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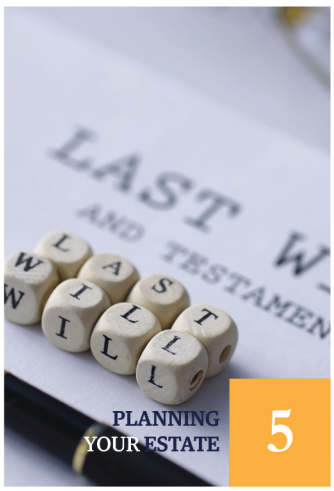
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Nairobi Central Seventh-day Adventist Church

I WILL GO









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PARL

PR. PETER NYAGAH



Honoring Conscience: A Biblical Perspective on Religious Liberty

SENIOR PASTOR'S DESK

Welcome to our second edition of Public Affairs And Religious Liberty Magazine, a magazine dedicated to exploring the intersection of religious liberty, faith, and conscience. In a world where convictions are increasingly challenged, it is vital to reflect on the biblical principles that uphold the sacredness of freedom, particularly the freedom to worship and live according to our conscience.

The Divine Gift of Conscience

Conscience is a gift from God, written into the very fabric of humanity. As Paul writes in Romans 2:15, "Who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them." God's law is inscribed on the hearts of all people, bearing witness through the inner voice that discerns right from wrong. This moral compass, guided by the Holy Spirit, is central to our accountability to God. Religious liberty is grounded in the recognition of this divine gift, affirming that each person must freely choose their response to God's call.

Freedom Rooted in Scripture

The Bible is replete with examples that affirm religious liberty. From God's command in Deuteronomy 30:19 to "choose life," to Jesus' respect for free will in John 6:66-67, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you also want to go away?'" Scripture emphasizes that genuine worship must be voluntary. Coercion contradicts the heart of God's design for humanity. True liberty allows every individual to pursue their faith journey without fear of compulsion or restriction.

The Responsibility to Protect Religious Liberty

Religious liberty is not only a personal right but a shared responsibility. As Christians, we are called to protect the freedom of all people, regardless of their faith. Galatians 5:13, ""For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another," reminds us to use our liberty to serve others in love, creating an environment where diverse beliefs can coexist peacefully. This commitment reflects the character of Christ, who ministered with compassion and respected individual choice.

The Challenge of Modern Times

In today's polarized society, religious liberty faces challenges from every side. Governments, cultural shifts, and misunderstandings about faith have created tensions that threaten the conscience's sacred space. This magazine seeks to address these issues with a biblical lens, providing resources, insights, and stories that inspire courage, wisdom, and compassion.

We invite you to embark on this journey with us as we explore how to honor conscience, defend freedom, and reflect Christ in a world that desperately needs His truth.

FORWARD

DAVIS OSIEMO

PARL MAGAZINES 2ND EDITION



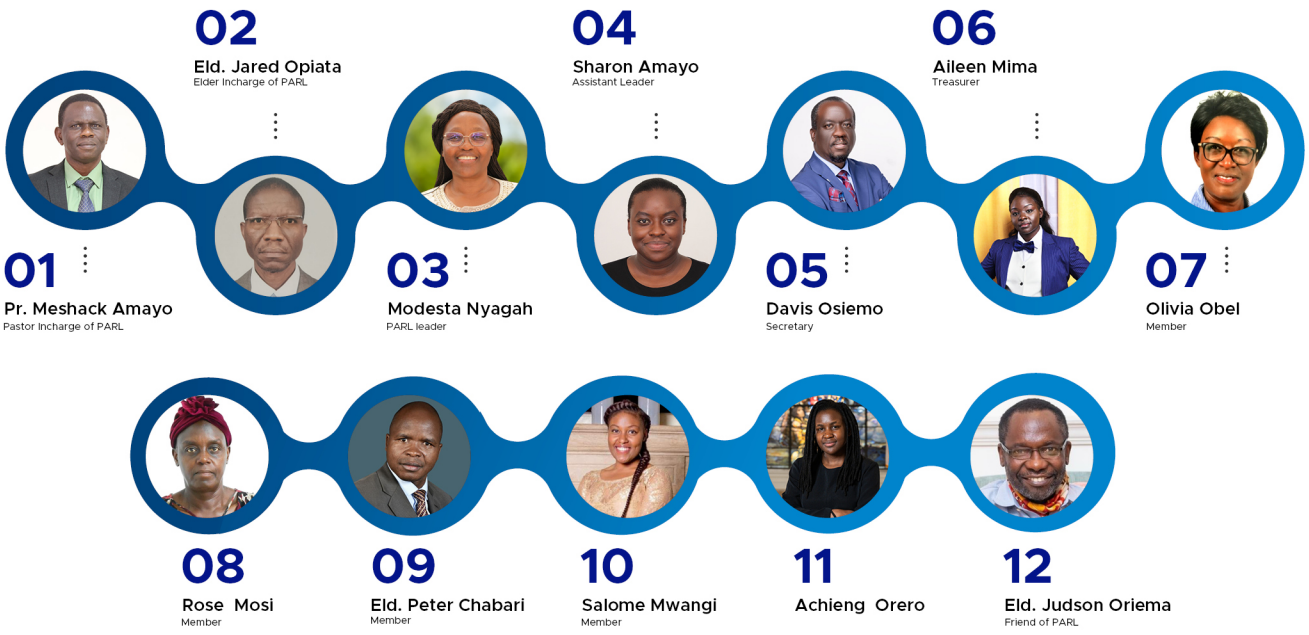
It has been a whole year since the publication of the first edition of the PARL magazine in January 2024. In the intervening period, a lot has happened in our country that impact on religious freedoms, some progressive and some ,regretably not so.

