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# THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

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# suitable for Framing

## Jesus, the Unpredictable

**T**he life and ministry of Jesus were "highly irregular." He cannot be contained within the limits of formal logic and there is no formula that will measure Him. Even in His advent, Jesus was unpredictable. He came as a Messiah to the chosen people, but He was not recognized because of His humility and suffering. No palace for Him, but a carpenter's home. Here was the Child of the ancient promise, but He was born of a virgin. Mystery indeed! The very day of His arrival seemed at first glance to be ill timed, for He was cradled in a manger away from home. Only humble shepherds heard the heavenly messengers and came to honor Him. Later on, when the wise men came to worship Him, they came from afar. Herod, the king, responded to the news with hate and with the slaughter of infants. Then Egypt (of all places!) afforded asylum to the world's Savior.

As a lad He astonished the doctors of religious law by His grasp of vital issues, and when He began to teach He spoke with authority. The trained leaders queried: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"

His concept of leadership shocked His closest followers. While they quarreled over position He reached for a towel and basin and washed their feet. He exemplified the leadership of service.

His miracles defy analysis or adequate rational explanation. He healed the blind and deaf—and lepers too. There seemed to be no incurables for Him; He even raised the dead.

His early popularity did not ensnare Him, for He assaulted wickedness in high places. He pointed out the corruption beneath their cloaks of respectability. He concluded His ministry in early manhood and left most of the planning to His followers. In fact, He entrusted His entire redemptive mission to a small band that He had tutored himself for three years, but the percentage of fishermen among them was amazingly high.

Despite the awareness of His impending death, He made no provision for a burial plot. Then a rich admirer and follower gave Him his own tomb, but it proved to be a temporary loan. On the third day the miracle of miracles happened—He rose from the dead! The news at first was credited to hysterical women, but finally the most skeptical cried out at the sight of Him, "My Lord and my God."

His departure was sudden and dramatic, and the promise then given was that He would return again. His believing followers still await that day. It could be a surprise to many, *for He is gloriously unpredictable!*

—Samuel Young

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by  
Wesley  
Tracy



## J. W. and the Kids

**J**ohn Wesley loved kids. He did more for the education of the young than any other person in the 18th century. Wesley himself said that he gave more of his time and energy to educational projects than to anything else.

Strangely enough, many of Wesley's theological descendants know next to nothing about his educational achievements. Perhaps it is because Wesley's educational eccentricities have been advertised so vigorously that we forget the valuable contributions he made. Who has not heard some radical ranter pounding the pulpit and punishing the people with a scathing quotation of Wesley's "will-breaking" passage? But many moderns are too soon outraged by Wesley's eccentricities.

Today's permissive educators slinging about "warm fuzzies" and "sloppy agape" turn tears and run at the first mention of Wesley's infamous "will-breaking" statement which he borrowed from his mother. Escaping that they might bump into a procession of young children from a Methodist school on a field trip to see a dead body and hear an exhortation on how death, sin, and hell all go together. Sooner or later they are almost sure to run into Charles Wesley's insipid hymn for children called "On Hell" which describes, with sensual vividity, the fate of impenitent children in the land of the damned.

*There their tortured bodies lie,  
Scorch'd by the consuming fire;  
There their souls in torment cry  
Rack'd with pride and fierce desire:  
Fear and grief their spirits tear  
Rage and envy and despair.<sup>1</sup>*

Again, a devout young Wesleyan majoring in developmental psychology may be hopelessly bent out of shape browsing through the *Journals* and reading Wesley's accounts of the piety of children under three years of age. Let a Wesleyan whose children are attending a Montessori school read that at Kingswood School no time, ever, was to be spent in play and we have yet another casualty. The jolt of these aforementioned eccentricities is something like what a 10-year-old Alabama lad experiences when he reads the rest of the history book and discovers that the South after all did lose the Civil War.

But if we can negotiate these "sandbars" and "rocks"

we can bring our ship of education safely into harbor and discover a rich Wesleyan heritage. It is futile to pretend the sandbars and rocks aren't there, or to try to explain them away. An interesting exercise is to note the contortions of 20th-century biographers trying to explain the ways of Wesley to Wesleyans. We learn, for example, that what Wesley really meant in proscribing play at Kingswood was that there would be no bear-baiting, cockfighting, or crapshooting on campus. Let us plainly admit that Wesley's eccentricities were sometimes as laughable as Bachelor Bill's "chain of command." Perhaps, then, we can come to an appreciation of the man who did more for education than any other person in the 18th century—John Wesley.

To understand Wesley's moves in education we need to understand the times. England was in the greedy grip of a whirlwind now called the Industrial Revolution. That whirlwind blew humanity into the cities like maple leaves before a November wind. And it left them, like leaves, piled in random heaps. Housing conditions were outrageous. Ten persons per unfurnished room was common. Horse manure polluted the unpaved streets. It was sometimes piled 14 feet high on both sides of the street in London. Diseases like typhoid, smallpox, dysentery, and cholera ravaged almost unchecked. One-fourth of the babies born died the first week of their lives. The whirlwind of industrialization blew in more people each day; disease, crime, and malnutrition removed more and more each day. In many cities the graveyard operators maintained "poor holes"—large common graves left open until the daily flow of the corpses of nameless nobodies finally filled them up.

Crimes of the most violent sort were so common they were commonly ignored. Gambling and gin drinking became the national pastimes. For the children there were the streets or the sweatshops. Schools? Only 1 child in every 25 attended any school of any kind. Into this revolution-ripe setting John Wesley came stressing as antidotes for the diseases of the times—*discipline, education, evangelism, religion, and love*. Through these the Methodists helped these sorrowful victims of squalor see their essential dignity before God.

To reach the goals of saving this society required a

thorough, multifaceted scheme of Christian education. Wesley was especially interested in the education of the young. His preachers and lay leaders were constantly reminded of this duty.

### The Preachers Were Teachers

Education was to be high on the preacher's priority list. The preacher himself was to teach the children (and adults) in the homes of his people. A preacher seeking admittance to the Conference was confronted with: "Will you diligently and earnestly instruct the children and visit from house to house?"<sup>2</sup>

Wesley counseled his preachers, "Let every Preacher, having a catalogue of those in each society go to each house. Deal gently with them. . . . Give the children the 'Instructions for Children' and encourage them to get them by heart . . . take each person singly into another room, where you may deal closely with him, about his sin, and misery, and duty."<sup>3</sup>

In 1766 he outlined the preacher's responsibility for the religious education of children.

1. Where there are 10 children in a society, meet them at least an hour every week.
2. Talk with them every time you see any at home.
3. Pray in earnest for them.
4. Diligently instruct and vehemently exhort all parents at their houses.
5. Preach expressly on education.<sup>4</sup>

One preacher objected, "But I have no gift for this." Wesley replied, "Gift or no gift, you are to do it; else you are not called to be a Methodist Preacher."<sup>5</sup>

Again the Conference of 1768 instructed the preachers to meet with the children an hour a week "whether you like or not."<sup>6</sup> "For what avails preaching alone, though we could preach like angels?" Wesley asks. "We must, yea every travelling Preacher must, instruct them from house to house."<sup>7</sup>

### Parents Were Teachers

Of course, the preachers could not alone do the task of educating the young. Parents were strongly urged to carry on family education. Wesley told the Methodists that their children were "immortal spirits whom God hath, for a time, entrusted to your care." And this He has done "that you may train them up in all holiness."<sup>8</sup> Preaching from the text "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15), Wesley told parents they must restrain their yet unconverted children through *advice*, *persuasion*, and *correction*. Correction included corporeal punishment, and Wesley reminded them that this should be done only after all else fails—"and even then you should take the utmost care to avoid the very appearance of passion. Whatever is done should be done with mildness; nay indeed with kindness too."<sup>9</sup> He declared that those who tried to thrash their children into heaven and out of hell should not think it strange "if religion stunk in the nostrils of those that were so educated. They will naturally look upon it as an austere, melancholy thing."<sup>10</sup>

To *advice*, *persuasion*, and *correction* the Christian parent was to add *instruction*. This instruction was to be done *early*, *plainly*, *frequently*, and *patiently*.<sup>11</sup> Since "the corruption of nature is earlier than our instructions can be we should take all pains to counteract this corruption as early as possible."<sup>12</sup> This project should start as soon as the child can begin to speak and understand, "because the bias of nature is set the wrong way; Education is designed to set it right."<sup>13</sup> Education aided "by the grace of God is to turn the bias from self-will, pride, anger, revenge and love of the world," Wesley goes on to say, "to resignation, lowliness, meekness, and the love of God."<sup>14</sup>

The parents were to see that each child took time "every day for reading, meditation, and prayer."<sup>15</sup> Further, family worship was to be "seriously and solemnly performed." Family worship was recommended for morning and evening and should include prayer, Bible reading, and singing of psalms. Lest some parents not know how to go about this and thus neglect it, Wesley prepared an order of service. A short prayer was used to begin the proceedings. Then the Bible was read and explained by a parent. Next, children were then to explain in their own words what the scripture meant. A longer prayer followed. Then came a doxology or benediction after which each child was to ask for a blessing from the parents. Parents were never, under any circumstances, to deny this blessing.<sup>16</sup>

Besides this, Thursday evening was to be set aside for catechizing the children. Saturday night was a special review time when each child recited what he had learned during the week.<sup>17</sup>

Besides these somewhat formal times of instruction, the parents were to use whatever opportunities came from the routine of life. For example, an April morning bathed in sunshine and punctuated with rosebuds was not to be wasted on mere aesthetics. Wesley advised the hearers of his sermon "On Family Religion" to ask the little child to look around and then ask, "What do you see there? The sun . . . feel how warm it is upon your hand! Look, how it makes the flowers to grow, and the trees and everything look green. . . . It is God who made the sun, and you, and me, and everything. . . . Think what he can do! He can do whatever he pleases. . . . He loves you; he loves to do you good. He loves to make you happy."<sup>18</sup>

Wesley made available to parents and preachers resources for the nurture of children. He published "Prayers for Families" and "Prayers for Children." Each of these contained morning and evening prayers for each day of the week. In addition "A Collection of Forms of Prayer" gave morning and evening prayers for private devotion and added questions for self-examination as well. Other materials were also provided.

Wesley himself prepared an important document for the education and spiritual nurture of children in the parish and in the home: *Lessons for Children*. It is a series of 200 Bible studies for children—all based on the Old Testament. In addition he edited a French document and called it *Instructions for Children*.<sup>19</sup> Its 58 lessons are gathered under six sections and include these subjects.

- I. God, Creation, Man, Sin, Redemption, Heaven, and Hell
- II. God and the Soul of Man
- III. How to Regulate Our Desires
- IV. How to Regulate Our Understanding
- V. How to Regulate Our Joy
- VI. How to Regulate Our Practice

### The Societies, Classes, and Bands Were to Teach

The *society* was "a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love that they may help each other to work out their salvation."<sup>20</sup> These societies were subdivided into *classes* of about 12 persons each. Each class had a *Leader* whose duties included seeing "each person in his class once a week at least, in order to inquire how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort as occasion may require; and to receive what they were willing to give toward the relief of the poor."<sup>21</sup>

The *bands* were small groups whose sharing, intimacy, and achievement rivals the best of the small-group explosion of the 60s and 70s. Their theme was "confess

your faults one to another, and pray for one another that ye may be healed." A part of every meeting was the sharing of one's answer to these questions:

1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?
2. What temptations have you met with?
3. How were you delivered?
4. What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?<sup>22</sup>

### Special Schools Were Established

The *bands*, *classes*, and *societies* deserve (and have indeed received in many places) additional attention, but, since the present exploration focuses primarily on education of the young, we shall move on to the schools John Wesley established and operated.

The Foundry was the first school which Mr. Wesley started on his own. He and the Methodists bought an old foundry for 115 pounds and spent five times that much rebuilding it as a school and society meetinghouse. It was located in a poor part of London where Wesley noted that the teeming offspring of the poor were given no schooling at all and so grew up "like the wild ass's colt."

