

**1. LESSONS FROM FISHING:** I recently read an excerpt from Max Lucado's book, *In the Eye of the Storm*, (p 57) that seemed appropriate as we begin a new year.

"When those who are called to fish don't fish, they fight. When energy intended to be used outside is used inside, the result is explosive. Instead of casting nets, we cast stones. Instead of extending helping hands, we point accusing fingers. Instead of being fishers of the lost, we become critics of the saved. Rather than helping the hurting, we hurt the helpers.

The result? Church Scrooges. «Bah humbug' spirituality. Beady eyes searching for warts on others while ignoring the warts on the nose below. Crooked fingers that bypass strengths and point out weaknesses.

Split churches. Poor testimonies. Broken hearts. Legalistic wars. And, sadly, poor go unfed, confused go uncounseled, and lost go unreached. When those who are called to fish don't fish, they fight.

But note the other side of this fish tale: When those who are called to fish, fish—they flourish!"

**2. NEW PRESIDENT FOR ATLANTIC UNION COLLEGE:**

Dr. James J Londis has accepted the invitation from the Board of Trustees to serve as president of this historic New England institution. He replaces Dr. Larry Geraty who accepted a call to serve as president of La Sierra University.

**3. ON A PERSONAL NOTE** between today and January 10 I'll be attending two consultations out of town, spend one day in the office, and then on the 12th it's off to Africa. Current plans call for meeting with government leaders in Zaire followed by gatherings with our believers in Kinshasa and other cities. The latter part of the week will include a visit to the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) in Rwanda and the second weekend (1/22) we will attend a mass gathering in Kigali, Rwanda, to celebrate the baptism of the one millionth member in the Africa-Indian Ocean Division. After a brief visit to Madagascar we will fly home, arriving just before the end of the month.

**4. INDONESIAN UPDATE:** When New Guinea is mentioned in church circles, mass baptisms and thousands of Adventist members come to mind. A membership of almost 130,000 results in one Seventh-day Adventist for every 20 in Papua New Guinea.

However, this picture is not the same on the Indonesian side of the border. Irian Jaya (which occupies the western half of the Island of New Guinea) came to the attention of Global Mission because it has only about 8,000 members scattered across some of the most rugged terrain in the world.

One family prayerfully decided to make a difference. Their objective was to establish 30 new congregations in unentered areas. To achieve this, ten new air strips were needed to be cut into the mountains and jungle. This is easy enough for me to write about, but doing it is beyond description because mountains reach elevations of almost 17,000 feet, jungles are extremely dense, and roads are almost non-existent roads.

This project has been under way for one year now. December 22, Alex Rantung, Union president wrote describing the new air strips, new jungle chapels, and the New-Work Taskforce teams all cooperating together to take the Adventist message to this vast territory. This coming April a team will be going to Irian Jaya to assess progress on this project.

**5. ADVENTIST HERITAGE YEAR:** As you know, 1994 has been declared *Adventist Heritage Year*. It marks the 150th anniversary of God's marvelous workings in the great awakening that brought our Church into being. Too often we call this the Great Disappointment. Certainly, for those who lived through it, it was a bitter experience. But for Adventists today, 1844 is a solid landmark, not of disappointment, but of our great hope. God's plan is on course. His Word is sure. He has begun the final act. Our Redeemer is near.

We will be reflecting on these great themes during the coming year. The publishing houses are releasing timely books. The *Adventist Review* will carry special articles, and the General Conference will unveil a major, feature-length film documentary about William Miller and his times. So during this new, and very special year, I hope you will reflect on "how the Lord has led us, and His teachings, in our past history."

###