

STRANGER TO THE WORLD

A contemporary look at the life and times of Christ.
THE EARLY YEARS



DOUGLAS COOPER

Cooper, Douglas, *Stranger to the World: A Contemporary Look at the Life and Times of Christ: The Early Years.* Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1990. Paper, 94 pages, \$6.95.

In *Stranger to the World* Douglas Cooper has provided a creative, cerebral look at Jesus' early years that teachers will find invaluable.

Cooper takes archaic biblical phrases and translates them into 1990's language. The phrasing of the book frequently delights: "Mary must have been concerned about how to treat Him. Should she worship Him or wash Him: Deify Him or diaper Him?" "And then—gurgles and coos. Hiccups and spitups. Heaven's best gift, done up in swaddling clothes."

In every chapter, the author picks out modern applications that bring home the reality of Christ as God with us. The chapter about Simeon shows how good, good religious people could be oblivious to the presence of divinity: "They may have been searching for the Messiah with their heads, but their hearts were closed. The intellect alone is never enough to discover the Saviour. He must be encountered with the heart."

What-might-have-been shows up regularly. What if the Jewish nation had chosen to receive Christ? What if His parents had listened quietly in the temple instead of rushing Him out, accusing Him of letting them down? What if they had

been less concerned with getting back to business as usual in Nazareth, and instead, have sought to learn about His Father's business?

Teachers would do well to ponder the fact that the Messiah's first recorded words were a question. The Master Teacher-to-Be was a master of questioning.

He would perfect the art of answering a question with a question. He would establish a whole new way of teaching and communication that the world had never experienced before. He would give a kind of dignity to the individual's right to think and reason and understand for himself or herself that was totally radical and revolutionary. What a departure from millenniums of tradition, of teaching by rote memorization and authoritative directives! Giving a person an answer can be a way of distancing yourself from him, of setting yourself apart as an authority. Asking a person a question is a way of acknowledging him, of honoring him, of including him.

This book should be required reading for every church school teacher. It will equip educators for more thoughtful presentations and discussions on the life of Christ. (The readability level of the book is grade 10.5 by the SMOG formula, so it should be offered to elementary students with some caution.)

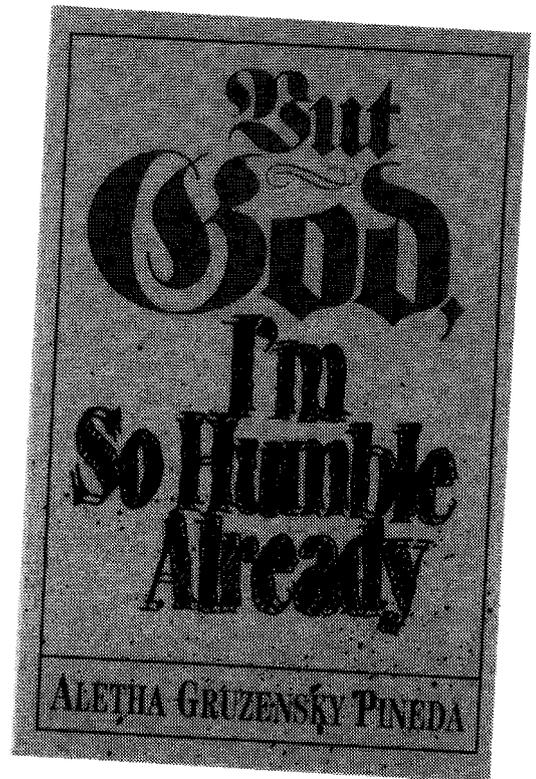
This book provides much material for contemplation, discussion, and introspection. It points the way to a closer relationship with the real Jesus, who is God with us.—Virginia L. Smith.

Virginia L. Smith has taught at the elementary, secondary, and college levels. She is currently Associate Director of the Church Ministries Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in Silver Spring, Maryland, where she is responsible for children's ministries.

Aletha Gruzensky Pineda, *But God, I'm So Humble Already.* Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1990. Paperback, 96 pages, \$6.95.

Christians have always placed a high value on humility. But just how do we define this virtue?

Humility cannot be a way we describe ourselves, or it ceases to be humility. Humility is evident only in its results, and therefore can best be described in others. And yet it takes personal humility to be able to perceive greatness in the humbleness of others. The paradoxical quality of humbleness is artfully illuminated in Aletha Gruzensky Pineda's book, *But God,*



I'm So Humble Already.

Pineda starts by dispelling the suspicion and fear that make us resist humility. She says that humility is never humiliating. Instead, it empowers and frees us to achieve and become greater than we thought possible. With each illustration, Pineda provides insight into the transcending power of humbleness in our lives, and in its transforming effect on others.

Humility takes the sting out of bitterness. It can transform experiences into unique opportunities for growth and self-worth. Pineda compares practicing humility to learning how to fall in a physical-education class. Success increases confidence and dispels fear.

Each chapter begins with a biblical text. These verses are illustrated by one or more captivating stories. Each story demonstrates the benefit of a humble and open attitude. Pineda is a gifted storyteller, and her illustrations make the truths of the book easy to grasp.

But God, I'm So Humble Already is well organized. Starting with humility and the self, Pineda moves the reader through humility and others, and finally, to humility and the world. Each level builds on and grows out of the previous level. The book's final chapter builds to a higher level of integration of values.