One end of the Foundry had a long room some 20 feet wide and 80 feet long. One end was a bookstore or literature dispensary filled with Methodist literature. In 1740 the other end became a school for 60 ragamuffins from the London streets.

One of the early headmasters was Silas Told, who so cared for the down and out that he had served for 30 years as the unpaid chaplain to the condemned prisoners of Newgate. This man, hired for 26 pounds per year, was ideally suited to control Wesley's school for the poorest children in London. In addition to the teachers, two stewards were appointed. They were to see that the rules were observed, raise money for the school, and control expenditures. But they were also expected to talk with the teachers every Tuesday and to meet with the students twice each week about spiritual matters. Of particular importance were the Wednesday morning meetings in which the stewards and teachers met with the parents of the scholars "and gave them advice as to how they might plan their home-life so that its influence on their children might assist the work of the school."<sup>23</sup>

We don't know a lot about the Foundry, the first school born of John Wesley's love for poor children. But we do know that it was a place of learning for poor children for some 30 years.

The Kingswood School building was begun the same year that the Foundry became a school, 1740. George Whitefield had been "shamed" into preaching to the primitive and brutal inhabitants of the Kingswood. They were coal miners, rough, sinful, ignorant. Whitefield preached and got many converted. They wanted a school for their children. Whitefield raised 60 pounds, held a "stone-laying" ceremony, knelt and prayed "that the gates of hell might not prevail against our design,"<sup>24</sup> and then announced that he only had time to "set it on foot," but he told them that he hoped that his "honoured friend" John Wesley would take it from there and bring the school to good effect.<sup>25</sup>

The school was located three miles from Bristol in a sort of national forest. It was an ideal site for Wesley's experiment. It would at least take the scholars away from the evil influences of the city streets.

The first building was completed in 1740. It consisted of a large central room with four smaller rooms on each end. The central part of the building still stands and is called Wesley's Chapel. For several years the coal miners and their children were taught to read and write and pray there. Then on April 7, 1746, the foundation stone for a

building large enough to house boarders was laid. At that ceremony John Wesley preached from Isa. 60:22, "A little one shall become a thousand and a small one a strong nation." The three-story building was completed in 1748 and on Friday, June 24, the opening ceremonies for the New House were held. Kingswood, the boarding school, was on its way. Charles Wesley wrote a special hymn for the affair which poetically expressed the educational ideals of the Wesleys:

*Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
To whom we for our children cry,  
The good desired and wanted most  
Out of thy richest grace supply.  
The sacred discipline be given  
To train and bring them up for heaven.*

*Answer on them that end of all  
Our cares and pains, and studies here,  
On them, recovered from their fall,  
Stamp't with the heavenly character,  
Raised by the nurture of the Lord,  
To all their paradise restored.*

*Error and ignorance remove,  
Their blindness both of heart and mind,  
Give them the wisdom from above,  
Spotless, and peaceable, and kind.  
In knowledge pure their mind renew,  
And store with thoughts divinely true.*

*Learning's redundant part and vain  
Be here cut off and cast aside:  
But let them, Lord, the substance gain,  
In every solid truth abide,  
Swiftly acquire, and ne'er forego  
The knowledge fit for man to know.*

*Unite the pair so long disjointed  
Knowledge and vital piety,  
Learning and holiness combined,  
And truth and love let all men see.  
In these whom up to thee we give,  
Thine, wholly thine to die and live.*

*Father, accept them in thy Son,  
And ever by thy Spirit guide,  
Thy wisdom in their lives be shewn,  
Thy name confessed and glorified,  
Thy power and love diffused abroad  
'Till all our earth is filled with God."<sup>26</sup>*

Besides Charles' hymn John delivered one of his most important sermons on education. Wesley's text was Proverbs 22:6. In the introduction he told the gathered teachers, scholars, parents, and guests that "education . . . is to be considered as reason borrowed at second-hand, which is as far as it can, to supply the loss of original [rational] perfection."<sup>27</sup> The aim for Kingswood, then, is to teach children "how to think, and judge, and act according to the strictest rules of Christianity."<sup>28</sup> Thus such virtues as abstinence, humility, sobriety, and devotion shall be "a hundred times more regarded than any or all things else."<sup>29</sup>

Just as "physic" is to restore physical health, Wesley told them, a Kingswood education was to restore spiritual health. The need was desperate because every one born of woman is infected by seven spiritual diseases. They are: atheism, self-will, pride, love of the world, anger, falsehood, and injustice.

It is the "part of all those to whom God has entrusted the education of children, to take all possible care . . . not to feed, any of these diseases; . . . and next, to use every possible means of healing them."<sup>30</sup> He reminds the listening teachers and parents that in the end it is God, not

(continued on page 37)



# THE ARK ROCKER

## JUST THE NEWS, PLEASE

"Remember George Brett's hemorrhoids!" That was I. M. Superior's parting shot the other day when I quizzed him about an announcement he had recently made. Obviously he was nettled, for he usually whispered even the word *bathroom*, and here he was raising his considerable voice to invoke that nadir of good taste in the national sports news some two years ago.

The announcement in question said: "Knott Reddy has decided to terminate a decade and a half at his post as of 30 February. He has given outstanding and devoted service and is irreplaceable, though of course we shall have to find a successor as soon as possible. Reddy's plans at this point are not certain."

This was the announcement as it came to public attention, and this is the announcement as it was informally broached at the regular board meeting of the congregersity. The board, or at least some of the board, quickly "amened" the "words of appreciation" and even more quickly voted acceptance of the resignation. All with a sigh of relief.

The plain fact is that Reddy was sacked. (In this case, a salaried post was involved, but the same sort of stuff goes on with voluntary service as well.) To be sure, no one said, "Reddy, you're fired!" But there were clear words about needing "new blood" and there was some vague talk about "concern over some of your decisions." (With fine ethical sensitivity to protecting sources!) So,

Reddy tendered his resignation, but in no way was it his choice.

"Obviously," Knott said, after his release, "pooh-bahs have a right to have their own team. I knew that from Day One—and was on the team. But the announcement makes me the decider . . . makes it look like stepping out was my idea. As if they really wanted to keep me and I disappointed them!"

We went on to discuss "official explanations," Superior and I. The best of them is, "X has terminated services to the congregersity for health reasons." That one has a ring of truth to it, anyway—*somebody* got sick of *something*.

Could it be that the *family* of God is being accused, by intimation, of being the *fumbly* of God by a certain administrative practice? "Goodness knows," said Superior, in our less-than-helpful conversation, "the grass roots wouldn't know what to do if we announced the truth—er, I mean, if we dragged out the dirty linen." The "clear" choices: lie or admit failure. A false dilemma! The message is clear: The church at large can't handle it. We're the fumbly of God, all right!

Of course, the rationale behind such goings-on is in the *highest* traditions of *deepest* compassion: "We didn't want to hurt him, or his family." Or, it may be tied (as it was in this case) to a sort of utilitarianism that is as honored as if it were a product of Creation Week itself: "We had to say *something* and this was the least painful thing to say."

Suppose Scripture had bowed to these honorable principles. "Paul of Tarsus announced today the decision of John Mark to terminate his services with Gentile Missions, Inc. In leaving, Mr. Mark ends three years of outstanding and devoted service to GM. He is irreplaceable, but his successor will shortly be named." How neat! This would have saved all of that homiletical gossip that has given Mark a bad name for two millennia.

There is indeed a certain messiness to the truth, especially to the truth about human affairs. And, there is something to be said about not airing dirty linen in public. But neither of these bits of truism stands against a commandment of Almighty God—the one about false witness. And neither of them is big enough to override a simply devastating word from our Lord: "Let your yes be yes and your no be no." Madison Avenue is nowhere near the designated routes to, or within, the Kingdom.

And I do indeed "remember George Brett's hemorrhoids," as indelicate as that whole episode became; for out of it, I saw lots of folks laugh and blush their way into at least a bit of compassion for a guy who literally couldn't take things sitting down. Our Lord was right, wasn't He: "The children of this world are wiser than the children of light." He meant that as sarcasm to help us grow. When will we ever learn?

And just what does it mean to say that the Holy Spirit is at work in the church, guiding it into truth?

*The Ark Rocker*



# MINISTRY TO THE YOUNG





## TOWARD A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON

# MAKING CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES WORK

by Sheryl Perkins

*Minister to Children, First Church  
of the Nazarene, Denver, Colorado*

**W**hen I first came to Denver First Church of the Nazarene as minister to children, I had a Gen. 1:1 experience. It was definitely a *beginning* for me, and my portfolio of past experience was very nearly "without form and void." However, I believe the Spirit of God was "hovering" over my decision at that time, and over the next four and one-half years, God did some "good" creating through me in the area of children's ministries.

I realize my context of ministry is different from the average-size church. But size does not determine precepts nor does it imply perfection. The principles I have discovered in the Children's Department of this church are applicable to any size church, and more importantly, they are transferable to any age-group ministry.

I believe children's ministries works best when every Christian, regardless of age, assumes the responsibility for being a "faith model." The concept of faith modeling is at the very heart of 2 Tim. 3:10 and 14: "You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings. . . . But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it."<sup>1</sup> Tied to the concept of faith modeling is the family responsibility of growing "faith genealogies" (see 2 Tim. 1:5). The fact that Timothy was part of a faith genealogy, made him a good prospect for the ministry.

I first ran across the concept of faith modeling in

Larry Richards' book, *Youth Ministry: Its Renewal in the Local Church*. The concept has tremendous potential for children's ministries. I have developed a message entitled: "A Framework of Ministry" that deals with three points that frame a picture of ministry.

1. Children's ministries works best when the faith-life is expressed through "faith models."
2. Children's ministries works best when the faith-life is expressed through "sound curriculum."
3. Children's ministries works best when the faith-life is identified and communicated in the midst of "real-life experiences."

Again, I give credit to Richards for the concept, but the following application is my own. Try to personalize and apply each of the three points to your own situation.

### **I. Children's ministries works best when the faith-life is expressed through faith models.**

Biblical principles taken from 2 Timothy infer the nitty-gritty of faith modeling. Paul says boldly in chapter 2 verse 2: "And the things you have heard me say . . . entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." Do you want the children in your church to pass on the things they hear you say? I don't mean the things you say "officially" from the pulpit, I mean those off-the-cuff remarks that may subtly slander another person; or actions that contradict your faith-testimony.

Is there any child in your church—wait, let's narrow that down—do the children in your family “know all about your teaching, your way of life, your purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance”? Do you want them to “continue in what they have learned from you”?

A grandmother put it this way, “Unless teaching and praying are accompanied by examples of Christian living, the child is not apt to incorporate his parents’ and grandparents’ spiritual values into his own life.”<sup>2</sup> Abraham Lincoln said: “There is just one way to bring up a child in the way he should go, and that is to travel that way yourself.”<sup>1</sup>

Children usually live whatever we live before them. Do you want a Children's Department that has purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance? Then model those attributes yourself.

We need to ask ourselves, who has modeled this kind of a faith-life to us? Personally, my greatest inheritance lies in the scores of people who have modeled the faith-life to me. Beginning with my missionary parents. I was in the 8th grade when my parents were given a new field assignment. One of the consequences of that change meant that my two 11th grade brothers and myself would have to go to boarding school. While I knew my parents dreaded the separation, I never once caught even an innuendo of “*look how much we are giving up for Jesus!*” Rather, they instilled in us how *privileged* we were to get to be living witnesses in the government school. Somehow they wrapped a cocoon of trust around us that spoke loud and clear: “Our God is big enough to keep you children! *He* will keep you faithful and trustworthy. Yes, we will miss you . . . but, the joy in heaven over the lives you will touch, will help us endure the pain of separation today!”