We had the Gen-Z demonstrations which held the country hostage for a few days resulting in seismic changes in the political space, we had unexplained abductions with some victims being found dead. During the same period, the Court of Appeal ruled that students in a publicly funded school cannot be compelled to attend mandatory mass and must be allowed to worship in the manner they choose. While we celebrate the progressive decisions coming from the judiciary, the abductions and unexplained murders are a cause for concern.

Now, more than ever, we need to pray for our country so that the hard earned freedoms are not stifled in any way. In this edition, we have interesting articles touching on various topical issues, from Politics and the Christian, Estate Planning , and Disciplinary matters touching on children. We trust you will find the articles informative .

THE TEAM

PARL COUNCIL MEMBERS 2023/2024



PARL

PROF EDWIN ABUYA



Planning Your Estate

Is estate planning un-African? In my professional life I have encountered clients who raise this question. While it looks a bit weird, one's perception of a particular issue can affect whether they embrace it or not.



Abraham, as is recorded in Genesis 25:5, "gave all that he had to [his son] Isaac". The issue of planning one's estate is important now, as it was during the biblical times. One can ask several questions in the context of this issue. This piece attempts to answer some of the common questions relating to planning one's estate.

Why should you plan your estate?

In addition to reducing any potential conflict among family members (and the associated legal fees), planning your estate will enable you to choose the person(s) who inherit your possessions and valuables. Further, it also gives you a chance to name the guardian(s) of any child in the event that you die. Moreover, estate planning is likely to protect your beneficiaries.

Is estate planning for the wealthy only?

No, this plan can help anyone to organise their affairs while they are still alive.



Is estate planning unAfrican?
In my professional life I have encountered clients who raise this question. While it looks a bit weird, one's perception of a particular issue can affect whether they embrace an idea or not. My response to this question is "no". Considering the benefits of organising one's life, estate planning cannot be a preserve for any race or people.

How do I plan my estate?
You can write a Will. For you to do so, you must have capacity. Put differently, you need to be:

(a) An adult i.e. above 18 years of age; and
(b) sober and of sound mind at the point of making the Will.

The capacity rule ensures that you are able to declare your wishes.

Must my Will be in writing?
No, oral expressions can also suffice. Even so, for these Wills to be legal:

(i) death must have occurred within three months of making the oral statement/ declaration; and
(ii) make the declaration in the presence of two independent witnesses. As the maker, they, too, should have capacity when you make your declaration.

What are the components of a written Will?
You need to ensure that you:

(a) capture correctly your name, contacts details and national, military ID or passport number. You should also declare that the document in question is your last Will.
(b) appoint an executor(s). This is/are the person(s) who will implement the terms of the Will. Ideally, they should not be beneficiaries (individuals who you have apportioned any property). It's important for the Will to include contact details (email, phone number, address etc) of the executor.
(c) indicate that your assets will be distributed after the executors settle any debts, funeral expenses and outstanding taxes.
(d) outline your assets, indicate the beneficiary(ies) and, if applicable, the portion that a beneficiary should receive. For ease of tracking, be sure to include the names and contact details of key persons such as caretakers (for flats/real estate etc) or relationship mangers (for bank accounts).
(e) include other pieces of information – your preferred method of sendoff (cremation or burial), timelines for reading the Will, mode of conducting the final rites and place of burial.

Can I change or cancel my Will?
Definitely. In the event of the former, you need to ensure that the change complies with the requirements for drawing a Will (flagged above).

Can my Will be challenged in court?
Yes, it can. To ensure that your wishes carry the day, be sure to comply with the rules flagged above.

