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EDITORIAL

Abundant Living

Papers from the *AIAS Forum*, Jan 28-30, 2010

Everyone wants to be happy, and most people would agree that health and happiness are frequently correlated. Unfortunately, current trends in our world today show an increase in lifestyle diseases, even in developing countries, and even among children. Jesus said, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly (John 10:10). Of course, He was talking about spiritual life, but it is clear from other passages in the Bible that He also meant for us to have good physical health. Along with the Bible writer, in this issue, we “wish above all things that you may prosper and be in good health” (3 John 1:2).

The *Graduate School Forum* was held January 28-30, 2010 on the AIAS campus, with the theme *Abundant Living*. Papers based on some of the major presentations from this 3-day conference are published in this issue of *International Forum*. Presenters were selected in advance and invited to present in their areas of expertise. Because these were invited addresses, and because this issue of the journal is dedicated to covering that event, these papers were edited and prepared for publication, but did not undergo the normal external peer-review process.

Health is a topic that has long been a focus for the Adventist Church, and the world is beginning to sit up and take notice, not only of the Adventist health message, but also of the studies showing that Adventists tend to live longer and healthier lives. This is definitely a time when, more than ever, the message needs to be shared, not only amongst church members, but with a world in need. It is clear that the world today is ignoring, or may even be unaware, of the way to health and happiness, even though there is much information available.

Hullquist reminds us that breakfast is important, not only for good health, but also in order to sustain thinking ability. Amazingly, with all the breakfast-eating literature available, an increasing number of adolescents, instead of eating what the body needs, are skipping breakfast or are eating foods that are highly refined and/or high in fats.

Galvez leads us on a historical tour to show how philosophy and biblical history can help us better understand why our health is important, and what we can do to maintain better health. He demonstrates that since the body is connected; our physical health, spirituality, and psychological mindset all affect each other. Biblical concepts mesh with modern ideas of health, and demonstrate their consistency with scientific findings.

Health education, however, has not kept pace with the times. The trio of articles that complete this issue of *International Forum* focus on new and better ways of sharing the health message, so that it will be more effective. Estrada suggests targeting specific groups with a message designed for them, rather than using a 'one size fits no one' approach. Dela Torre picks up on a similar theme, focusing mainly on targeting children and early adolescents in schools. The idea is to work with the youth and help them to make good choices before they have already developed destructive health habits. Rounding out this issue, Oendo looks more generically at the traditional approach to health education and suggests how it could be improved, given what we have learned about approaches to health education and learning in the last 30 years. While the message remains essentially unchanged, the approaches need to be tailored to the target audiences. Such adjustments would include incorporating concerns for community, culture, and relevance to the developing world, and not merely replicating approaches focusing on the individual that have been employed in the developed world.

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