Ten years later, one of those boarding school friends came to visit me in the U.S.A. She had planned to stay around 10 days but ended up staying three weeks, in order to take in more Sunday services. On the Sunday before she left, with tears streaming down her cheeks as the choir sang “How Great Thou Art,” she leaned over to my mom and whispered: “And to think, Mrs. Perkins, I wouldn't be here today if Sheryl hadn't had to go to boarding school!” Worth the pain of separation? You bet! Every homesick tear I ever shed in that school has been rewarded by this one happening.

In my present ministry there are many children who model the faith-life to me. One fourth grader wrote the following response to the question: “How have you changed since you became a Christian?”

*When I became a Christian I started to pray for other people's problems and not just mine. I started to pray for my mom and dad to be better friends just a little bit, and it wasn't working. So I started to pray a lot. Every night and sometimes in school and just last week my dad went in my house and “ipologized” to my mom and grandma. Now they're real good friends, and I think it's because I prayed and Jesus answered my prayers.*

## **How often have you seen little hands extended in enthusiastic greeting, only to be snubbed by adults who thoughtlessly never lower their eyes to the level of a child?**

All of a sudden the story Jesus told about the persistent widow in Luke 18 came alive to me, right now in the 20th century!

After asking ourselves: “Who has modeled the faith-life to me?” we need to ask: “How do I model the faith-life to others?” Not very well! This negative modeling is not done intentionally, for that would warrant first-degree guilt on our part. Instead it is done *thoughtlessly*, because we have allowed ourselves to become too busy to even care about common courtesies.

At the top of the list of examples of negative modeling is the failure to acknowledge the presence of “child-persons.” This is magnified when we fail to introduce “child-persons” when “adult-persons” are being introduced. How often have you seen little hands extended in enthusiastic greeting, only to be snubbed by adults who thoughtlessly never lower their eyes to the level of a child?

Attitudes of condescension exhibited toward children when they show interest in spiritual matters are devastatingly thoughtless. This is especially striking when children go to the altar during services. Back in the pews I hear adult-persons whisper to each other: “Wasn't that cute? Little Bobby went to the altar!” What do the little ears around that conversation hear? (Remember 2 Tim. 2:2 and 3:10.) It's *cute* to go to the altar, but sin is never cute, even in a five-year-old! Bobby's getting a lot of attention, but attention should never be the motive for seeking repentance! Adults, think! Gird your minds and your tongues. What children hear you saying is making lasting impressions on their lives.

There is an even more devastating negative modeled subtly by the church of today. To me it is a crippling disease, for it twists the redemptive act of God in Christ, in order to fit selfish motives. This is what the Christianity of our day models to its “child-persons”: Seek *safety* in religion, but *pleasure* and *happiness* in the world. Stop a minute, when you think of *pleasure*—does *what* (cars, TV, boats, vacations) rather than *who* (Jesus Christ) come to mind first?

This is the spirit of worldliness exhibited by parents who sacrifice children to the ambition of society and to the riches and the friendships of the world. You cannot make children's ministries work because you hire the "best children's director." Rather, the key lies in a statement made by Susanna Wesley when John begged her to write down some of the details of the education of her children. "No one can, without renouncing the world in the most literal sense, observe my method. There are few, if any, who would devote about 20 years of the prime of life in hopes to save the souls of their children."<sup>4</sup>

## **II. Children's ministries works best when the faith-life is expressed through sound curriculum!**

In *Exploring Christian Education*, curriculum in Christian education is defined as "the path along which we seek to guide the follower in the footsteps of Jesus until he reaches the homeland of God."<sup>5</sup> In the light of this definition, ponder the implications of John 1:14 and 1 John 1:1:

*The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory . . . that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.*

In other words, God became curriculum so that we could have a "hands-on experience" of the God-life. This enfleshment of God was not haphazardly designed nor delivered in a buckshot fashion. The preparation has been in process since the foundation of the world (that's a mighty long time) and then blessedly in the fullness of time, the enfleshment of God's Son, our Christ, was delivered.

Curriculum does not exist in a vacuum. It is tied like Siamese twins to the teacher who lives as a faith model before his or her class. Curriculum becomes alive in the hands of the teacher. Curriculum becomes meaningful when the teacher is prepared and consistently aims to reach well-grounded goals. As the Holy Spirit works through the preparation and consistency, the power of one hour in Sunday School is magnified throughout the week, for greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world!

This point is illustrated by my fifth grade Sunday School teachers. You could give their girls a test any day of the week and they could tell you the *content* of the curriculum in detail. However, while covering content thoroughly, these teachers stress the importance of Bible reading and memorizing God's Word. For every song the girls sing in Sunday School there is a Bible verse to memorize and incorporate into life. Secondly, they lean heavily on the power of prayer. Prayer requests are taken weekly and are recorded. The girls expect God to answer! Lastly, they never miss an opportunity to point out the subtle influence of the world, through the radio, TV, and literature, on our thought lives.

How effective have they been? Enter Stephanie . . . (Her name has not been changed. She is a real life bundle of Jesus power!) Stephanie came bound-

ing up three flights of stairs and burst into her Sunday School class. "I have two things to share with everyone today!" she said joyfully. "Since the beginning of the year (five months ago) Ann and Karen have been telling us to read our Bible every day. Last Sunday I decided to try it for one whole week. So every day this past week I have read my Bible. When I waited to do it till night time, I found I almost didn't have time and I guess I felt I was too tired to try. But I did it anyway. I have learned so much about God this week, I just feel great!

"Secondly, I've been praying for my stepdad to come to church with us. He drinks and cusses and I just know he'd be happier if he loved Jesus. Well, today he said he'd come to church, so I'm not going to children's church because we all want to sit together in the adult service. Please pray for our family today."

Indeed ministry to children does work best when the faith-life is consistently stressed through curriculum.

## **III. Children's ministries works best when the faith-life is communicated in the midst of real-life experiences.**

To me all of life falls into two categories: Programmed real-life experiences and spontaneous real-life experiences. While I was in college and seminary, that is, involved in academics full time, I was bewildered by the accusation of living in an "ivory tower" levied against full-time academicians. These accusations were generally given by guest lecturers and accompanied by statements like: "Wait until you get out into the *real* world . . ." I would look at the proclaimer of these statements and wonder where he thought he was—the *unworld*? Even if your home or job is an ivory tower, the reality of human persons living in that tower makes that experience real life. Programmed experiences are not apparitions! They are real life!

Programmed real-life experiences in children's ministries include Sunday School, children's church, Caravans, vacation Bible school, choir, etc. Spontaneous real-life experiences are those curve-ball questions children hurl at you when you least expect them and when you are least prepared to deal with them. They are neither premeditated nor maliciously used by the child. They just happen. These spontaneous real-life experiences, when applied immediately to the faith-life, can underline a biblical precept that you have been spending weeks on in a programmed situation. All of a sudden the child's eyes light up and you are rewarded with an excited burst: "Teacher, I get it!"

Most children's workers are quite adept at the programmed real-life experiences—it's the spontaneous moments that we fail to capture and use to make children's ministries *really* work! It is to the spontaneous times that Deut. 6:7 speaks: "Impress them [i.e., the commandments, especially the one to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength] on your chil-

dren. Talk about them when you sit at home [*I couldn't do that . . . I'd be interrupting cartoons and that's the only time we have any peace and quiet around our house*] and when you walk [*drive*] along the road [*can't, the radio is on and besides everyone is yelling*], when you lie down [*who has time to pray with kids before they go to bed, and none of us take naps anymore*] and when you get up [*What? Before I have my morning cup of coffee? Anyway, no one in our family gets up at the same time*]."

Impressions are being made all the time on children. If we don't captivate children with the God-life every moment of every day (which is what Deut. 6:7 implies) you can count on it, Satan will get them in one of his subtle traps.

I will never forget the following encounter I had with a spontaneous real-life experience. It happened on a Sunday morning following children's church. My "curriculum" for the hour ended sharply at 12 noon, but I had the sinking feeling the adult service was running over schedule! That particular morning I was especially sensitive to the capabilities of the child-persons I was ministering to. I could tell by their squirming bodies that their attention span had definitely been stretched to the limit.

Following the closing prayer, I gave them the following directions: "You have permission to talk with your friends, but you may *not* leave this room until I get the signal from one of the adult ushers that the pastor has finished preaching." Immediately the noise level increased and everyone seemed happy.

Meanwhile, I began to gather my things together in readiness for leaving the room like I'd found it. Actually I wanted to split the scene in record time. My head ached because most of the programmed real-life experiences that day had not gone according to program . . . like running out of program at noon sharp! Any children's worker knows the importance of the life and death rule: *always overplan*. That day I just burned out of ideas!

In the midst of my rummaging, I heard someone say: "May I go sit in my dad's office?" I looked up, recognized the child as one of my better behaved parishioners, and so I gave him the "go ahead nod." What kind of trouble could he get into in his dad's office, I thought? As the door closed behind him I saw two more male boy bodies making a bee-line for the same exit! Oh, no! These two were definitely not some of my better behaved parishioners.

"Greg! Mike! Hold it a minute. Where are you going?" I queried in my best, well-modulated tones.

"Out," they responded in equally well-modulated innocent tones.

"Hold it! What were my instructions?"

"But Kenny . . ." (Kenny was the one who was now in his dad's office . . . I hoped.)

"I know about Kenny. But that isn't what I just asked. What were my instructions?" By now Greg and Mike's jaws were set at a slight angle that told me: "Get set, lady, you are in for one *big* confrontation!"

Greg, through clenched teeth, said: "You said . . .

we . . . were . . . not . . . to . . . leave . . . the . . . room." He articulated each word exactly like I had just minutes before, and then the following rushed out, "But that's not fair!!! Why does Kenny get to leave and we have to stay?"

Point well taken, Greg! And before I had time to petition God's help, the Lord graciously helped me to apply a faith-life perspective to this spontaneous real-life experience.

"You are so right Greg. I have just been terribly inconsistent. For that I must ask you to forgive me, because my inconsistency has not allowed fairness to rule in this situation. However, in life, there will be *many* times when you will be treated unfairly. In some cases you will be unable to do anything about it. Your only choice will be in the area of how you will react to that situation.

"That choice of how you react is a great gift from God. You may use it or abuse it. That is your choice. Today you have a choice. To get ticked off at me because of my inconsistency or to accept my apology. Either way you will have to abide by my initial instructions. What's your pleasure?"

The slight angles of their jaws were slowly loosening their defiant set, but struggle was still written all over their faces. That's a pretty heavy concept to hit a couple of kids with at 12 noon on a Sunday morning! "You see, boys, sometimes in life it is more important to *obey* than to be treated fairly. But—one more point, if you choose to obey it is vital that you obey with a smile. God questions the sincerity of our obedience if it's done through clenched teeth!" As I acted out the last statement through clenched teeth, I finished with a smile.

Those boys' eyes had never once left my face. Slowly smiles broke out on their faces and we shook hands and they forgave me! Just then the usher poked his head around the corner and gave me the "time's up" signal! I offered up a prayer of thanks for the signal and for the spontaneous experience I had just been through.

In order to make children's ministries work in your church you are going to have to build a *vision* for growing faith models, who will en flesh sound curriculum, and learn to apply both programmed and spontaneous real-life experiences to the faith life!

## NOTES

1. All Bible quotations in this article are taken from *The Holy Bible, New International Version*.
2. McMichael, *Cooking with LOVE and Cereal*, p. 7.
3. Ibid.
4. Deen, *Great Women of the Christian Faith*, pp. 143-44.
5. Sanner & Harper, eds., *Exploring Christian Education*, p. 160.

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Good guidance for those who lead  
the ministries to girls and boys.

# Four Ps with Purpose

by Jim Zimmer

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In considering the ministry of Christian education of children in the local church there are at least four things to think about in daily and weekly preparation. I choose to call them "Four Ps with Purpose." They are *pursue*, *persist*, *prepare*, and *pray*. These are not listed here in order of importance.

