A congregation that would live out the gospel and not focus on criticism.

51253 Truly interested in worshipping God, in the needs of its members and, society at large. A place where everyone should feel welcomed and a place to look forward to and something to be happy to share with "non-believers."

51255 Multi-generational, accepting each other with young and old members on the platform.

51257 I would not design one in the first place. The beauty of communal worship is that it provides a place for a wide variety of people to connect as a community in worshipping their Creator. Often these are people with whom we wouldn't normally associate, but we are brought together by our abiding concern for a relationship with Christ. My preferences about who to worship with are too bound up with my own quirks and hang-ups to be trustworthy.

51258 Just a little more accepting of things that are fun and not harmful, and trust yourself and others to be able to determine for themselves what is harmful or influential.

51259 I think it would just have one common denominator. People who are there for the praise and enjoyment of being with God and friends.

51262 Average age 20-35. Young pastors. Exciting church services.

51266 When everyone is accepted and involved with the church. Apply emphasis on the family and relationships.

51267 Heaven.

51273 My church.

51274 Committed to Bible study and prayer. Accepting, nurturing, and providing

activities for young people to keep them from experimenting in the world.

51280 Warm, relaxed, able to allow diversity in thought and lifestyle (much like my congregation now).

51281 A congregation filled by people of all background and cultures. People who care for others with genuine warmth that radiates out to all whom come in contact with them.

A church that is interesting yet fundamentally sound in its teaching.

51282 Forgiving, non-judgmental, accepting, non-hypocritical.

51283 Lots of people who listen with open minds.

51284 More informational talks on how to deal with everybody's life, not sermons. An accepting congregation.

51285 Honest, truthful, minds of their own, non-judgmental, but that would be organized religion, and I seem not to agree with that.

51287 -

51289 -

51291 A cross between the reverence of high church and the praise of a celebration church. I'm partial to classical music, but that's really not how praising God has to be.

51293 Eliminate the words: Seventh, Day, and Adventist. Replace with "Christian."

51294 Accepting of all people, like Jesus when He was on earth, and how He is now. He loves everyone.

51297 Active in social concerns.

51298 I'm a member of _____ Church, but I think it's too large. Size of a church that large makes for an almost impersonal church. I like smaller churches. Too small is uncomfortable. Small to medium-sized is what I think is ideal. The closest to ideal is the congregation at _____ SDA Church. They are doing something right.

51305 -

51307 -

51309 -

51318 I'm not sure; I feel you shouldn't have to go to church to believe and praise God.

51323 Real intelligent, sensitive people in touch with the needs of each other.

51325 Educated and intellectually stimulating environment. Diverse in all aspects.

Tolerant of different views, ideas, people, and religion. Active group that cares about the community and applies emphasis on action rather than doctrine.

52001 A warm, loving church.

52002 One in harmony with God.

52004 -

52005 Don't know.

52006 Members would be more involved including young people. Lack of involvement makes them leave.

52008 Youth, choirs, and ministers who listen and speak with you positively instead of nag.

52014 A group of people that are non-judgmental of how you dress and live your personal life. It should be that people go to church because they love God and want to share with a group of people that share the same kind of love for Him.

52016 One without judgment and salvation by works. People who don't hold EGW as a god. She was a wise, God-fearing woman and only a human.

52124 Less conservative, more approachable, loosen up and be happier, not so focused on rules and going to hell.

52126 Very socially active to help the less fortunate. Politically active to change injustice and suffering in the world. More accepting of other issues and faiths.

52134 -

52141 Everyone would have or strive to have consistently the right spirit in different situations.

52147 -

52155 Everyone likes each other and gets along like a family.

52161 Every color and culture together, open-minded, readily forgiving, and understanding.

52162 A church with persons who regardless of financial success were actively and daily sharing Christ with someone. Each person would have a personal relationship with Christ, which would govern each action.

52167 An equal number of children, youth, young adults, and elderly people--95% of whom are African-American.

52172 I do not know.

52176 Family-oriented feeling. Based on God's love and no condemnation for wrong doing.

52177 I am completely interested in designing something like this.

52179 -

52183 I think it's fine the way it is.

52184 Somewhat liberal, very open, loving, and supportive.

52187 It would be people who show who they really are and be that, not try to pretend they are someone else for just Saturday. And of course people that could accept one another just like that instead of telling each other what they're doing wrong.

