



Hi everybody,

Decided to take a day off. Have to admit it always feels great to have a guardian angel watching over one (Audrey our very own Union Angel) to make sure I take time off after having a rather heavy load the past two weeks. However, sitting here this morning all alone in my flat I quickly found myself pretty bored so I thought I would write a few words of encouragement or

perhaps should I say not so encouraging words. I have basically had the privilege of working in the local church part and full-time since 1995. It has truly been a wonderful and life transforming experience. I can honestly say that each day is different. Just when you think you have seen and experienced all there is to see something new happens!

As some of you are aware of I am now working as youth director for the Swedish Union. At first I was very nervous but the more I am exposed to youth ministry and all the dynamics of working with children, teenagers, youth and families the more exciting it becomes. I actually feel a lot younger and more energized as I rub shoulders with young people. The energy and dedication of many of these young people is just amazing. In fact I experienced this first hand both in Malmö and last week at Ekebyholm. It has become clear to me that right now in Sweden we have a revival amongst our youth and young people. *We are truly a church that is on the move.* This gives me hope for the future.

However, as I travel around the country and visit our congregations and speak to our members I still find attitudes among certain groups that frankly instead of supporting this revival try instead to control or even limit such a revival. There are still various universal signs I see that indicate to me that the church needs to seriously re-evaluate what it is doing if we are to have any lasting impact in our society with the gospel. Here are just a few we need to think about. Hope it gets us thinking so that we at least try and make the necessary changes in the way we think and run our churches. *In other words there is something foundationally wrong with the church when:*

- The church actually become content with having people visit or join us very Sabbath rather than actually going out in order to finding lost people and build meaningful relationships with them. In other words,

we must never lose our passion for evangelism! If we do we have no biblical mandate for our existence as Christians and more importantly as Seventh-day Adventists.

- The church body, both individually and corporately, are happy being reactive rather than proactive. I am convinced that people today are not cared what we have to say until they know we care. The slogan today is: Don't tell me a sermon, show me a sermon. As such we should actually be at the forefront when it comes to issues like slavery, injustice, environmental issues etc. People are watching us. They want to see that what we preach and teach is practically lived out in all areas of our lives.
- We the members of the church lose sight of the next generation and refuse to fund and support youth ministry simply because we don't understand or approve of our young people.
- The goal of the church is to simply maintain the way things are – In other words don't rock the boat or upset anyone in the church especially the "people of influence" (also known as doorkeepers) and of course the "big givers"!
- And finally, when the leaders, pastors and of course active lay people refuse to go the extra mile in leading and serving in the church because of how "inconvenient" their lives become. We must never forget that we are ALL CALLED to serve God.

Well, as you understand I feel a lot better now having ventilated my thoughts. Will now try to sit back and relax a few hours.

God bless

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