The first of our Ps is **pursue**. We need to pursue long-range plans. This pursuit includes keeping regular hours for formulating thorough plans. Never sacrifice planning sessions. Never put off what can be taken care of immediately. *Pursue* through reading and creative thinking, the skills that will enable you to be a creative and enthusiastic educator. Take time to write down your creative thoughts. This will take some discipline but will be worth all the time invested. *Pursue* to learn how and when to use Bible helps such as Bible dictionaries, pictorial dictionaries, commentaries, Bible encyclopedias, etc. You do not know all the answers and these tools can shed some light on your lesson preparation.

*Pursue* a realistic understanding of your strengths and weaknesses. Work at building your strengths and correcting your weaknesses. Becoming a pursuer means becoming a good listener. Listen, for others have good ideas too. Learn to be an open person,

ready to make changes in your instructional approach if need be.

Our second P is **persist**. Persisting is probably the hardest P on the list for this P will bring confrontation with others as well as self.

*Persist* in upgrading your teaching staff. Teachers need to be at their best in teaching the truths of God and His Word. *Persist* and insist on solid preparation and quality programming for Christian education. A persistent person must be a self-starter and motivator. After all no one understands the religious education program like you do.

Work on being genuine. Show genuine affection for your pupils and a sincere appreciation for their parents.

*Persist* in helping your staff succeed. Show your appreciation for their work and effort and occasionally give them some creative tools that will help them with their teaching ministries.

The third P is **prepare**. Learn to discipline your body for the task that will be yours. Get plenty of rest, exercise, and watch your diet. *Prepare* your mind through reading the Word, devotional and inspirational books, as well as listening to records and tapes. We need to keep up our spiritual lives in order to give out to others. Keep your soul prepared by keep-

ing tender and open to the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

*Prepare* by approaching life positively. Look for the good even when hard times come. Preparation also means spiritual growth. If you don't grow in the Lord, your ministry will become a chore.

Learn to prepare schedules, agendas, sermons, and lectures well in advance. You'll want to file your notes for further study and reference. Let preparation be a powerful factor in all you do for the education program of your church.

Our final P is **prayer**. Learn to pray wisely and with purpose and intent. Pray that workers of like mind and spirit to you will be sent. *Pray* for all those who are under your care (babies, children, youth, and adults). *Pray* for your family that they not only will be a true asset to your ministry but that they also will grow with you in the things that belong to God and the church. *Pray* for your outreach ministries, your shut-ins and those who are on the fringes of the church. As a leader you'll need to *pray* for a spirit of confidence in your ministry that you keep the faith and in turn keep the work vibrant and real. *Pray* for the hurting people in your congregation.

Learn to become a real person, committed to Jesus Christ and His work and these four Ps will in turn become a real treasure to you.



# Philosophy and Objectives for Children's Ministries

by Miriam J. Hall

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Church of the Nazarene*



**R**ecently I read the fascinating story of John Pounds, a crippled cobbler from Portsmouth, England. Single-handedly he rescued 500 boys and girls from lives of crime, despair, and ignominious death. In the evenings, John—who could scarcely walk and only in great pain—scoured the docks of Portsmouth, offering “hot ‘taties” to the starving, homeless children. During the day his cobbler’s shop served as a “Ragged School” where these same children could learn lessons and hear about God. John once wrote, “‘They’re rather thickish on the floor at times, but I keeps my window open all day for the poor things. We’re all happy together.’”<sup>1</sup>

John’s other ministries to children included feeding them, mending their clothes and shoes, giving some a home with him, and even designing special corrective shoes for crippled youngsters. In time, his “Ragged School” became so well known that more affluent parents tried to send their children. John’s reply to these inquiries was, “‘I wants them as nobody else cares for.’”<sup>2</sup> On the front of his shop hung a sign which read, “Little Vagabonds Preferred.”<sup>3</sup>

In his concern for their physical and mental needs, John did not overlook the spiritual development of his children. He set them all to learning Bible verses and carefully taught them about God’s love. When he died in 1839, he left behind his Bible, a few personal possessions, and “500 children with saved souls and rescued lives.”<sup>4</sup>

If someone had asked John Pounds to state his

philosophy and objectives for ministering to children, he would have had no idea what the person was talking about. And yet we see by his actions that John’s entire life was guided by a philosophy and by objectives which any modern-day children’s worker would do well to emulate. John believed in the worth of every child—no matter how depraved that child might *appear* to be. He believed that every child deserved a chance in life, and that each one had an eternal soul worth saving. And because John Pounds believed these things, he gave his time, his energy, and his possessions to minister to the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of children.

The era in which John Pounds lived was a desperate one for children. It called for desperate and determined measures by one who cared about boys and girls. The same can be said of our generation. Although the specific conditions facing children today are different from those which existed in newly industrialized England, they are no less harmful to young minds and spirits. Consider these:

★ “Latchkey” children spend hours alone, unsupervised, because both parents are working.

★ In some areas of the country, divorce touches one out of every two marriages, victimizing thousands of children. One divorced parent stated, “My daughter doesn’t really know what it means to have a man around the place. My own parents divorced when I was a child, and now her father and I are divorced.”

★ Young children watch six or more hours of television a day. Included in this is a daily diet of sex, violence, and profanity.

★ Children in grade school are exposed to alcohol, drugs, and even contraceptives.

If we are to make any impact at all upon today's children, we need a whole legion of "John Poundses" who, out of a God-given sense of mission, will expend the effort and make the sacrifices necessary to save today's spiritual waifs.

Unfortunately, at a time when the church so desperately needs dedicated children's workers, a spirit of indifference seems to have fallen over many congregations. Week after week, the children's director pleads for workers who will help out in various children's ministries; but too often the pleading is in vain. Apathetic adults insist that they have worked in children's ministries "long enough." They now prefer to sit back and enjoy the adult Bible class or the adult worship service. They seem unmindful of the fact that there are children who will be lost if no one takes the time to reach them and teach them.

Not long ago an important document from the

general superintendents crossed my desk. On it were written statements concerning the mission and objectives of the Church of the Nazarene. As I studied the document, certain phrases caught my eye:

★ "Respond to the Great Commission of Christ to 'go and make disciples of all nations'" (Matt. 28:19, KJV).

★ "Christian fellowship"

★ "The conversion of sinners"

★ "The upbuilding of believers in holiness"

★ "Preaching the gospel to every creature"

What relevance do these statements—written in adult terminology—have to children's ministry? When they are viewed in the light of some important Bible-based assumptions about children, I believe they can help us establish valid objectives, priorities, and strategies for ministering to children. In the paragraphs which follow, I would like to consider with you four important ideas which I feel form the core of a sound philosophy of children's ministry, and the objectives which grow out of these ideas. I believe they can give us a sense of direction

Photo by Bruce Jennings





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## Children are told, "Grow up quickly. It's not a good thing to be a child."

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and a sense of urgency about our work with children.

### I. Children Are Valued Highly by God

The Bible is not a book about children, but it does make some very clear-cut statements about their value to God and His kingdom. In various Bible passages we can discover that:

- ★ Children are a "heritage" and a "reward" from God (Ps. 127:3).

- ★ Parents are to expend considerable effort to teach even young children the truths of God (Deut. 6:7).

- ★ God has planned for children, as well as adults, to praise Him (Matt. 21:16).

- ★ Childlikeness is a prerequisite to entering into heaven (Matt. 18:3).

- ★ Welcoming a child is the same as extending a personal welcome to Jesus (Matt. 18:5).

- ★ Offending a child is just grounds for severe punishment from God (Matt. 18:6).

- ★ The angels of children have ready and continual access to God in heaven (Matt. 18:10).

When we read the Bible statements about children, it is significant to note that they are valued by God *not in spite of* the fact that they are children, but *because* they are children. For example, in describing the joys of a restored Jerusalem, Zech. 8:5 particularly mentions "city streets . . . filled with boys and girls playing there."<sup>5</sup> When Jesus welcomed the children in Matt. 19:14, He stated that "the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." In the Temple, Jesus expressed appreciation for the praises the children sang to Him. When He wanted to feed 5,000 people, He used a young boy's lunch. In other words, the state of childhood, the characteristics and abilities of children, and the things that children do have value in themselves to God.

This emphasis on the value of childhood is especially important today when our society seems to be trying to force children out of childhood as early as possible. The plot against childhood is seen in the kinds of clothing and toys provided for children, in the types of activities into which they are guided, and in the pressures to which they are subjected at home, at school, and in community organizations. In countless ways, today's children are being told, "Grow up quickly. It is not a good thing to be a child."

When we consider the tremendous value God places on children—and upon the period of childhood—our objectives for ministry become quite clear.

**First** of all, we must not make the mistake of pro-

viding for children programs and activities which are simply scaled-down versions of teen or adult ministries. Instead, we must evaluate carefully each program to see whether it is appropriate for a *child* of a given age, saving until later those things that are more appropriate for later levels of development.

**Second**, we dare not be careless in our efforts to minister to children. Money for children's programs should not be last on a list of priorities—after the funds for new shrubs for the church lawn. Teachers of children must be selected carefully for their strong Christian character, their love for children, and their sense of commitment to the task. We cannot be content to minister only to the children of regular church attenders. We must reach out to *all* children—whether they are happy or sad, pretty or homely, gifted or retarded, advantaged or disadvantaged, lovable or seemingly unlovable. The Bible records very few occasions when Jesus became angry. One of these times was when adults tried to push children aside. In God's eyes, ministry to children is a top priority. It must be ours as well.

### II. Children Are Sinners

Although the Bible stresses the value of children, it does not view them through rose-tinted glasses. It clearly spells out the fact that children, like all other members of the human race, are born with a sinful nature. "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child," states Prov. 22:15 (RSV). Later in the same book we read, "A child left to itself disgraces his mother" (29:15). The sweeping statement, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23, RSV), includes every child born into the world.

The degree to which a particular boy or girl reflects this sinful, fallen nature varies from child to child, just as it does in adults. Some children are by nature, by environment, or by training more pliable, more compliant to rules, or better behaved than others. Some have a very tender conscience which is easily awakened to an awareness of wrongdoing; others seem to have almost no conscience at all. But all children, whether they appear to be naturally "good" or naturally "bad," are born with a sinful nature which sooner or later will express itself in chosen acts of sin. Until a child has been awakened by the Holy Spirit to an understanding of his sin, he is under God's protecting grace. But, there is no set "age of accountability." It, too, varies considerably from child to child, occurring very early for some and quite late for others.

Those who minister to children must remain constantly aware of the fact that our task is much greater than just teaching about God, or training in good, morally acceptable habits. We must keep in mind that ultimately we are working with God for the transformation of every child.

A major objective of children's ministry, then, should be to provide children with opportunities to hear and respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ. As we mentioned earlier, today's children face prob-

lems and influences which just a few decades ago were unknown even to the majority of adults. In today's world, children need to know that Jesus loves them, that He died to save them, and that He can change their lives.

We need to present the gospel to children because boys and girls can experience a transforming relationship with Christ. One young man, now a missionary, told his sister, "If I had not been saved at the age of five, I don't know what would have become of me." A strong-willed child, he later recognized that it was his early conversion which had kept him from going into the paths of sin.

Not all boys and girls will be saved this young. Many are closer to the ages of 8 to 11. Some may not commit their lives until the teen or adult years. It is true that much of what we do with children is foundation building for later development, and that we should not feel we have failed if every boy or girl is not won during the childhood years. But it is just as important to remember that we are building the foundation for *salvation* and *transformation*, not just trying to increase Bible knowledge or bring about outwardly conforming behavior. Again, this distinction in purpose will give to children's workers a greater sense of urgency in their work, and a clearer picture of their need to depend on the Lord in all that they do.

While most children are not spiritually and psychologically mature enough to be sanctified, they do need the Christian nurture and fellowship that will increase spiritual growth and lead to this experience. Helping a child to accept the Lord as Savior is important; but we must not limit our ministry only to evangelism. Children's ministry also means surrounding them with Christian influences which will strengthen, not tear down, the child's inclinations toward God. We do this when we provide for children appropriate experiences of Bible study with life application, worship, and fellowship.