52188 Christ-centered, brother-loving, and self-awareness of oneself and others and how we are all just mainly sinners and need to uphold, encourage, and fellowship with one another and not just on Saturday. I would not want an ideal congregation, but rather an idea group of Christ-living people.

52191 Happy, caring, open-minded, liberal, and etc.

52198 It would be more loving, kinder, friendlier to church members and non-members.

52199 I'd like to see the members be a little less judgmental, and I really do think that the church needs to change and be more open if it wants to grow and gain new comers.

52210 I honestly could not imagine.

52214 More open-mindedness, not towards changes but towards accepting people.

52215 The church would be honest, spiritual, unselfish, happy, moral, close-knit, loving, musically talented, courage, debt-free, Christ-like, intellectually gifted, spiritually gifted, punctual, patient, temperate, spirit-filled, etc.

52216 Don't know.

52219 Everyone would know each other, no cliques would be formed, and the pastor would know and take the time to know each member by name.

52229 Men and women of all ages, races, and religions who get along together, are loving, accepting, helpful, and kind when they disagree. They remain open-minded and can agree to disagree with grace. A congregation that is actively serving in some way and supporting each other through all kinds of weather; that is not hassled by the church administration to give tithes and offerings but gives from the heart.

52233 Not sure.

52234 A place where people accept you and love you as you are.

52235 More love and showing it.

52243 The same as if it is not but without gossips and hypocrisy.

52247 The ideal Adventist church would consist of families and would have an overall feeling of camaraderie. The congregation would think and act both globally and locally.

52251 A mixture of all races, ages, and genders.

52252 The type of people who Jesus walked among. The poor, the prostitutes, even the homosexuals (I am sure). Not the upper middle class who will travel to another continent to "help" but won't go down town to help or go out for programs that are seen as helping the "unworthy poor" such as pregnant teenagers and illegal immigrants.

52263 A mixture of people who believe in God and in His Word and who recognize the Sabbath day.

52267 It would be a place in which people would act and not take what they are being taught as a given but would question and find God on their own.

52268 Love, patience, and more Christ-like.

52269 -

52277 It's fine the way it is.

52278 Christ-centered, a forgiving congregation, and encouraging for the good. United, more aware of suffering and pain among members, friendly, youth reaching, diversity acceptance, and understanding that not everyone is perfect. Need to learn to cope with sinners in the sense of trying to help them back to church instead of turning their back on them.

52279 -

52281 More participation of the congregation with music and testimony. Also a lot more youth participation with better pastors directing themselves for the youth.

52299 Honest and caring.

52302 People who are really trying to serve the Lord.

54004 -

54007 Acceptance by all, non-judgmental, caring, and non-hypocritical.

54014 -

54015 Strong faith. Active prayer. Strong witnessing program. Hospitable. Love for Christ and His standards. Enjoy working with youth. Active in community.

54018 -

55001 A more accepting, less pious, less condemning, more cohesive and supportive group. We need to be less exclusive and more willing to fellowship and form relationships with non-Adventist neighbors--that is the only way we will make a difference.

55005 People of all races, ages, and genders learning from and sharing with each other.

55007 I don't know.

55009 -

55014 Like a family with everyone's ideas and opinions. Young and old alike being heard with no ridicule.

56005 Just a situation where everyone works together to help each other to develop the talents the Lord has given them and to help them overcome temptations without pushing people away.

56006 Nobody cuts down or makes fun of other Christians.

56022 A nice mix of all ages.

56023 It would be open, honest people that cared deeply for each other, and you could bring struggles with sins to them, and they would pray and help you work through them instead of condemning you.

56030 People who totally love the Lord and follow Him.

56034 Unsure.

56036 Friendly, loving, and understanding.

56044 Love, comprehension, one "big" family, encouraging one another, and praying for one another. Taking a sincere interest in each other during the week, not just on Sabbath. Outreach programs where you have the opportunity to witness to others.

56045 -

56048 More like human beings.

56053 Christian.

56054 More loving, accepting, and forgiving. Less judgmental. Focus on Jesus and our relationship with Him and less on our mistakes.

56056 Intellectually challenging, yet based on traditional doctrine. Variety in sermons. Equal portion of age group. Active evangelism. Supportive of world church. Community outreach. Social activities.

56058 -

56059 People of all ages with friendliness and liveliness.

56064 Accepting you unyielding and uncompromising on core standards and principles.

56065 -

56067 Anyone would be welcomed to come worship, even if they are wearing jewelry.

We need to stay focused on Jesus and living for Him.

