

Food Services Ministry

Not Afraid to Sail Uncharted Waters

Revelation 14:6 — “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth — to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.”

Can you imagine traveling the oceans, and living a new adventure every single day? This was the dream of Joseph Bates, who grew up watching whaling ships leaving and returning to the harbour from his bedroom window. The boy's mind sailed with those boats as he grew up in New Bedford, Massachusetts. In an attempt to dissuade Joseph from his dream, his parents sent him at a young age on a short trip on a boat. Instead of getting disheartened, the young man was more inflamed than ever. During the next twenty-one years, Bates devoted himself to life at sea.

After some time living his dream, he set the goal of saving 10,000 dollars — which was a fortune at the time — with the purpose to buy a boat of his own.

He was successful and bought a vessel. However, Bates' ship was different. There were no alcoholic beverages or tobacco allowed on it. Moreover, the crew wasn't allowed to use profanity. It was during one of his trips that he found a Bible that his wife had packed in her luggage. As he read it, he felt touched by the love of Jesus.

It didn't take long for him to discover the Sabbath. Then, he looked for Seventh-day Adventists who kept the Sabbath to study this new truth. Later, Bates decided to publish a booklet where he presented the claims of the fourth commandment. His forty-eight-page volume was published in August 1846. After retiring from the sea, Bates invested his energy and money in preaching about the soon coming of Jesus and the biblical Sabbath. Bates became a mainstay of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and left a legacy that went beyond his fortune. He dedicated the remainder of his life to the cause of God.

Appeal: God calls each of us to stretch our faith, whether it's to go where He calls us, or to give regularly and systematically as He directs. Giving includes faithfully returning God's tithe and listening to His voice as He calls us to covenant with Him in giving a regular and systematic offering, called Promise, besides our tithe. He asks us to give. I challenge you to ask God, “What percentage of my income do You want me to regularly give as my Promise offering?” Then listen for His answer. Saying “yes” to God is the only way to stretch your faith.