**Through Bible study**, a child can become grounded in God's Word. Appropriate Bible study for children includes:

- ★ Graded age-level studies in which we present to children all of the major truths of the Bible—on his level of understanding. The Bible needs to be taught to children patiently and repeatedly, with emphasis upon how God's Word applies to life.

- ★ Opportunities for Bible memorization through which children can hide God's Word in their hearts. Verses which are memorized are ready and available to children when they face life's situations and problems.

- ★ Discipleship training for children who have made a commitment to Christ. This training needs to be made available on both an individual and a group basis.

**Fellowship activities** help to strengthen the child's Christian environment. For some children, the fellowship activities in which they participate at church may be their only Christian influence. For others, these activities will add to the environment Chris-

tian parents provide. In either case, children need these types of activities to strengthen the pull of the Lord and weaken Satan's attraction in their lives.

**Through worship** children can be led to respond to God in a personal way. Children should be provided with worship experiences both with their peers, and with the entire church.

### III. Children Need Godly Nurture at Home

One of the strongest concepts which the Bible stresses in regard to children is that their religious education is primarily the responsibility of their parents. Scriptures such as Exod. 12:24-27, Deut. 6:4-7, and Eph. 6:4 leave no doubt that parents are to work hard at helping their children learn about God's nature, about the things He does, and about ways to please Him. Nowhere in the Bible does it even suggest that an hour or two at church on Sunday or Wednesday is sufficient to influence a child for God. From the beginning, God planned for children to "catch" much of their spiritual understandings and values from those with whom they spend the greatest share of their time.

If this is the case, then one of the most important objectives of the church's ministry to children must be to uphold and to strengthen the child's Christian environment at home. This effort to provide the child with the environment of a Christian home calls for the dedicated efforts of everyone in the church. Whether it is the pastor, a child's teacher, or members of the congregation, each individual needs to view evangelism as a means not only of saving adults, but of providing a Christian environment for the children in that home. The church needs to provide classes for parents which help them to discover their responsibility for nurturing children and learn ways to do so. Parents must become sensitive to God's leading in their lives, asking Him to guide them to be the best possible models to their children. Many times, the church's strongest ministry to children is an indirect one—reaching and teaching their parents how to nurture them in the Lord.

### IV. Children Belong in the Community of God's People

One of the most beautiful things about early Hebrew and Jewish customs was the way in which boys and girls were included in the religious life of the community. Many of the religious activities were carried out at home where children would naturally take part. But beyond this, many of the things which the Hebrews did were done with the purpose of attracting the attention of children, encouraging questions, and providing adults with an opportunity

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**Children are sinners too.**

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to talk about God. For example, when Joshua led the people into the Promised Land, he told them to erect an altar of 12 stones as a memorial of the occasion. He then said, "In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them . . ." (Josh. 4:6). When a child was about three years old, he began to attend the adult worship services. Children also took part in the annual religious festivals.

Today, many of a child's religious experiences at church occur in age-level groups with his peers. This is good up to a point, because it allows us to tailor our ministry to a child's needs. But we must also make it a major objective to include children in church experiences that include teens and adults. I remember the impact upon my own life when as a child I heard the testimonies of the "moms and dads" and "grandmas and grandpas" in our church. I didn't always fully understand what they were talking about; but I knew they loved God.

Children need to be included in the life of the church not only for the benefits which they can receive, but also for those things they can contribute. In the book, *The Ministry of the Child*, Dennis Benson tells of an occasion when one of his parishioners confided, with tears in her eyes, that she faced surgery for a possible malignancy. All through the week, he struggled to prepare a sermon which would bring hope and comfort to this individual. But as the Sunday morning service progressed, he could feel only a spirit of heaviness and despair. Instead of communicating warmth, he felt as though he were pronouncing the last rites. But then, says Benson:

*As I ponderously launched into my third point, a small toddler left his parents in a pew toward the back and made his way down the aisle. At the fourth row from the front he paused, turned, and climbed on the seat. He sat there beside her. I don't think he said anything, just snuggled in. Her arm encircled him. He responded with a hug. He sat with her only for a minute or so, and then he went back to his parents. But . . . her face! I saw it. warmth and hope once again lived in her eyes, courage shone in her bearing. She had received her gospel for the day.<sup>6</sup>*

Children belong in the community of God's people. When we are tempted to segregate them from these experiences because they are occasionally noisy, let us remember Jesus' words, "Let the little children come . . . and do not hinder them" (Mark 10:14).

## V. Beyond Philosophy and Objectives—Then What?

It takes time, thought, and effort to work out a sound philosophy and objectives for a biblical ministry to children. But after we have done it, it still is not enough to make a real difference in the lives of children. In commenting on the ministries of several great Christians, George Sweeting said, "Each of these—and every person God uses—had in com-

## Children's Worker's Prayer

I acknowledge, Lord, that I do not sufficiently realize the value of children nor the danger to which they are exposed from the Prince and Spirit of the world. Like the example of Moses' parents, teach me to fully recognize the danger and yet never to fear the commandment of the king. Just as my life is hid with Christ in God, may the children I reach know no other dwelling place.

"Give me grace, as one of your redeemed ones, to train the children I work with to serve You. May the joy of a personal experience of redemption warm my heart, inspire my words, and lift up my life to testify of Thee and to train the children I work with for Thee alone."

*Amen.*

Andrew Murray, *How to Raise Your Children for Christ* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1975).

mon a passion for souls. Their fervent desire to see people come to Christ made the difference."<sup>7</sup>

When it comes down to the wire, it is this "passion for souls" which makes the difference between an effective and an ineffective children's ministry. John Pounds had no written statements of philosophy—although he lived by one. He had no printed objectives—although he carried out several important ones. Yet because his life was ruled by the passion to rescue unfortunate children, his ministry reaped results for God. Today, let each one of us who calls Jesus our Savior and Lord ask Him for a portion of that compassion—that "suffering with"—which caused Him, and men like John Pounds, to give their lives for children. Only when God grants this request will the children who cross our paths become our "spiritual children" as well.



## NOTES

1. Lois Hoadley Dick, "Hot 'Taties," *Moody Monthly* 82, 7 (March, 1982): 20.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 19.


3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

5. This and all other Scripture quotations not otherwise marked are from *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, copyright © 1978 by New York International Bible Society, and are used by permission.

6. Dennis C. Benson & Stan J. Stewart, *The Ministry of the Child* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978 and 1979), p. 30.

7. George Sweeting, "Our Concern for the Unconverted," *Moody Monthly* 82, 7 (March, 1982): 1.



# MINISTRY TO LITTLE PEOPLE

by Stephen Manley  
*Evangelist, Church of the Nazarene*

Jesus took the children into His arms and blessed them. In this one loving act, He also rebuked the disciples for thinking that children were not important. In the mind of Jesus there is a special link between a child and greatness. This fact is so important that it is recorded in all the Synoptic Gospels (cf., Matt. 18:1-10; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48). This certainly should set the stage for the activity of the pastor in children's ministry.

There are a lot of practical helps that one can seek and find to increase one's ability to minister to children. We certainly have no criticism for any of these means of ministry. Most of these depend on the personality and interest of the individual.

It seems that the real need is to develop a proper philosophy from which ministry to children can flow. The way we view any particular group determines how effectively we communicate with them. It is here that many have their greatest battle.

One philosophy that has hindered children's ministry among pastors is the **"second-class citizen syndrome."** Jesus never viewed children as second-class citizens. However, the disciples did. Evidently the disciples thought they were doing Jesus a big favor by keeping the boys and girls away. If the disciples had been the judges, children just were not capable of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus sternly rebuked this attitude with words which meant "How could you, disciples, think for one moment that these are unfit? I tell you 'for of such is the kingdom of heaven'" (Matt. 19:14).

The disciples were engulfed in the earthly rule which states that position begets power. After all, the disciples were the 12 chosen lieutenants of the Christ. Peter, James, and John were even a bit higher than that. They had been to the Mount of Transfiguration and the others had not (Matt. 17:1-13). Besides that, Peter was allowed to pay the taxes with a special miracle (Matt. 17:24-27). It was inevitable that the disciples, who were in conflict for position, would fall to arguing about who is the greatest. A child certainly was not in the political running for the "office of greatest." Boys and girls occupied no place of honor and held no official position.

The question is asked of Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matt. 18:1). Can one comprehend that Jesus actually called a little child unto Him as an answer? Jesus placed greatness and childhood on the same level. The characteristics that are so evident in a child are the same characteristics that produce the foundation upon which greatness is built. Jesus was saying, "If you are prepared to spend your lives serving, helping, loving people who, in the eyes of the world do not matter at all, you are serving Me." There are no second-class citizens in Christian service.

A second philosophy that has hindered ministers from involving themselves in children's ministry is **"the baby-sitting syndrome."** This is the twin philosophy to "the second-class citizen syndrome." If boys and girls are not capable of the Kingdom then what can one do with them but occupy their time? The Catholic church certainly does not agree with this philosophy. They have repeatedly said, "Give us a child until he is seven and we will keep him for life." From their view, the ideas and training that are instilled in a small child will shape his entire living. That changes the nursery attendant from a baby-sitter to a minister. It changes the pastor from "putting up" with a small child to "ministering to" a child.

Jesus made special effort in His outreach toward children. He encouraged the "Hosanna to the Son of David" that was being sung to Him by the children in the Temple (Matt. 21:15). His teaching certainly emulated the child's trusting response to the kingdom of God. There is no doubt that for Jesus it was not baby-sitting but ministry.

A third philosophy that is a hindrance, even a destroyer, to children's ministry is **"the stepping-stone syndrome."** I can remember clearly the technique of my sister as she "battered me up" in order to get me to introduce her to a new boy in town. There is something about using another person for gain that absolutely destroys any relationship with that person. It is the simple matter of reducing the used person down to a function. They cease, in our eyes, to be of value, significance, and eternal worth. They become a means to an end. That is self-centeredness at its highest point. It is carnal.

Have we used boys and girls as a function? Could it be that we were more interested in numbers than in their personal lives? Have we used them as a means to attract their parents without considering their own value? A child must be loved for just what he is, a child. This is one of the great facts of the love of Christ. He loved all persons for themselves. He has made no attempt to step on me to get to someone else.

Jesus is the pattern of how to minister to the little ones. One would do well to search the Scriptures diligently in order to discover those attitudes and techniques which made Him successful. Probably when one discovers them, they will simply be seen

**“Could it be that we were more interested in numbers than in their personal lives?”**

as a natural outgrowth of “Divine love.” Let me share some things that appear to be His pattern.

Note, the loving touch that Jesus seemed to have in regard to children. Children were not held off at arms’ length. Matthew reports, “And he laid his hands on them” (19:15). In Christ’s rebuke to the disciples who were pushing children off, He said, “And forbid them not, to come unto me” (Matt. 19:14). In a Sunday morning service a young mother brought her newborn baby for the first time. When the pastor introduced the new member-to-be he reminded the people of the congregation not to attempt to hold the new baby but give her a few more weeks of growth. His announcement was a waste of good breath. Every woman in that church was standing in line to get their hands on that new baby. One can call that motherly instinct, but there is something about love that wants to reach out and touch.

Would it not be a proper habit for a minister to simply reach out and touch every child he sees? We shake hands with Dad; we welcome Mother. Kids are people too. When that child has experienced your sincere loving touch, he will listen to what you have to say. If he does not listen to you, what you have done has preached love to him. Being an evangelist, might I make a footnote? Every evangelist should have a ministry to children. Not everyone can do gospel magic or puppets. But every evangelist could go to the boys’ and girls’ Sunday School classes and simply say, “Hello, Jesus loves you.” Every evangelist could sponsor a hot dog roast after one service and be there to play games with the children. It is valuable, effective ministry.