Are there any other bits and pieces of information that I should consider?
Yes, the document must be signed by at least two witnesses. They, too, must have capacity. Ideally, they should be individuals who know you. Again, for ease of follow-up, you must include their contact details. Lastly, it is in your interest to obtain professional advice prior to signing off the final document.

PARL

AMB. PROF. HON. SAM K. ONGERI, EGH.



POLITICS AND RELIGION IN KENYA

Religious liberty is one of the foundational doctrinal teachings of the Seventh-Day Adventist (SDA) Church. The church believes and teaches that God is not a vindictive and capricious tyrant, who imposes His will upon humanity, and who He is quick to chasten at the slightest opportunity. God recognizes that unlike mindless robots, humans have the capacity to make judicious choices and considered judgment. As a corollary, the church believes that the liberty to choose either to walk with God or not is an inalienable freedom that defines the relationship between the Almighty and man (Joshua 24:14-15). This means that God grants humanity the liberty to worship Him or not, which freedom then lies at the very foundation of religious liberty.

So critical is the matter of religious liberty to the SDA Church that it is marked annually as an important aspect of worship in its calendar.

What has been the relationship between the church and government in Kenya within the framework of religious liberty and the teachings of the church?

First and foremost, it is important to note that two decades after Kenya's independence in 1963, the government declared Kenya a five-day working nation, thereby according Christians the freedom to worship on Saturday and Sunday. Needless to state, the major beneficiary of this olive branch from the government and the political class was the SDA Church, the only denomination that observes Saturday, the Sabbath, as the day of rest and worship. Recognition of Sabbath by the government as a day of rest was the result of negotiations and persuasion of government by members of the SDA Church that held positions of leadership therein.

The philosophical foundation of religious liberty, which the Church cherishes, is based on biblical scripture. This relationship between the Church and the State is articulated in the counsel of Christ Himself, which urges the former to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar (Mark 12:17). This advice means that the Church and State should not hold adversarial or confrontational positions against each other, as is often mistakenly perceived.

Seventh-Day Adventists believe that the State exercises its authority on behalf of God, who is the supreme source and author of all authority in heaven and on earth, and who deserves worship.

For this reason, curtailment of religious liberty is tantamount to undermining God's authority.

The view of God as the supreme source of instruction is articulated in the text by the SDA Church's Fundamental Beliefs, a document that outlines its doctrinal teachings.

It is God's design that His will be done on earth as it is in heaven, without let or hindrance (Luke 11, Matthew 6, and John 17). It was God's intention to govern His people, in our case, Israel, through His anointed leaders (kings and prophets) in whom He imparted divine knowledge, wisdom and understanding. But with time, Israel demanded for an earthly king (1 Samuel 8:20).

The clamour for and subsequent installation of an earthly king upon Israel was, to some extent, a rejection of God's will upon His people. But God granted them liberty of choice.

That all authority, including that which is secular and vested in earthly leadership that we install as humans is sanctioned by God is incontestable as enunciated in Romans 13:1. Coming as it is from God, such secular authority cannot be used to deny the Church the liberty to worship God as He has prescribed.

Perhaps cognizant of Jesus' and Paul's tacit endorsement of their legitimacy, many leaders have laid claim to a share in absolute authority, which is the exclusive preserve of God.

The philosophy that underlies the SDA's belief in the separation of the Church and State is that both occur at different tiers on the hierarchy of authority, with one sitting on the earthly layer, which is prone to infallibility, while the other sits on the heavenly throne, about which

the question of infallibility does not arise.

Therefore, where the will of God is in danger of being compromised in the context of the attempt to synchronize Church and State instruments of governance, the will of God should be accorded precedence since it is the supreme source of authority in the management of human affairs.

It is in light of this philosophy that SDAs believe that the Church and State can coexist as institutions on earth without undermining God's authority.

Acknowledging that all authority such as that held and exercised by government and political leaders comes from God does not in any way place such secular authority at par with divine authority. The basic understanding of this principle should be that earthly leadership derives its authority from the real source of authority, God. Viewed this way, it becomes clear that political and other earthly leaders exercise their mandate in the place of God. However, this does not ascribe to them the power to undermine the God-given religious liberty that the Church should enjoy.

As God's appointed agency on earth, the Church plays the role of an umpire in the footsteps of His prophets where earthly leadership may exhibit the excesses of unchecked authority and power, or where morality is the borne of contention. Accordingly, the Church cannot be an umpire and a companion of the State simultaneously.

The Church believes moral and spiritual questions are better discerned and resolved spiritually, while the secular world prescribes, often in law or through some form of consensus, how such questions may be resolved. This is the point of divergence between the Church and State, and this is the stage at which the SDA Church opts to remain rooted in Scripture in its opposition to the emasculation of divine authority. Such freedom to disagree is a value cherished by the Church.