56069 Diverse, honest, vulnerable, conservative with self and liberal with others.

56072 They wouldn't look down at you if you were wearing jewelry or not the latest fashion. You are there to worship God no matter what you look like. It is what's inside you, not outside.

56079 -

56082 The ideal congregation cannot be designed. We are humans and sinners, but most importantly, we are children of God.

56089 -

56090 Highly spiritual and motivating. More emphasis on the love and blessings of the Lord and less emphasis on what you can and can't do.

56091 All as one, praying, reading the Bible and loving each other like the days when the Holy Spirit came to the apostles.

56104 -

56120 Outside, not too big of a group. A time to learn and listen. A time to discuss issues that are of real concern to the future.

57002 Humble, accepting, patient, God-fearing, big heart, etc.

57005 Of all races.

57006 More love, mercy, and less nitpicking. There are hardly any people my age who have spiritual maturity or a need for friendship.

57012 -

57020 Warm, friendly, and encouraging.

57022 It would concentrate on developing a personal relationship with God and telling others about what we believe. It would cease to gossip about others; instead, concentrating on helping one another. I would work on important issues and not get side tracked by little things.

57024 The ideal congregation would consist of people of equal importance. Everyone would be equally special and accepted as a child of God.

57027 People of all ages. We need the experience and wisdom of older ones and the virtue and innocence of younger ones. All colors, backgrounds. But all seeking to serve God and others. Not dependent on the pastor but willing to work and reach out. On fire for God.

57038 We have enough information through the writings of EGW, so it is not necessary to "invert the wheel" into something different. When you follow what God has already said, blessings will not cease from happening. It is the absence of such that leads to confusion and the state of some churches today.

57039 Friendly, welcoming, accepting, and, most importantly, non-judgmental.

57041 Friendly and genuine Christians who are happy to serve God and share His love.

57043 -

57046 -

57049 Multi-generational, multi-ethnic, centered on Christ, seeking God's way, stretching out of tradition's box with purpose not just to get out of tradition, solidly Bible-based with study encouraged and watched, evangelistic, and creating a loving community within.

57050 There will never be such a thing until we reach heaven, but to get close I would want a variety of people all focused on sharing Christ with each other and their worlds.

57051 All have committed every area of their lives to Christ's lordship and have a burning desire for reaching others with Christ's love.

57055 Being more social and not so judgmental. I believe that most Adventists are afraid to interact with those that aren't of their religion. We tend to shun people away instead of inviting them.

57059 Very relaxed and outgoing. A lot like people were back in "olden days" when they didn't worry so much about what people thought and money but were more loving towards each other no matter what.

57063 We really need trained ministers for children, youth, young adults, and adults. If nothing else, we need people trained to coordinate activities. In my church, which I have attended for 19 years, everyone my age is gone except one. Instead of concentrating 100% on outreach, we need to take a look at our very heart and send some resources that way before we lose all of our young people to better programs.

57068 I could not design an ideal Adventist congregation because no one is perfect except for God.

57069 A mixture of ages, but quite a few young adults would like to find an Adventist spouse and also a congregation that supports everyone.

57070 They'd be unpretentious, could dress anyway they want for service, no fashion comparison, see one another for what each person really is inside, be open, honest, and not hypocritical.

57071 No one would be too concerned about others' business and would show only love for everyone.

58016 Loving, accepting, supportive, without being judgmental or critical. I believe true Christianity is more important than SDA. SDA should come in second place.

58017 The ideal Adventist congregation would have a wise mix of opinions from conservative to liberal, but all members would be open-minded and madly in love with God and each other. There would be a choir and a rigorous Bible study during Sabbath School or after church.

58019 -

58022 People who are happy and willing to help all that they can.

58028 Forgiving, slow to judge, and open hearted.

58029 Enthusiastic people eager to leave church confines and find ways to assist people and be seen by the non-Adventist community.

59018 The opposite of the answers in #70.

59020 -

59022 Nothing really. It's fine.

59026 Each member in love with the Lord and each member allowing and helping other members to grow in faith without judging or ridiculing.

59027 The wheat and tares shall grow together until the harvest.

59028 -

59033 -

59034 It would be loving and very active in the community. There would be programs that catered to people of all ages and backgrounds. There would be less traditionalism, and it would be open to accept new ideas and change.

59036 A congregation that was representative of the racial make up in a given area.

59040 -

59042 An ideal congregation would be Adventists coming together for one purpose-- focusing on Jesus. There would be no gossip nor back biting. Everyone would be considerate of the others. I would also like it if the church took a turn back and started supporting their youth and focusing on their youth because the youth are leaving church by large numbers and no one understand why.

