We are at a time in history when the world is in need of brave leadership—leaders who are unafraid to step out with a vision and a commitment to change. The Adventist church is no exception; we need leaders who have vision and the capacity to respond continuously to change.

When speaking of change, it is useful to differentiate between first- and second-order change. First-order change works within an existing structure and involves doing more or less of something. The outcomes of the system remain the same; it is the means of producing the outcomes that change.

Second-order change involves seeing the world in a different way and challenging assumptions. It is sometimes described as transformational or disruptive, which involves new ways of doing things, changing beliefs and goals, new learning, and structural change. Brave leadership subscribes to this second type of change.

Powerful examples abound on the topic of second-order change. For the purpose of this discussion, however, we will focus on the stories of Esther and the beginnings of Adventist education. In both stories, God chose leaders that saw the world in a different way "for such a time as this."

Esther 4:14 says, "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

What traits did Esther possess that qualified her to be a brave leader? First, Esther showed extraordinary courage, perseverance, and empathy, risking her own life to approach the king to plead for the lives of her people. Working closely with Mordecai and other Jewish leaders, she developed a plan that was adapted to influence the king and reverse the edict against the Jews. Finally, Esther was humble and acknowledged her dependence on God throughout her story, refusing to compromise her faith or identity.

Our second example takes us to 1862, eighteen years after the Millerite Disappointment. W. H. Ball and James White are having the following conversation: W. H. Ball—Is it "right and consistent for us who believe with all our hearts in the immediate coming of the Lord, to seek to give our children an education?" James White—"The fact that Christ is very soon coming is no reason why the mind should not be improved. A well-disciplined

and informed mind can best receive and cherish the sublime truths of the Second Advent." Ellen White was said to be of the same opinion.

As a result of this ongoing dialogue, the General Conference established the School Committee in 1872. The first Adventist school was established in Battle Creek that same year. Today there are over 8,000 Adventist schools around the globe—the largest Protestant school system in the world. All due to the extraordinary vision, faith, and perseverance of James and Ellen White, along with other early Adventist leaders.

Today we need more brave, visionary leaders who will accept the challenge of second-order change in our institutions. As were Esther and James and Ellen White, they will be chosen of God "for such a time as this," initiating change that is timely and relevant to further the Great Commission.