In circumstances where the law of the land and the law of God are in conflict, the Church is compelled to cite Scripture as the beacon of judgement. However, the Church has often come under attack as an institution that is so conservative that it is blind to change as modern and contemporary trends demand. Critics of the Church even believe that such conservatism is a threat to religious liberty.

This perceived conservatism is premised on the scriptural principle that the character of God is invariable as He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13: 8). Religious liberty then is not limitless. If God's will is, for example, that marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman, His will excludes same-sex relationships from the union termed marriage. This precept is not amenable to amendment as would the law of man, which may anchor its reasoning on human rights as the basis for amendment and subsequently recognize same-sex marriage. It is at this point that guidance is needed to guarantee religious liberty in so far as it does not contradict God's law.

This means that were the Church and the world elect to walk shoulder by shoulder in all matters, God's will upon humanity would be eventually undermined significantly in preference to government and governance without morals. This is why the Church should retain its role as the Vox Dei (voice of God) when aberration from social mores occurs among humans.

Division of labour and roles between the Church and State does not in any way mean or even imply that both institutions cannot coexist or partner in collaborative engagements. If the Church and State understand their roles in social development, no adversarial relationship can arise between them.

When King Solomon purposed to complete building the Temple of the Lord, he enlisted the support of King Hiram of Tyre, who supplied cedar timber for construction (1 Kings 5). This is a perfect example of a working relationship between the Church and the world around it. The Temple was completed through diplomatic ties established between Israel and Tyre. This demonstrates how political leadership as human agencies may be involved in God's work.

Indeed, Ellen White welcomed the move by the colonial government of Zimbabwe to donate land to the SDA Church, where Solusi University stands today. Her counsel about the government's donation to the church was instrumental in changing and influencing the thinking of the SDA Church about the relationship between the Church and the State as partners rather than adversaries in development.

Since 1963, the SDA Church in Kenya has maintained a cordial but principled relationship with the State and/or government. Indeed, many leaders from the former Nyanza Province have held senior government positions in the Judiciary, Executive and Legislative arms of government, and served as judges, ministers (Cabinet secretaries), Permanent Secretaries, ambassadors, Members of Parliament, District Commissioners, Police Commissioners, university Vice-chancellors, Heads of State Departments and parastatals, the highest being the Office of Chief Justice and Chief Secretary to Government. This shows that the Church has been accorded commendable recognition by the government. In reciprocation, the Church has maintained a non-confrontational approach to government policies. Matters that seem to put the





Church and State on a collision course have always been resolved amicably.

The Church has benefited from this relationship with the government in many ways. For example, to date, SDA-sponsored institutions of learning receive government capitation for development, besides teachers employed and paid by the Teachers' Service Commission.

It should be remembered that religious liberty has also been guaranteed in our institutions of learning to a large extent, with SDA students accorded opportunity to worship on Sabbath. Further, even the main examining body for basic education, the Kenya National Examinations Council, as well as public colleges and universities do not administer examinations on Sabbath.

Additionally, most institutions, including those maintained by SDA churches, are situated on land donated by government. Indeed, University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, stands on land that was provided by the government of the Republic of Kenya. The university was also granted a Charter by the government, thereby according it the autonomy and authority enjoyed by other universities in offering academic programmes for conferment of degrees as envisaged and required by the government's Commission for University Education.

As if to confirm further that the SDA Church and government are partners in social transformation, the latter has in the recent past allowed the establishment of the Adventist Africa University (AUA) in Nairobi and also recognized its academic programmes.

Furthermore, the health facilities of the church such as Kendu-Bay Mission Hospital in Homa-Bay County, Nyanchwa Adventist Hospital in Kisii County and others located in many parts of the country have been licensed to offer medical services to surrounding communities. Patients seeking medical attention are also allowed to access the government's National Hospital Insurance Fund for treatment.

The Church received personal donations for development from former Presidents Daniel Moi and Mwai Kibaki (both deceased), and Uhuru Kenyatta, as well as the current president, His Excellency Dr. William Ruto, in its branches across the country.

Though a public institution, the Kenyatta University administration granted the SDA Church land on which the local Adventist community erected its church.

Such acts of kindness show how religious liberty has been accorded its pride of place in the fabric of government systems. In keeping with the spirit of mutual recognition and partnership, the government has always involved the SDA Church in events marking national and international celebrations.

In February, 2023, Pastor Dr. Ted Wilson, the SDA General Conference President, who is the Church's global leader, visited Kenya and held talks with President Ruto, who holds the highest political and government office in Kenya. They discussed Church and development. The visit sent a strong message that the Church and political class can collaborate in uniting people for development and promotion of the will of God on earth.