Note, also, that in the ministry of Christ to children there was the value touch. When one reaches out and touches a child, he is really saying that you are worth something. This child is worth my attention

and time. Jesus was constantly building self-worth into people. His attention was never focused on masses of people but individuals. The very act of placing a child upon your lap or “putting your hands on them” bespeaks an individual treatment. Can we do anything less?

I am afraid that many times the minister has been too concerned about “important” things like the bulletin or the songbooks in the pew in order to deal with the moldable life of a little one. Why would a child listen to the message of one who would not listen to him?

Note, that the touch of Jesus was a serving touch. The disciples had come to the place of arguing about who is the greatest in the Kingdom. How disheartening that must have been to Jesus. By example and teaching the life-style of the kingdom of God had been displayed, but they had missed it. It was at this point that Jesus took a little child unto Him. The grammar in this verse (Matt. 18:2) is simple. It is impossible to know whether the child was a boy or girl. The child was less than seven years of age. Jesus was going to share one of the deepest and most important statements on salvation that He had ever uttered. He was going to relate that unless the disciples turned around (conversion) in their attitudes they would not even enter the Kingdom. Up to this time they had assumed that they would make it, for they were arguing about who would be the greatest. Chrysostom says about us, “We are not able to reach even the faults of the Twelve; we ask not who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven, but who is the greatest in the Kingdom of earth: the richer, the more powerful” (*Renaissance New Testament*, Randolph O. Yeager, Vol. 2, p. 610).

The teaching of Jesus is that we must lower ourselves in our own destination. How difficult that is for any adult. Then Jesus continues teaching by saying, “And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me” (Matt. 18:5). The word *and* is an emphatic conjunction. If the disciples would enter into humility and think of themselves as a child does, then they would be able to receive the little child for Jesus’ sake. Therefore, they would receive Christ.

This is a most startling verse. Jesus Christ has identified himself with the little ones. To receive the little one is to receive Christ. To serve the child is to serve Christ. When the disciples rejected the little ones, they were rejecting the very principles of the Kingdom; thus, they were rejecting the Lord of that Kingdom.

The Christian that has the ability of serving a child demonstrates his renunciation of power and greatness. He does not value just the work that brings great success. The ministry is to be a service of love. Jesus has taken the question of greatness and transformed it into a task of service.

In light of this, ministry to children becomes a high priority. When this kind of priority is established, an attitude of love is expressed which reaches through to the heart of a child. There is no ministry to children without it.



# SERMON IDEAS FOR THE YEAR OF THE YOUNG

by Mark A. York

## JESUS ANSWERS OUR EXCUSES (FOR NOT TEACHING CHILDREN)

**Scripture**—Mark 10:13-16

**Text**—Mark 10:15

*Introduction*—There are many excuses parents and church people have for not ministering fully to children. In Mark 10:13-16, Jesus answers our excuses.

### A. *The Excuses of the Disciples* (v. 13)

Although we do not know for sure why the disciples turned children away, it may have been one of these:

1. *Children are insignificant*—Don't bother the Master with children. They don't have problems; they don't pay tithes (at least not much).
2. *Children are immature*—Certainly children are immature but this does not bar them from a loving Christ.
3. *Children are incapable* of spiritual understanding.

### B. *The Exclamations of Jesus*

When He saw what the disciples were doing He exclaimed:

1. Let the children come—an open *invitation* for children.
2. Forbid them not—a *prohibition* for those who would stand in their way.
3. Such is the kingdom of heaven—a *declaration* of their significance.

### C. *The Example of the Child* (v. 15)

1. The child is capable of great trust.
2. The child is a symbol of utter dependence on others.

3. The child acts as a total being, with nothing held back.

*Conclusion*—Jesus took them in His arms and blessed them. Let us take the children in our arms as a church, and everything we do with and for them will be a blessing, leading them closer to Jesus.

## GOD'S PLAN FOR TEACHING OUR CHILDREN

**Scripture**—Deut. 6:4-7

**Test**—Deut. 6:7

### A. *Content to Be Taught*

1. Children need to be taught *about* God (v. 4).
2. Children need to be taught *love for* God (v. 5).

### B. *Character of the Teacher*

1. The teacher is to have a thorough understanding of God's commandments (v. 6a).
2. The content of love for God must be the character of the effective teacher (v. 6b).

### C. *Continuing Nature of Teaching*

1. The home is the center of Christian education.
2. Teaching is to continue constantly (sitting, walking, lying down, and waking up).

## SERMON STARTERS

**The Child and the Christian Home**—Eph. 6:1-4

**The Child and the Kingdom**—Matt. 18:1-6; Luke 18:17

**Paul's Pattern for Parents**—1 Thess. 2:10-12

Encouraging

Comforting

Live lives worthy of God



**“You champion the cause of the shy and the undemanding.”**

*Alma Jean Lunn is a professional educator. She is also director of a thriving children's ministry in her local church. I asked her how her pastor contributed to her success in children's ministries. I also asked her what a pastor can do to help workers with children succeed. Her response came in the form of:*

# An Open Letter to Our Pastor

Thank you for . . .

1. Preaching biblically, positively, and honestly
2. Providing a Christian model
3. Giving friendship generously and
4. Offering prayer continuously

## YOUR SERMONS ARE LIFELINES TO TEACHERS

We eagerly anticipate each service. As we listen we know that you thoughtfully search for deeper meanings; that you wrestle personally with the truth from God's Word as it applies to living. Your emphasis on the great commandment and the golden rule helps us to focus directly on God's expectation for us as we live out our commitment to teaching children. You point out the availability of Christ to heal wounded spirits. In the less-than-glamorous and sometimes thankless task of working with children, we are reminded that fulfilling joy is found in serving Christ and is not dependent upon the adulation of people.

Your firm belief that laypersons can receive a divine call to service is positively reinforcing. The weekly efforts through your sermons to develop lay leadership is making an impact on us to use our God-given talents. We are catching a vision how best to use our professional and work skills in the church.

We need these honest sermons that warn against working in the church as an ego trip. It forces us to examine our motives and to look honestly at our feelings, especially when credits are distributed publicly and we are not always included. We are increasingly concerned about becoming instruments to be used of God rather than seeking positions or titles.

The temptation to place our needs before considering the needs of others is common. Your ex-

pression of empathy toward human frailty in such a situation is greatly appreciated. We saw this demonstrated when you admitted your own temptation on one occasion to react negatively to constant interruption until the Holy Spirit checked you. It is at times like these that we understand more fully the place of the Holy Spirit in providing checks for our behavior. You not only tell us to be honest, you show us your honesty.

## YOU TEACH US TO MODEL BY YOUR OWN MODELING OF CHRIST

First, you are open to new ideas. You show interest when your members have creative suggestions in performing the work of the church. We see you showing appreciation for those persons who operate outside the common mold. We see you encouraging persons who don't ordinarily assume leadership roles to be responsible for the implementation of projects. A good example was the time Pat was given an opportunity to take a score of newly arrived immigrants to shop for shoes. A real need was met both for the immigrants and for Pat.

Second, you demonstrate willingness to change. You do not force pet projects or preconceived ideas on others. We never see you using strong-arm tactics. When circumstances merit change, we see you making that judgment fairly. Although you appreciate and encourage traditional practices, you are not bound to their dictates.

Third, we see you spending your time unselfishly even though your own personal needs might be postponed. You champion the cause of the shy and undemanding for both the young and the old. You are not unduly impressed by prestige and power. You are willing to let God arrange your agenda because your focus is on a greater mission such as fulfilling the will of God for your life.



Fourth, you give evidence of continuous learning and demonstrate fresh ideas. You speak of your spiritual growth and the insights you receive in time of study and prayer. You discuss reading sources readily. You sincerely request sermon critiques from laypersons and initiate open discussion on ideas generated by your sermons. This non-defensiveness is another expression of your willingness to make yourself vulnerable to your parishioners.

Fifth, you work at your tasks diligently. As we know you better, we are more aware that you are disciplined. You work hard and attempt to follow a well-organized plan.

Last, you encourage the uncovering of latent talent by providing opportunity to join Bible study groups and workshops designed for the development of spiritual gifts among laypeople.

### THANK YOU FOR GIVING YOUR FRIENDSHIP GENEROUSLY

We consider your friendship to be genuine: that we are valued as individuals in your eyes. We believe you are loyal to our denomination but we applaud your willingness to reach out to persons in need who are beyond denominational parameters. Your pastoral care reaches to those who are not always immediate candidates for membership. Even though people are culturally different or choose a different life-style, you see them as persons of worth. Only a few were aware of the time you willingly gave to one family. It was a stormy night and most of us were comfortably spending the evening at home when Nancy called. She and her husband needed immediate help through a severe family crisis. You responded with great concern for non-members even though the prospects of church membership might never be a realization for this family.

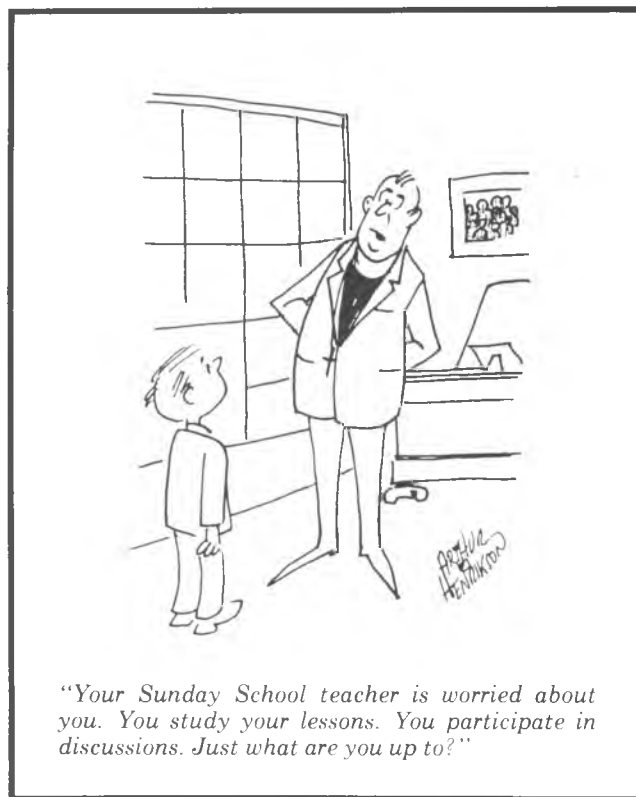
Youth recognize you as a friend. You often observe them with an appreciative view. You validate their worth when you call them by name. This is one way that they know you take them seriously and value their contribution to the church. You take time to cultivate their friendship and encourage their spiritual growth.

You make friends with teachers. You think highly of those without title, position, or wealth. The humor you show is quick but coupled with kindness. We feel comfortable, for we know you are not role-playing; that you can maintain dignity without being stiff or sanctimonious.

### YOU GIVE MORE THAN LIP SERVICE TO THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER

You systematically provide ways to express prayer needs. You manage to list the requests before us as prayer reminders and urge us to carry the responsibility to pray for others.

The prayer requests are not treated lightly. We realize that you are sincerely concerned when you express sympathy and understanding. We feel that this is not superficial nor is your response con-



descending. Your sensitive inquiries about our needs are appreciated.

You pray personally and specifically which reveals firsthand and recent knowledge. Stiffness and formality are eradicated. Respect for personality is retained even though first names and specific needs are often included in prayers. However, you never betray the confidence of timid persons or sensitive problems.

You participate in small prayer groups that meet regularly and offer support for the church. Instruction in organizing prayer groups is made available for us and we are given opportunities to join a prayer-support group.

Your emphasis on the altar helps us to focus on the most important aspect of our work. You refer to the mercy seat regularly. We wholeheartedly agree when you give the altar primary focus and show us that the altar is the heartbeat of the church. You remind us that all activities are in vain unless we culminate our goals at the altar and our students establish a relationship with God. Pray for us that we might fulfill the mission of Christ as we work with children.