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North American Division Office of Education is writing excellent materials for small schools. Thanks to this, and to advances in curriculum and instruction, our small-schools teachers can hold their own anywhere. □

Arthur B. Devlin is a graduate student in curriculum and instruction at the School of Education, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. Before enrolling at the university, he taught for nine years in Georgia-Cumberland Conference church schools and served on the Adventist Reading Management System committee.

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⁴ E. L. Morphet, R. L. Johns, and T. L. Reller, *Educational Organization and Administration: Concepts, Practices, and Issues* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1982), p. 103.

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⁶ Alan Paisey and Audrey Paisey, *Effective Management in Primary Schools* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 23.

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⁹ Morphet, et al.

¹⁰ Schuster and Stewart.

BOOK REVIEWS

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Educators will find it useful to assign this book for students to discuss and to apply in personal experiences.

—Selma A. Chaz Mastrapa.

Selma A. Chaz Mastrapa is a psychologist who works at Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Maryland. Until the fall of 1990, she was Associate Professor of Counseling Psychology in the School of Education at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Rock, Calvin B., Church Leadership: A Call to Virtue. Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1990. Paper, 96 pages, \$7.95.

The author speaks to church leaders from a broad background as a pastor, college president, and general vice-president of the General Conference of Seventh-

day Adventists. Church and educational leaders at all levels of the organizational structure will find this book to have practical appeal. It provides both a professionally and a spiritually centered discussion of the leadership needs of the late 20th century.

The author points out that today's world challenges church leaders with attitudes and perceptions unknown in the past. This calls for a distinctive type of leadership for today's church.

Rock does not downplay the importance of leaders' being on the cutting edge of technology, or the need to keep pace with scientific management techniques. However, his basic premise is that the Christian church, led by Christian workers, suffers or succeeds in proportion to the virtue of its leaders, and that today the church faces a crisis of ethics that must be resolved if God's purposes are to be fulfilled.

The book then addresses these questions: (1) What specific conditions in society make leadership increasingly difficult today? (2) What leadership traits are especially challenged by these circumstances? and (3) What, if anything, can be done to make sure that leaders acquire the virtues required by the current situation?

The book consists of nine chapters, each based upon one of the indispensable leadership qualities so necessary today. Beginning with self-confidence, Rock moves on to courage, trust, self-control, versatility, honesty, decisiveness, loyalty, and disinterested love.

Rock addresses the real problems and challenges of modern leaders by using practical illustrations from everyday life. He also draws upon personal experiences to illustrate the various virtues.

Academy and college administrators will readily identify with the situations presented. A case in point is the chapter on "Courage." How do we decide between courage and mercy? Does courage mean steadfastly applying the rules, and administering justice? Or does it mean having the courage to make an exception? Can one give a coveted second (or third or fourth) chance and still administer justice?

Rock's book is replete with situations that leaders can identify with. Illustrations, quotes, and examples buttress the original premise and lead the reader to a better understanding and a deeper commitment to more adequately fulfill his or her role in God's church.

Rock warns that virtuous leadership may or may not result in "thank you" plaques, certificates, or accolades.

But the greatest reward of all will be that of knowing that one is perpetuating in a doomed society the noble principles of our Lord. That, in the final analysis, is all we have a right to

desire to expect in this world. The promise of heaven and the earth made new will often buoy our spirits and fire our imaginations, but even these are not our ultimate stimuli. That which gives fuel to our witness and life to our souls must ever be the unfathomable, unsearchable love of Christ.

This book is highly recommended reading for all those holding leadership positions in the church or school.—Gil Plubell.

Dr. Gil Plubell is Director of the Office of Education, K-12, North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, in Silver Spring, Maryland.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS FOR SMALL SCHOOLS

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program was first piloted and then incorporated into the regular weekly schedule by Washington Conference schools. It has been further developed in the Michigan Conference. Several other conferences are also actively participating in Bible Labs. For further information about the program and materials write to Dr. Edward Norton, Associate Superintendent of Education, P.O. Box 19009, Lansing, MI 48901, U.S.A.

² The Bible Labs coordinator is a church member selected by the church nominating committee. He or she gives leadership to the school's community service program. *The Bible Labs Manual*, a "How to" booklet, contains among other information the job description for this position.

³ Robert C. Serow, "The High School Extracurriculum: Cui Bono?" *National Association of Secondary School Principals*, 63 (April 1979), pp. 91, 92.

⁴ William M. Alexander, Galen J. Saylor, and Emmett L. Williams, *The High School* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1971), pp. 214, 215.

⁵ For further information on the philosophy of service see the author's dissertation: Edward M. Norton, *The Philosophy of Christian Service and Its Practice in the Seventh-day Adventist Senior Academies of the United States During the 1979-80 School Year*. Ed.D dissertation, Andrews University, 1985.

⁶ The Bible text marked RSV is from the Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1946, 1952, 1971 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, and is used by permission.

⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn. 1905), p. 395.

⁸ Cited in Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin, *Action Learning in Minnesota* (Bethesda, Md.: 1975 [ERIC Document Reprod. Service No. ED117 016]), p. 13.

Dr. Edward M. Norton is currently Associate Superintendent of Education for the Michigan Conference of SDA, Lansing, Michigan. His responsibilities include Bible labs, secondary staff supervision, and curriculum development. He has been an elementary and secondary teacher and principal, and has taught religion at the college level in the United States and Argentina. He served on the Washington Conference Bible Labs manual committee and on the General Conference Bible Textbook Steering Committee, and has taught several seminars and in-services on Bible labs and school service activities.