It is incumbent upon the SDA Church to fortify its department of religious liberty and use it to build bridges with government and nongovernmental agencies, to nurture a God-fearing people. This collaborative strategy should not be mistaken for compromise.

However, religious liberty is not synonymous with permissiveness, as the former is premised, anchored and practiced in the context of the immutable law of God. God has not left man to his own devices, as it were, in a world without guidance. Cognizant of the frailty of man, God put in place ordinances, commandments, and statutes to govern human conduct before and after the fall of man. Such guidance spells out how humans should worship God and relate with one another.

In conclusion, it should be understood that religious liberty is the only way through which God's will upon His people can be guaranteed and actualized.

PARL

AILEEN YONAH-MIMA

THE PARL ACTIVITIES 2024

The first edition of the Department's Magazine, "PARL", was launched on the 27th January 2024 at the Nairobi Central SDA Church. A total of 500 magazines were published and we had the privilege of having Pr. Joel Okindo (PARL Director, East and Central Division) offer dedicatory prayer over the magazines before distribution

The year commenced with the PARL council training that was held on 21st January 2024. The council members were taken through the PARL biblical foundations, policies and mandate of the department.

The PARL Sabbath was held on 27th January 2024 and the theme of the day was ***Gems Present in SDA Beliefs*** About freedom: a unique voice in advocacy of Religious liberty. The speaker of the day was Pr. Jeremy Marambi, the Executive Secretary, Central Kenya Conference and the title of his sermon was Religiously "Incorrect". The Sabbath afternoon panel discussion touched on the relationship of the church and the state; where the panelists shared on how the church can relate with the state and how members of the church who are in the civic space can add their voices in state affairs.



PARL Magazine

The first edition of the Department's Magazine, "PARL", was launched on the 27th January 2024 at the Nairobi Central SDA Church. A total of 1,000 magazines were published and we had the privilege of having Pr. Joel Okindo (PARL Director, East and Central Division) present in church and together with the Nairobi Central SDA church pastors to pray over the magazines before distribution. The newsletters were distributed amongst the church members and the neighboring Seventh-day Adventist churches as well. The magazine was available in both hardcopy and e-copy.

The church had the privilege of having Dr. Ganoune Diop, GC Director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty preach at the Nairobi Central SDA Church and later on had a meeting with some of the council members and church leadership.

Sabbath School Rally

The Branch Sabbath School Rally was held on 8th June 2024 at Nairobi School and the PARL Department through Eld. Judson Oriema made a presentation touching on the role that the PARL department plays when it comes to advocating for religious liberty in schools.

Legal Aid

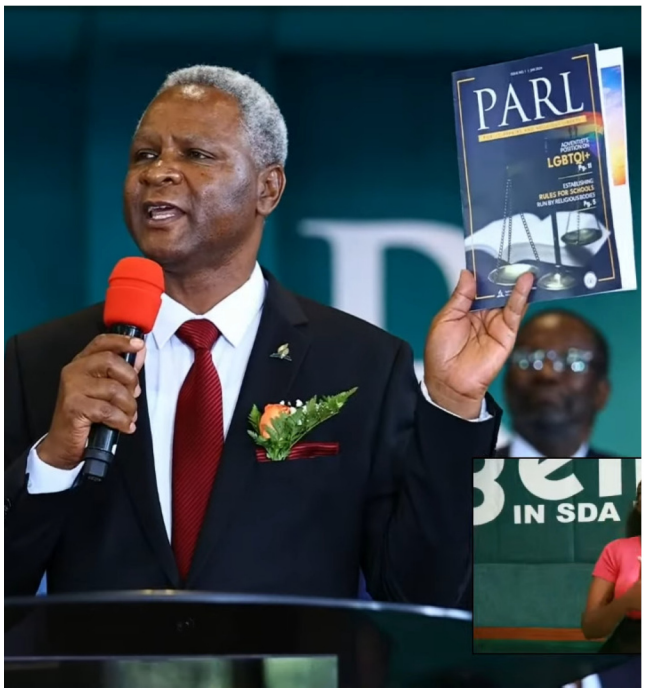
The department in conjunction with the Singles Department organized for a free legal Aid clinic that was held on 28th July 2024. We had legal minds drawn from within Nairobi Central SDA church and other churches come and provide free legal services.

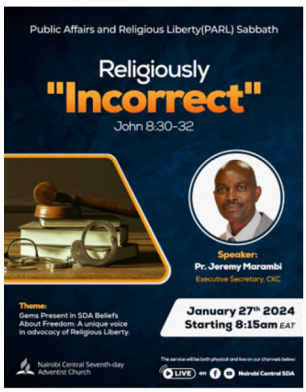
The legal services were tailored to suit the different needs of the members who came ranging from Litigation, Probate and Administration and Family law.