### WE HAVE COME TO DEPEND UPON THESE SPIRITUAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS: ENRICHING SERMONS, CHRISTIAN MOD- ELING, SINCERE FRIENDSHIP, AND EF- FECTIVE PRAYER

This is how you have helped us. Please continue. How could we ask for more?

—Alma Jean Lunn 



# How to Organize and Equip Your Church for Ministry to Youth and Children

by Bill Manning

*Associate Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Kansas City, Missouri*

**1. RECRUITING:** *It's hard to coach the junior high basketball team when your arm is still smarting from the minister's hammerlock.*

Some ministers have a reputation for arm twisting . . . quite a distinction for someone called "pastor." Yet, it is understandable. There are all those positions to fill. It is an easy trap to fall into, especially in ministries geared to children and young people because they require more workers and usually have more openings. Nonetheless, it is a trap. If you recruit a worker with your thumb in his back, you will probably have to keep it there in order to get the job done. High-pressure recruiting is out of place in the church.

What we are really dealing with is not just the pastor's recruiting methods, but the layman's motive for service. When the junior High Department su-

pervisor drives to a teachers' meeting, it shouldn't be a guilt trip. The motive for service must be more than guilt or a sense of obligation. The spirit of service should be joy. The Psalmist says, "Serve the Lord with gladness" (Ps. 100:2). And according to St. Paul, the motive for service should be love. We are urged to serve one another in love (Gal. 5:13).

How do you suppose a minister would recruit workers in a congregation where the members were motivated by love to serve with gladness? That's simple. He would keep the congregation informed of the opportunities for ministry, and the openings would be filled. It sounds rather naive, doesn't it? It is about as naive as the idea that the Holy Spirit of God will dwell in a man and help him to live a holy life. It is just as naive, and just as true.

Can you imagine what kind of revival would occur

if those who minister to children and teenagers experienced a renewal of the joy of service!

**2. ASSESSMENT OF GIFTS:** *Take the “Eeny, meeny, miny, moe” out of placement for ministry.*

In order for people to serve with gladness, they must be able to minister in the areas that are best suited for the use of their gifts. While God gave us the gifts for ministry (Eph. 4:9), He did not give the same gifts to each of us. We would readily agree that not everyone was gifted to sing solos. And it is just as true that not everyone was meant to work with children or teenagers. Therefore, it is important for Christians to come to a realistic understanding of themselves and of their gifts for ministry. For some, a minimal effort at assessing gifts is all that is needed; this may take the form of a survey of each person's past experience and present interests in ministry. For others, a more thorough approach is necessary, such as periodically offering a seminar on spiritual gifts. Still others will only discover their gifts by experiencing them; they should be given short-term assignments that allow them to test the waters before jumping in completely.

**3. TRAINING:** *It is tough to get a kick out of boot camp.*

When considering the church's ministries to children and teenagers, few matters are of more importance than preparation and training. However, there is something about the word *training* that sets off an alarm in most of us. It makes us think of boot camp, and everyone knows that boot camp is no fun. There are some approaches to training that are not so alarming. Here are three creative approaches to the matter of training for ministry to children and young people:

- **Apprenticeship:** Pair a novice with someone who really knows the ropes. This is one of the most time-proven and successful approaches to training. The key to this approach is for both participants to have a clear understanding of and appreciation for their respective roles as instructor and pupil. Establish the length of the apprenticeship at the outset of the relationship. The time commitment will vary from three months to a year depending on the nature of the assignment and the individuals involved.
- **Mock Presentations:** For those involved in teaching from curriculum (e.g., Sunday School, VBS, some Bible studies), a creative and proficient mock presentation of the next lesson can serve as a model to work toward in one's own preparation. Since it places the teacher in the role of the pupil, it provides valuable insight into the communicative dynamics involved in the methodology. At the same time, it serves as a launching pad for one's own creative input into the lesson process. The value of a mock presentation depends on the expertise of the presenter and the receptivity of the participating teachers. The mock session should be conducted three to seven days before the lesson to allow time for assimilation, reflection, and application.
- **Workers' Retreat:** While the workers' retreat is a valuable experience for workers with any age-

group, it is especially well suited as an approach to training youth workers. The workers for whom the retreat is being planned should not perceive it to be a time of training. For them it should be viewed as a time of personal renewal, team building, and program planning. The retreat should be perceived as a training experience only by the two or three individuals responsible for the planning. All of the activities and methodologies planned for use in the course of the retreat should have a dual purpose: (1) They should accomplish the workers' goals of personal renewal, team building, and program planning. (2) They should also serve to better equip the workers so that when the retreat is over, they can go home and use those same activities and methodologies in their ministry to young people.

**4. COMMUNICATION WITH WORKERS:** *It's nice to be able to talk to the Lord about things, but sometimes it is reassuring to have a second opinion.*

Most of the breakdowns in the ministries of the church have their roots in problems of communication. It is unthinkable that all communication should be channeled through the pastor. That would be quite a bottleneck. But the pastor is in a position to help develop chains of communication and accountability among those involved in the ministries of the church. He is also in a position to provide the proper forums for expediting communication (e.g., teachers' meetings, cabinet meetings, committees, reports, etc.). Everyone who is involved in a ministry should have a responsive person they can talk to about that ministry.

**5. PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING:** *If 2 heads are better than 1, what about 100?*

In most instances, it is important for planning and decision-making to be done by those who will have to carry out the plans and act on the decisions. This communicates trust to those involved in ministry, and it makes them more responsible for their work. When orders filter down from the top, the plans are often diluted by the distance between the place of decision-making and the place of action. When people are involved in the decision-making process, the level of enthusiasm is much higher, and so is the probability of success. As those involved in the ministries to children and teens begin to assume responsibility for most of the decisions effecting those ministries, they should be encouraged to do the same with the children and teenagers by involving them in the areas of planning and decision-making that they are able to handle. Of course, it is essential at each level of decision-making to clearly establish the parameters of one's authority.

**6. CHANGING AREAS OF SERVICE:** *Help the albatross.*

The albatross is one of the most graceful of all birds in flight. But if its mastery of flight brings a sigh of admiration, its gracelessness in landing brings a chuckle. The albatross was born to fly, but apparently its squatty build and webbed feet make a

smooth landing an aerodynamic impossibility. The albatross gracefully sweeps down for a landing only to roll over on its face. As often as not, it comes to a screeching halt with its beak buried in the sand. It must be a frustrating way to end such a beautiful flight.

There are people in your church who are like the albatross. They fly well; they have a very meaningful ministry. But they do poorly when it is time to come in for a landing; they fall flat on their faces when it is time to change to another area of ministry. You can help the albatross.

Everyone who takes an assignment will give it up at some time. For their own good, and for the good of the young people they minister to, it is important to be able to help them make that change when the time comes. Undoubtedly, there are some instances in which a person needs to be encouraged to stick it out where he is at. But in most instances, the one who talks about making a change has already quit in his heart. Don't encourage someone to hold on to a job if the fire has gone out. Don't let the good they have done go to waste. Show them how to work with you to bring about a smooth transition in leadership.

**7. FAMILY ORIENTATION:** *It is hard to minister to a family if you ignore them.*

If you are going to have a growing ministry to children, you must plan a program that meets the needs of young adults. If you are going to have a significant ministry to teenagers, your program should have a family orientation. In either case, you can easily ignore the family. Here's how: (1) plan age-group activities that continually separate the family, and give no thought to bringing the family together; (2) schedule your activities and programs for children and teens without keeping parents informed; (3) make it impossible for the family chauffeur to plan her schedule, or schedule overlapping events for the different age-groups that keep her running all day; and (4) never consult the parents for their input. If you ignore the family, they will ignore you. Show respect and consideration for the family, and you will receive the same in return. Most important of all, as you include the family in your planning, you begin to extend your ministry into the home.

**8. COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH:** *It's hard for someone to have a life-changing experience when they have been lulled to sleep.*

Ministry to children and teenagers should be more than dissemination of facts, it should aim at the internalization of principles. Unfortunately, the most common problem in the process of communication and internalization is boredom. Many workers with children and teenagers are guilty of talking too much. They forget that children have such brief attention spans, and that teenagers are prone to daydream, and they lull them to sleep with words. We all learn best by means of experience. And principles are internalized as our experiences combine the input of facts with the recording of our feelings.



Photo by Strix Pix

**9. ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH:** *It's hard to relate to a flannel graph.*

Children and teenagers are often influenced as much by the messenger as they are by the message. Those who minister to youth should understand that whether they like it or not, they serve as models for those young people to exemplify. Of course, that makes it very important for each child and teenager to establish meaningful relationships with appropriate Christian models. We should recognize that no one person can effectively relate to every child or teenager. Therefore, the greater the number and variety of workers, the more likely it is that someone can establish a meaningful relationship with each one. In the end, whatever they learn from us or model after us will come not so much from a book as from a relationship.

**10. PROVIDE WARM MEMORIES:** *Give them warm, pleasant memories of the church to hold on to.*

These young, innocent ones won't always be that way. Life's circumstances will see to that. When they grow up, they may get away from the influence of the church. But regardless of what happens, they will never escape those warm, pleasant memories of the love and happiness they experienced in the fellowship of believers.

# MINISTERING THROUGH MUSIC TO THE YOUNG

by Esther Wesche

**W**e hum as we walk along, sing a tune when we are happy, whistle while we work, tap our feet in time to the band as it plays. We often listen to music without realizing it. Television and radio commercials take full advantage of our innate response to rhythm by filling our minds with catchy nonsense ditties, urging us to buy their product.

Recognizing the intense power and subconscious influence of music, the church must fill the minds of her young people with music which glorifies God and provides a tool for worshipping and communing with Him.

An active children's and youth choir program can fulfill this responsibility. To do so, however, demands that the program be developed around several requisites. There must be a clearly stated philosophy outlining the purpose of choirs in relationship to the overall church philosophy. A choir director must be specifically assigned to *each* choir! A job description should be carefully written for each of these directors. It should clearly define the relationship of the choir to the director of music, director of Christian education, director of children's ministries, and director of youth ministries. Exactly how the choirs will be organized, particularly in regard to age groupings, needs to be delineated and finally, the limits on activities—such as church and non-church performances, frequency of appearances, tours—must be spelled out.

Let's elaborate on each of these essentials.

In developing a philosophy of music for children and youth in the church, several questions must be explored. Will the choirs be a means of giving young people an active part in the worship service? How often will they perform? Is the major emphasis to be on performance, or on preparation for adult church roles? If the latter, when will advancement occur and what will be the motivation for continuing participation until advancement takes place?

Selecting the music director is extremely important. Not always is the best musician the best choir leader. The person selected must have a love and understanding for children and youth. He or she needs to be able to think creatively and imaginatively. They need to know and understand the characteristics of children and teenagers. A pleas-

ing personality is a must, as well as a sense of humor, infectious enthusiasm, and lots of patience! The director's voice is also vital. It should be a model for the youngsters to emulate. One of the most important attributes of the director will be the skill to exercise assertive and positive discipline—one that choir members will respond to willingly and properly. The director must command respect from the group at *all* times!

It is important that job descriptions be written for the choir directors, as well as every full- or part-time staff member. Job descriptions for the directors of youth, children, music, and Christian education, should spell out each position as it relates to the church music program. Too often the choir directors and the choirs are caught in a no-man's-land with no staff position clearly assigned to support and assist them. The youth director, or frequently the Christian education director, is responsible for the music. It is important that both recognize their duties and work together in assuring a harmonious and effective program.

Grouping patterns are important, even in the smaller churches. In the smaller congregation there may be less than a dozen children in grades 1 through 6. Even though this is a small group, it can still be outstanding if the director approaches the task with the determination to have the best choir in the business! Enthusiasm creates enthusiasm. Smaller churches can also group those in grades 7-12 effectively. Where the school system includes a middle school, the 6-12 grade grouping is very satisfactory. Kindergarten children can be added to the elementary group even though their attention span will require increased patience and understanding.

