

The Admiral And The Bible

(NAPSA)—Rear Admiral Barry Black, the Navy's Chief of Chaplains, says he has had a "lifelong love affair with the Word of God." He focuses each day by doing "spiritual aerobics," reading the Bible: two Old Testament chapters, a Psalm, a Proverb, two chapters from the Gospels and a chapter from one of the New Testament's letters.

Admiral Black, an ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastor who has two earned doctorates, grew up in the inner city of Baltimore. His mom was a single parent who raised eight children in what he calls "a Bible-centered world." She made the Scriptures "live in a dramatic way," helping each of her kids get on and stay on lifelong paths to achievement and success.

His boyhood allowance depended on memorizing Bible verses. Although "there was a ceiling" on how much he could earn each week, the young Barry Black focused on memorizing the Proverbs, the short and powerful words of Solomon's wisdom.

Admiral Black, addressing the luncheon to inaugurate National Bible Week 2000, said that his Bible memorization kept him on the right path as a teenager. When a couple of school friends urged him to join them to get even with someone, Proverbs chapter 1 flashed in his mind: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not...refrain thy foot from their path." He stayed home. The others went, killed a boy that day, and wound up in prison. Barry Black believes that had he gone with his friends, he too would have ended up in prison. The Bible quite literally kept him on the straight and



narrow and helped him become who he is today.

Even now, he memorizes several verses from his morning's devotions, turning them over and over in his mind. He applies them as he meets with the nation's senior military personnel and supervises the work of some 1,500 active and Reserve Navy chaplains.

The admiral says that when he speaks to younger people, they seem to want to study the Bible and learn for themselves how it applies to their lives. They ask, "what is God saying to me?"

Admiral Black says, "If the Word of God can do what it did for my family," it can have the same impact on other families and be a vital resource for all Americans. He lauds the National Bible Association for its mission of "encouraging everyone to read the Bible" and for sponsoring National Bible Week™ each year from Sunday through Sunday of the week that includes Thanksgiving. To find out more, visit www.nationalbible.org.

For Admiral Barry Black, the Bible is good for life.