The day had two sessions with the first one being a common session and the main speakers was Advocate Elvis Abenga. The speaker touched on Family law and what available help is there and how to get it.

All Africa Congress

The All Africa Religious Liberty Association (AARLA) organized the 4th All Africa congress in Arusha, Tanzania from the 17th September 2024 – 21st September 2024. The theme for the Congress was Peaceful Coexistence In Africa: The Undeniable Value Of Human Conscience. The congress brought together religious liberty leaders, top government officials, academics, and legal experts from across Africa. The congress attracted speakers of experience on matters of peace and conflict resolution, at the global, Continental, regional, community and family levels and there were short presentations from invited speakers both at the plenary and break-out sessions that allowed participants for Q&A questions, comments in a very interactive atmosphere. Some of the PARL council members attended this powerful congress that was both interactive, insightful, impactful and knowledgeable.











PARL

ELD. JUDSON ORIEMA



BRINGING UP A DISCIPLINED CHILD AMID LEGAL & RELIGIOUS CHECKS

By and large, every parent wants the best for their children. More often than not, the best characters are developed and achievements realized by disciplined children. This is because they listen and obey instructions better, are more patient and controlled, and are more likely to win favors from business and social contacts with whom they deal. It therefore follows that most parents want to bring up disciplined and obedient children

While most parents desire and genuinely try to bring up disciplined children, this is not an easy task. To begin with, parenting does not come with a manual, hence many have to keep guessing the 'dos' and 'don'ts' as they move along. Where one is privileged to be advised by more experienced parents, the pieces of advice vary and may be contradictory. Besides, children are born with different characters and orientations, hence what may have worked for one set of parents may not necessarily work for another.

Another aspect that complicates parent's role is set of value systems and existing laws. First there are the general moral values that prevail in different social groupings. For instance, there are social setups where any adult can correct or rebuke an erring child, even when they are not the parent or direct guardian. In other social fabrics, it is okay for young people to question issues and advance their points of view, even when it does not augur well with the adults. Such issues may challenge a parent's approach to shaping their children's character.

More limitations to what parents can do to bring up disciplined children arise from the formal laws of the land. These include the grand-law, or the Constitution, and parliamentary legislation like The Children's Act (2022), and the Basic Education Act. These laws make provisions that parents must obey. These sets of law are more limiting in terms of a parent's choices of disciplinary actions to be meted on their children should they err, compared to the general societal moral values or norms. Disobedience of the former attracts the sanction of the law, while one can lightly get away with ignoring or disobeying the latter.

Yet another source of counsel or instructions on how to tackle children's discipline is the Bible. The Bible's instructions are of great moral force and conviction to Christians, and therefore play a big role in parenting. This is because the application of the biblical principles by a practicing Christian is done out of personal conviction rather than external sanctions.

Below are a few key provisions of the law in Kenya as relates to the handling of children, and a few biblical texts that guide Christians in shaping the characters of their children.

i. The Laws of the land

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 makes specific provisions for the protection of children. Article 53(1) requires a child to be protected against abuse, neglect, harmful practices, all forms of violence, inhumane treatments and punishment and hazardous or exploitative labor. These constitutional provisions regulate and/or control the manner in which parents may wish to inculcate values or behaviors in their children. In shaping the character of a child, one may employ some forms of punishment that may be considered as beyond the threshold of legality. It is debatable, for instance, if canning an errant child would be permissible, and even then, how much canning is allowable.

The same article 53(1), paragraph (b) gives a child the right to free and compulsory basic education. The immediate question that arises is what does a parent do if, as is always the case, there is no institution that offers absolutely free basic education (forget that the government even talks of free secondary education)?

Another complication may arise where a child declines or resists taking the "compulsory" basic education, or resists taking such education. What then can a parent legally do to comply with this legal provision? Can a parent be blamed in such circumstances?

Article 53(1)(c) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 entitles a child to basic nutrition, shelter and healthcare. Obviously the first port of call for a child to expect these rights is the parent, and ultimately, the state. But the complication comes when the parent(s) genuinely cannot afford the basic rights. Are the parents then to take the blame? And in circumstances where a parent is incapable



of providing a child's basic need, would they retain an authoritative or convincing enough voice in directing the minor's behavior? The current "liberated" generation is most likely to ask why they should obey someone who cannot provide their basic needs! What options are such a parent left with?

Further provisions are made in the statute now known as The Children's Act (2022) that has replaced The Children's Act (2001), which had itself largely mirrored the convention on the Rights of Children and The African Charter. The current Act has aligned the provisions in line with the broad provisions already referred to in The Constitution of Kenya (2010).