59044 A rejoiced Adventist congregation.

59065 Everyone would just try to follow the Bible, love one another, stop all the gossiping, and focus on their lives and try to get ready for the second coming of Christ.

60023 A house of worship! Something _____ Church is not.

60043 A congregation made up of every ethnic background and that has unity in Christ. The soul purpose would be to win souls by telling others about Jesus, showing kindness to others, and having lots of Bible study and prayer.

61012 -

61013 I wouldn't.

61019 Heaven.

61022 It would be people of all races and backgrounds worshiping the Lord under one roof.

61032 It would have the joy and excitement of the Pentecostal, the fervor of the Holiness, the devotion of a Catholic, the movement of the Baptist, and the preaching of the non-denominational church.

61033 More people trained to teach SDA beliefs and influence new members slowly to metamorphose into good and upstanding Christians.

61040 A mixed-race church with harmony, lots of love, and reverence.

61042 Praise and worship, singing, and teaching Bible.

63002 Filled with the Holy Spirit. Good relationship with Christ.

63004 I'm not God.

63009 A group of people that have learned what it means to be accepting of everyone around them. Even if you can't agree with the mistakes people make in their lives, never let them feel like they no longer matter to you. You can tell them you don't like what they are doing, but never let them feel like they are forever doomed because of it.

63015 It would be very excepting of everyone including sinners, because no one is perfect. God loves us all even sinners.

63026 Joyous, accepting no matter what your background is.

63038 -

64001 Good question.

64002 It wouldn't be very big so each member could know each other, and it would have a wide range of ages with lots of children and youth with its own pastor.

65004 I couldn't, only God can. But I would imagine the ideal congregation would be very diverse as society is, and the diversity would be taught as acceptable so that they'd all get along.

65008 Just like _____ SDA Church. Nothing more or less. They got it all together.

65020 -

65021 Ethnically diverse and maximum of 300 members.

66001 I am not sure. I guess very small group of people that kept up with each other at least weekly.

66005 Warm, musical, encouraging, forgiving, and accepting.

66028 "Ideal" is a condition that doesn't exist on this earth yet.

66035 Christ-like. They care for their members, live up to the standards that are right (not lower them to supposedly attract more people), and are actively spreading the gospel.

66039 One in which every member is in love with Jesus so that their lives are controlled by love for Jesus and characterized by being truly unified because all self-serving purposes, plans, programs, and ideas would be set aside in order to submit entirely to Jesus.

66041 -

66052 -

66054 A congregation that loves each other.

66056 Romans 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Philemon 2. The church is simply a body of people coming together who seek Christ. The New Testament Christians were very loose-knit, meeting in the homes of fellow believers.

66058 Loving people. People who do not judge you by what you do or how far you go along with their ideas.

66060 Open-mindedly conservative.

66061 Modern ideas with changed times, opened-minded and open-hearted, not old ways of thoughts.

66062 -

66074 Everybody has different needs; there is no ideal church for everybody except for heaven. Sometimes I go to praise upbeat churches, and sometimes I need a more traditional setting.

66075 If I could design the perfect church, with my ideas, it would be imperfect, since I am not perfect. I think things are going as well for our church as can be expected, and we'll do fine, if not better, as long as Christ is our example.

66078 -

66079 Open-minded.

66080 More loving and accepting.

66085 All like me.

66082 A combination of all ages, not just the older people, married couples, and young children.

66088 Everyone really and truly loves God and is doing everything to help others have a personal relationship with God and for everyone to be heaven-bound.

67002 -

67004 -

67007 Loving, understanding, and always witnessing for Christ.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS DRAWING ON TEN YEAR YOUTH STUDY

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"Indicators of Commitment to the Church in a Longitudinal Study of Church-affiliated Youth." A paper presented to the Annual Joint Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and the Religious Research Association, Arlington, VA, November 6-8, 1992.

"Grace, Relevancy, and Confidence in the Future: Why Young Adults Commit to the Church." A paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Religious Research Association, Albuquerque, NM, November 4, 1994.

"Social Attachment to Religious Institutions among Young Adults" (with Phil

Muthersbaugh). A paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Religious Research Association, St. Louis, MO, October 27, 1995.

"The relationship of parenting styles to commitment to the church among young adults" (with Randall L. Wisbey). A paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, San Diego, CA, November 9, 1997.