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### Questions Youth Are Asking Today

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RENT NOW, TITHE LATER?

YOUTH AND WAR

by C. Mervyn Maxwell, Chairman, Department of Church History,  
Andrews University

IMMORTALITY, WHEN?

### LONG-HAIRED CHRIST?

**My parents are forever making cute remarks to their friends about the length of my hair. It nearly cracks them up, but it makes me mad. Why can't they lay off for a while? They claim to be Christians; don't they know that Jesus Christ wore long hair?**

If I were writing your parents I would quote Ephesians 6:4, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath." I would ask them, "Where does the Bible say your children must have short hair?" I would urge them only to ask you to honor your body as a temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20) and keep it neat and clean.

But since I am writing to you, let me ask, "How do you know that Jesus had long hair?" Do you realize that the Bible nowhere says He had, and that we have no contemporary account outside the Bible that says He had? I am always amazed when I hear people say that hippies look like Jesus. Who knows for sure that they do?

On the other hand, we have pretty good evidence that Jesus, even if He may have worn His hair longish, did trim it so as to keep it neat. Among the Jews of His day only the relatively scarce Nazirites refused to cut their hair at all—as a religious duty—just as they also refused to partake of any product of the vine, whether fresh grapes,

raisins, grape juice, or wine. See Numbers 6; Judges 13. Jesus was sometimes called a "Nazarene" (Matthew 2:23) because He grew up in Nazareth, but we know He was not a "Nazirite," for He drank some form of grape juice on occasion. Matthew 11:19; 26:29.

But if you should say that Jesus must have worn His hair at least medium-long because that was the custom in His day (whether it was or not), wouldn't you have asserted more than you wanted to—namely, that Jesus had more sense than to upset people by defying custom over so inconsequential a question as the length of His hair, and that He kept his powder dry so He could make an issue out of other things that really mattered, like loving your neighbor as yourself?

If your parents should make love not war over the rights and privileges of your scalp, shouldn't you?

### PARENTS TOO OLD

**This may sound corny—but if my parents were the same age as my friends' parents, my life would be very different. I was born when they were middle-aged, and I'm their only child. I know most teenagers think their parents are too old to understand, but mine really are. They're nearly sixty!**

Why not come to their rescue?

At their age they need all the help they can get; and the best help you

can give them is surely to practice the golden rule. Imagine you are their age. Think what questions you would have about your child and how you would worry about him as you read in the papers about other young people.

Teach them about yourself, and about your dreams, and friends, and dates. Don't be in the least phony with them. They'll see through you and become all the more tense. Don't be tense yourself. Talk quietly, conversationally, so as not to upset them.

Signal "over" occasionally and give them a chance to explain their hang-ups and fears about you. Communicate.

Pray for them. Pray with them when it's appropriate. Let them hear you saying, "Dear God, help Mother and Dad to be good parents. Help them to understand me and to be the kind of parents You would like them to be. Help me to understand them and to be the kind of son You want me to be."

### ADVENTIST EXPLOSION

**I notice from various contacts with Seventh-day Adventists that they still hope, as they did decades ago, to get their "message" to the whole world. I hope they can, for I think the world needs it; but with the population explosion producing each year 70,000,000 new people, how can it ever be done?**

1. However long or short a time it may take to present Christianity to the world, Christ will not come till it is done. Jesus said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matthew 24:14.

2. Jesus said only that the good news was to be *preached* to the whole world; He did not say everyone would accept it. We need not expect the second coming to be delayed until the world has been converted. "Evil men . . . shall wax worse and worse" until the end. 2 Timothy 3:13.

3. Modern technology makes the distribution of news fantastically rapid. Transistor radios are ubiquitous; 90 percent of all Americans knew of President Kennedy's death within twenty minutes, and 90 percent of the rest of the world within forty!

4. The population is exploding at 2 percent a year. Adventists, at 6 percent a year, are "exploding" three times as fast! By God's grace they earnestly expect to complete their part of the great commission.

#### MAN'S OR GOD'S?

**The Sabbath is not the day of the Lord. Jesus said it was "made for man." When He said "the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27, 28), He meant that the Son of man as a human was superior to the Sabbath.**

A few years ago I bought a home. It is *my* home.

It is also the home of my wife and child.

I bought it "for them"—and also for myself.

The Bible says "the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord." Exodus 20:10. It also says that the Sabbath was made "for man." This is the ultimate genius of the Sabbath; it is a day for unique spiritual fellowship between God and His human creatures. "God's day"—"for man."

Let's honor God by observing the day He set aside for us.



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professor at Harvard, proposed that man's best hope lay in "continuing economic growth." No one hoped to reach anything better than "modest goals."

There is a beautiful verse in the Psalms that says that when men are "at their wit's end," the Lord "bringeth them out of their distresses." Psalm 107:27, 28. The margin puts it, when "all their wisdom is swallowed up." How accurately those words describe the situation in the world today! But note, it is then—when all men's wisdom is swallowed up and they are at their wit's end—that Jesus comes.

Repeatedly Jesus followed that pattern when He lived on earth two thousand years ago. Although He was always willing to help, He usually stayed away until His services were asked for.

The second chapter of John says that He visited a marriage feast in Cana. His participation in that social event was the same as that of any other guest as long as the people in charge were handling the various problems that came up. But when the supply of wine ran out and the woman in charge of the refreshments admitted that the problem was beyond her, Jesus sprang into action. He solved the problem quickly and completely, and in a way far better than anyone had dared to hope for.

Mark tells us that Jairus's twelve-year-old daughter fell ill. Jairus did not immediately call for Jesus, and the little girl grew worse. Only when she was "at the point of death" (Mark 5:23) did the father set out to find the Master Healer. While he was on his way, the girl died, passing beyond all human aid. And that's when Jesus came. When all men's wisdom was "swallowed up." And again His solution was better than anyone had dared to hope for.

It was the same with the man at the pool of Bethesda. See John 5. For many years this old man had been sure he could take care of himself, one way or another. But after thirty-eight years he finally realized that he couldn't. His problems were too much for him. All his wisdom was swallowed up. He was finally ready to let God take charge. And that's when Jesus came and healed him.

Because Jesus is the same today as He was then, we have greater confidence now than ever before that Jesus is coming soon. The whole appalling mess the world is in today and man's increasing realization of his impotence to solve his mounting problems is sure and certain evidence that Jesus will be here soon.

Happily, He will not solve the world's problems in any human manner. What He will do with this old polluted world will be better than anything anyone has dared to hope for. He will make "all things new." "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." Revelation 21:4.

Should the *Signs of the Times* still preach that Christ is coming soon? Certainly it should. And it will continue to do so in clear and unmistakable terms. His coming is nearer than it has ever been. And thank God it is! □