- While The Children's Act (2001) only abolished corporal punishment for child offenders by the penal institutions, leaving loopholes for parents to still administer the same, The Children's Act (2022) completely outlaws corporal punishment. This is one of the guiding principles in Section 25 of the Act, which guarantees the right and freedom from torture to the child.
- The new Act elaborately defines what the Best Interest Considerations are, and in the 1st Schedule lists 17 factors that these would constitute, as opposed to merely being stated as was in the former Act.
- The new Act establishes new institutions and expands the roles of the existing old ones, among them being: The office of the Secretary of Children Services, the National Council of Children Services, the Welfare Centers in the County Government, the Child Welfare Funds, among others.
- The new Act has also established an elaborate system of dealing with children in conflict with the law.

The net effect of the above provisions in the Children's Act (2022) is to expand the role and extent of government involvement in shaping the development of a child. This, no doubt, limits or interferes with the extent to which a parent can deal with aspects of a child's behavior that influence the development of their character. It is a tricky call for a parent to shape the character of a child when certain of the measures they may want to take will be outside what is permissible by the provisions of the aforesaid Act.

Section 4 of the Basic Education Act also expressly abolished corporal punishment, besides cruel and inhumane treatment of children in school. The result, of course, is that the child cannot be caned in school, at home or in the penal institution. Without this manner of punishment, which used to be an accepted way of compelling obedience from children, the authority of parents, guardians and teachers over the behavior of children has been greatly curtailed. There then had to be alternative ways of shaping a child's character other than through these pain inflicting forceful methods.

Clearly, the traditional methods of unbridled absolute freedom of the parents to bring up and shape the character of their children are now greatly curtailed by municipal laws. Similarly, the changing societal fabric has curtailed the extent to which the community may help shape a child's character. The society is now more individualistic and independent of one another. To a large extent, each person/family tends to mind their business.

Millennial parents would, for instance, take offence if a neighbor reported their young ones' bad behaviors. Such a neighbour would rather stay aloof the next time they spot misconduct from the said children.

ii. Biblical guidance to parenting

Christian parents receive their counsel on parenting from the Bible. The key verses that give such guidance include Proverbs 13:24, which states: "He who spares his rod hates his son. But he who loves him disciplines him promptly". This counsel has been embraced and praised for the better discipline that the older parents were able to inculcate in their children. The question, however, has always been the extent, and frequency to which the rod can be used in disciplining a child.

The idea of punishment for wrongdoing is a principle found in the Bible, even with regards to adults. It is no doubt a measure of discipline or deterrence from wrongdoing. Proverbs 3:12 actually says that "whom the Lord loves, He corrects, just as a father does to a son in whom he delights". A similar advise is amplified by Hebrews 12:6 in the following terms: "For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."

But the same Bible also cautions parents against provoking children. Colossians 3:21 advices fathers not to "provoke your children, lest they become discouraged". No doubt this is moderation of the counsel not to spare the rod, and appeals for reasonableness in handling children. Provocation has a connotation of originating a strife, and the counsel against it would seem to be an attempt to avoid such situations. The dilemma a parent would be faced with is how to avoid a strife with a child that is going wayward even where friendly counsel has been tried in vain.

In a nutshell, bringing up a disciplined child in Kenya today is a challenge parents face, especially as there is hardly any prior training provided to parents. It is further complicated by surrounding factors and circumstances, value systems and laws. Perfection, however, is utopia and a parent can only try their best in their unique circumstances and leave the rest to God.

PARL

REFLECTION

MODESTA NYAGAH



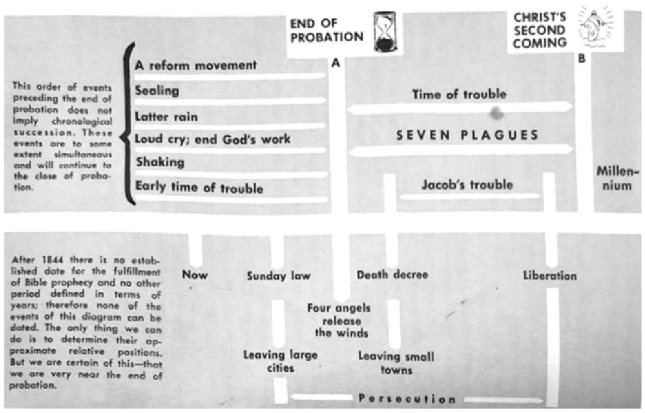
END TIME UPDATES

'Hold fast till I me', says the Lord

The name of our church is 'Seventh Day Adventist'. The Adventists focus on the Second coming of Jesus Christ, which is the blessed Hope of the Church.

