

Editorial

Within Adventist circles the topic of demonization and spiritual warfare are rarely discussed. As I have taught mission topics I have often had doctoral students who have never had even one lecture on how to deal with the demonic. This is true in the West but also true in Africa and Asia where witchcraft and the occult are thought to be much more prevalent. However, in reality, demonization and the occult are equally present in all areas of the world, and especially in the West with its growing secularism and rejection of biblical Christianity.

In response to this void in Adventist education and theological training the Department of World Mission and the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University convened a conference on *Spiritual Warfare and the Occult in Scripture, History, and Contemporary Society* from September 24-26, 2015. This issue of JAMS contains most of the presentations from that conference.

The conference had a good mix of biblical, historical, and practical presentations on the occult and spiritual warfare. The two articles by Cristian Dumitrescu and Ann Hamel detailing how the church related to demonization and the occult throughout its history adds important elements in attempting to understand the why and how of where the Adventist Church is at present as it relates to this important topic.

Three articles deal with practical aspects of helping people find freedom in Jesus. Michée Badé's article offers many helpful suggestions to those struggling to know what to do when confronted with demonization, while Bruce Bauer's article points out possible dangers in dialoguing with demons as part of the process of setting people free. Abner and Maila Dizon add additional principles in their article for those seeking to better understand how to deal with demonization.

This issue of JAMS also has an excellent article by David Trim on the shifting roles and purpose of the Secretariat Department in the General Conference. It is especially interesting to note the emphasis on mission during the Daniels and Spicer era of leadership and then the change in subsequent years to an emphasis on record keeping and secretarial duties. It is also heartening to see the recent renewed emphasis on mission coming from that department at the General Conference under the leadership of G. T. Ng.

Bruce Bauer, editor