In view of the SDA understanding of the "Great Controversy" and the climactic events of human history involving union of the church and state, eliminating the freedom of worship, resulting in persecution of the faithful remnant, the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) monitors and seeks to prudently interpret current trends that may reflect the prophetic scenario.

The table below shows a glimpse of the last day events.



The above table and excerpts below are from the first edition of Fernado Chaij, (1966), "Preparation for final crisis".

This is a survey of the immediate future, extending our gaze as far as the return of Christ, with a panoramic vision of the events that will confront us until the day of our final liberation.
This edition bears a summary on;

- A reform movement
- The sealing
- The latter rain,
- The loud cry, and
- The early time of trouble.

The listing of these events in this order does not imply they will occur in the same sequence. Some of them may occur simultaneously.

A Reform Movement
In view of the earth-shaking events that are about to occur in "the day of the Lord" church members must be awakened by a voice of alarm. They must seek a profound and genuine conversion - one of the heart. A revival of true godliness must be effected in the church in preparation for the great events of the time of the end.

There is no doubt that we have arrived at the very eve of this hour. Therefore, this call to genuine reformation must resound now throughout the globe.

The Sealing.
In order to prepare His children for the time of trouble, God desires to stamp upon them the seal of His law, character, and perfection. The ongoing process will soon be over. Actually, sealing concerns individuals and can be described as a process that starts at conversion and ends with the close of probation, whether at the death of the believer or at the end of the investigative judgement. Only those who are prepared can be sealed, and only those who are sealed can pass successfully through the time of trouble and enter into the presence of the Lord at His second coming. The preparation consists of cleansing from sin, and victory over every weakness and defect.

The latter rain - the loud cry, and the finishing of the work.
To hasten the completion of the gospel commission, God desires to pour out on His people the latter rain of the Holy Spirit. Thus, as the early rain prepared the apostolic church to proclaim the good news of salvation with success and efficiency in all parts of



their world, so shall the outpouring of divine power enable the people of God today to complete the work and reach every nation, tribe, tongue, and people with the last evangelic message. The promise of the latter rain is for today, not future. But an indispensable prerequisite for its fulfillment is that the great majority of church members consecrate themselves completely to God, denying self, repudiating sin in all its forms, and seeking the Lord with humility.
Shortly, the loud cry of the message must be given. Accompanied by a manifestation of divine power, the earth will be lit with the glory of the Lord, and the work will be finished according to the plan and promise of God. See Revelation 18:1-4.

A special process of reform and sanctification will be needed among the ranks of the Church, affecting majority of members, in preparation for the latter rain, the loud cry, and the finishing of the gospel task.

The shaking
The shaking is another of the great events that will affect the Church during the time of grace (probation). This term suggests that some who are numbered among the people of God will apostatize. Many Adventists will leave the ranks because they did not accept with all their hearts the divine call to conversion and complete consecration, and because they rejected the message of Christ to the church of Laodicea, a message of repentance and reform of life, maintaining only a formal and superficial experience. When the great hour of crisis for the Church arrives and persecution begins with the enforcement of a general Sunday law, many will desert. Some of them will become our worst enemies.

Only a complete surrender of life to God and a constant experience of growing in grace will safeguard us from this great danger, and keep us united with the host of consecrated men and women who will gloriously triumph when Jesus appears.

The early time of trouble
The last hours of probationary time will be tempestuous and difficult for the world and children of God. In the world, even while the four angels are holding the winds, war, confusion, political problems, economic and social distress, disintegration of the family, fear, and worry will increase.

Governments, although they may try so hard, will not be able to cope with the complex problems confronting them. This early time of trouble, to which Jesus referred in Luke 21:25, comes before the great time as probation closes. Trouble will begin soonest.

For God's people, the early time of trouble will be made more serious by persecution, to which they will be subjected by apostate powers. Nevertheless, God will be with them to fortify them and help them to live triumphantly and suffer gladly for His sake. "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience," promises the Lord to the persecuted, "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man takes thy crown." Revelation 3:10,11.

PARL

PR. MESHACK AMAYO

ULTIMATE FREEDOM

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."
John 8:36.

Created to be free, we all seek freedom. The foundation of Freedom is God.

Worship needs to be done at a state of being free. People today want to be in a position of doing, speaking, gathering, thinking, believing, wearing, worshipping and generally acting without any restraint whatsoever.

The search for freedom is a desire for every heart. Naturally we were created by God to be free. But there is no freedom without God. All freedom that the world offers have their side effects but having freedom inside Christ, is a step made inside peace. In Christ our conscience remains free while having boundaries of eternal realms.

Christ said, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." John 8:36. When you are in Christ you'll feel no boundary while naturally you are under a cage of protection. It protects against diseases, overtones in worship, infringing others territories, and against sin. Christ is a freedom provider.



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