For the larger churches, much closer grouping is best. At the preschool level, a three- to four-year-old choir and a five- to six-year-old group can be organized. Second and third graders can make up the next group, with intermediate age youngsters, fourth through sixth graders, at the next level. A junior high/middle school choir and a senior high group complete the pattern.

If the church is large enough, consideration can be given to an all-boys' choir and an all-girls' choir

(continued on page 63)

# MINISTERING TO YOUNG TEENS

by Larry Richards

One of the most helpful tools to enable us to understand youths' transition from childhood to adulthood is the concept of *development task*. This is the notion that it is critical for youth in the maturation process to succeed in working through certain issues successfully. There are five tasks which have been identified as central. During adolescence:

- ★ a young person needs to develop a healthy self-image.
- ★ a young person needs to develop good social skills and friendships, and learn how to relate to others.
- ★ a young person needs to develop healthy attitudes toward and relationships with members of the opposite sex.
- ★ a young person needs to make a personal religious commitment to self-chosen beliefs and moral values.
- ★ a young person needs to develop and begin to live by self-chosen values and priorities.

We can consider these five areas to define the most important concerns for those working with normal adolescents. Let's look more closely at each.

**1. Healthy self-concept.** Intellectual and emotional self-awareness are especially characteristic of adolescents. These are the years when youth make judgments about themselves and about the kind of persons they want to become.

Typically young teens evaluate themselves on the basis of concrete physical characteristics and on the way others react to them. "My nose is too big" is a judgment likely to make a young girl feel she is ugly, just as low strength is likely to make a boy feel he is ineffective or a failure. Even the guy who's the life of the party may misinterpret others' reactions to him, and think I'm dumb; everybody laughs at me. Such things as these may shape a younger teen's self-image.

How do we help teens build a healthy self-concept, which reflects God's own evaluation of him or

her as a person of infinite worth and value? We can teach God's love and demonstrate His love for each individual in our class. We can build close personal relationships. This is important, for youth tend to identify themselves with parents and other significant adults and seek to be like the admired person. Having close friendships with us can help them discover the person they want to become. Achievement is another powerful aid to self-formation. To reach or make progress toward significant goals is important, as is the appreciation and affirmation of adults who see that progress. You and I can be sensitive to evidence of growth in our teens, and let them know we see and appreciate their progress.

**2. Social skills and friendships.** Adolescents have a strong sense of identity with other youth. The influence of the peer group is strong. This social identification with other youth is an aid in the transition of youth from childhood to maturity. It provides emotional support as a young person moves away from a childhood dependence on his family.

It's important for our youth to have links to a peer group which shares strong Christian values and commitments. Building friendships within such a peer group is vital. Thus learning how to relate to other teens in supportive, caring ways is a vital aspect of Christian growth for youth. No wonder the relational climate of your classroom is so important! And no wonder a basic contribution of your church is in developing a Christian youth community.

**3. Healthy attitudes toward the opposite sex.** Dating practices and the meaning of sexuality are issues which are always important to teens. Not only can these be explored in Bible studies, but a Christian peer group where friendships can grow between guys and gals without the pressure for single dating will also meet a great need.

**4. Personal religious commitment.** Children can have a real faith in God and love for Him. But during adolescence the simple, trusting confidence of





childhood is tested in many ways. Basic beliefs are challenged in school and by peers. Growing intellectual powers and new ideas force teens to seek solid reasons for their faith.

For youth, as for all believers, a personal experience of God at work in daily life is basic for growth toward maturity. They need to experience God answering prayer, providing strength for Christian living, and giving guidance to choose what is best.

**5. Self-chosen values.** One term for describing the underlying source of our choices is "values." In adolescence it's typical for "what others will think" to be a primary determinant of choices. Yet real maturity demands making choices based on principles that have been carefully examined and consciously chosen. Neither what Mom and Dad think, what the crowd thinks, or even what folks at church think, is an adequate substitute for carefully examined and consciously chosen principles to guide our lives. How important that this quest for values be rooted in exploration of and greater understanding of the great truths revealed in God's Word.

Youth, then, is a time of transition. It is a time during which teens are working through the issues which will shape their lives as adults. Because adolescence is so vital a time, your ministry of the Word of God becomes even more critical!

## **Profiling Young Teens**

We've looked at adolescence . . . as a time of transition, when young people must accomplish five basic developmental tasks. . . . But there are other ways of looking at youth as well. Perhaps the classic approach is the psychological, in which physical, social, mental, emotional, and spiritual characteristics are identified. These too provide clues for us to help us minister more effectively.

A number of facts about the development of young teens is summarized for you in chart form, along with some of the implications of these characteristics for your teaching ministry. Not every young teen will fit these descriptions. There is great variety in development, with some young people ahead of others and some behind, and with some young people further advanced in one area and average in others. But, in general, the following does describe the typical characteristics of junior highs in their seventh and eighth or seventh through ninth grades.

## ***JUNIOR HIGH PROFILE***

### **PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **Characteristics**

1. Sudden body changes occur with puberty.  
Girls mature more rapidly.  
Boys are often smaller than girls.  
Many boys are awkward, with low strength.

2. Awkwardness, low attention span, periods of fatigue are common.

These characteristics are associated with youth's growth spurt.

3. Puberty brings sexual awakening and interest.

Girls' more rapid development means interest in older teen boys.

#### **Implications for Teaching**

1. Tendency to focus on physical characteristics and develop self-image based on real or supposed blemishes. Help relate worth and value to God's love rather than comparison with others.
2. Don't expect sustained, in-depth study in your classroom. Work for variety of learning activities; let your young teens dig as deeply as they choose, but do not push.
3. Young teens often feel embarrassed and strange about their sexual feelings. Teaching about dating and sex may be responded to with giggles and fooling around. Don't let these reactions which mask embarrassment lead you to think these topics are not of interest.

## ***JUNIOR HIGH PROFILE***

### **SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **Characteristics**

1. Desire peer acceptance, need to belong.
2. Stirrings begin for greater independence.  
Attitudes often marked by resentment when parents still treat as children.
3. They want to be treated as grown-up.
4. Awareness of self increases.
5. Heroes provide role models.  
Teasing and practical jokes often indicate affection.

#### **Implications for Teaching**

1. Teach Body of Christ, build sense of unity in your class department.
2. Help teens discover the nature of Christian freedom; how to relate to parents.  
Help provide opportunities to take responsibility.  
Retreats and other away activities have great attraction.
3. Avoid treating as a child even when their behavior seems to merit it.  
Treating with respect wins the loyalty of young teens and opens them up to your influence.

4. Avoid putting a young teen on the spot or in other ways embarrassing him or her.
5. Studies on Bible characters are appropriate. Developing a close relationship and letting young teens observe you in daily life situations are powerful ways to influence them and their faith.

## ***JUNIOR HIGH PROFILE***

### **MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **Characteristics**

1. The ability to think seriously and abstractly begins developing.
2. Young teens tend to make snap judgments.
3. The “why” behind the “what” becomes increasingly important. Authority may be questioned.
4. The desire to learn through experimentation and self-discovery invites challenging learning experiences.
5. Imagination is easily stimulated and tends to be very active.
6. They seek to make their own decisions.

#### **Implications for Teaching**

1. Young teens do not think long and deeply, but are beginning to wrestle with issues. Don’t dismiss their questions; be ready with reasons for what you say.
2. Help young teens think through issues; introduce evidence they might overlook.
3. Don’t mistake this characteristic as rejection of Scripture or doctrines. Be patient with young teens’ need to know, and challenging of adult statements.
4. Help them learn how to study the Bible for themselves. Use discovery methods in class, and praise teens for significant insights.
5. Use teaching methods that permit use of imagination. Keep variety high, and resist using the same methods over and over again.
6. Help them think through how to apply Bible truths as basic part of your teaching strategy.

## ***JUNIOR HIGH PROFILE***

### **EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **Characteristics**

1. Emotions are intense.
2. Emotions surge up and down.
3. Feelings of insecurity are common.

4. A deep need for peer approval exists.
5. They lack control of their emotions.

#### **Implications for Teaching**

1. Don’t avoid discussion of emotions. Teach passages in which emotions are expressed (such as psalms). Talk about emotions as basic strategy in study of story passages and application of Bible truths.
2. Explore role of emotions in Christian life; teach living by faith as basic to the believer’s life-style. Anchor faith in truth, not in feelings.
3. Present Christ as one who understands and accepts them, and be willing to show consistent love and supportiveness in your own relationship to them.
4. Help them relate desire for approval to God’s approval and involvement in their lives.
5. Don’t misinterpret in-class reactions. Young teens are likely to laugh when they feel any strong emotion, even pity or compassion.

## ***JUNIOR HIGH PROFILE***

### **SPIRITUAL CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **Characteristics**

1. They are interested in a practical faith.
2. They have a high degree of idealism.
3. They have many doubts and questions.

#### **Implications for Teaching**

1. Stress life application, and share your own experience in living Bible truths. Teens are highly critical of abstract ideas without clear application to life.
2. Can involve them in a variety of service projects, missions trips, and activities. This is a critical time to help them explore the meaning of discipleship, and engage them in joint projects to communicate the gospel to friends.
3. Provide a context where they can talk honestly about their doubts. Realize that young teens *want* to believe and are eager to have reasons to support their faith.

Typically young teens do not want detailed information; they simply want to know that the biblical position on such topics as evolution or morals is intellectually respectable.

This article is excerpted from Larry Richards new book, *Teaching Youth*. The book is published by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City and sells for \$4.95. It is available through your publishing house.



# MAKING THE NEWS

by J. Grant Swank, Jr.

*Pastor, Church of the Nazarene  
Walpole, Massachusetts*

**D**o you want most of the people in your community to know about your church? How much would you pay out in public relations to have the living rooms of your town blanketed regularly with the news concerning your church?

There are various choices you and your church board can make in an attempt to have your church known in your city: (1) You may take out *ads* in the newspaper, such costing quite a dollar from your yearly budget; (2) you can have printed *brochures* describing your church program, such distributed door-to-door throughout the neighborhoods, this costing quite a bit as well as wearing out a lot of shoe leather; (3) you can tack *posters* here and there—particularly on community bulletin boards in grocery stores and the like—such making a little dent on the city's consciousness; (4) you can have *flyers* left at the check-out counters of your community's motels and hotels, such hitting only a limited public; or (5) you can go by way of *television* and *radio*, such being a public service spot scheduled for 3 a.m. (!) or a prime-time slot belting your finances to smithereens.

Yet there is still another choice. It is one that will cost no money but that which will go for a stamp, some stationery, and an envelope. In terms of time spent, it will add up to about seven minutes a day. The coverage will be near-complete as far as the homes in your area are concerned. And there will be no layout for shoe leather or gasoline.

The choice is the *news release* sent to your daily or weekly newspaper. Why is it that clergymen do not take better advantage of this free publicity? on a regular basis and not simply when having special services or some musical spectacular?

Note, the release must be written correctly or it will not appeal to the paper's staff. In the first paragraph of a release, type (double-spaced on regular-sized white paper) the essential information: what, when, where, why, by whom. All other paragraphs should have detail in descending order of significance. For instance:

*Alabaster Box Sunday will be celebrated on September 19 at the 11 a.m. worship of the Church of the Nazarene, 777 Main Street, Your City, Indiana, according to the local pastor, Rev. John Doe, and the local Nazarene World Mission Society president, Mrs. Que Public.*

*Monies received from this special ingathering are used to construct buildings such as clinics, hospitals, schools, chapels, churches, and parsonages on worldwide mission stations of this evangelical, Protestant denomination. These construction programs are overseen by the church's 600 global missionaries having a supportive membership of 430,000.*

*New contribution containers will be distributed to worshipers in preparation for the next ingathering set for February, 1983.*

*Persons not able to be present for the Sep-*

*temper 19 event may obtain their containers at any of the worships scheduled at the church for the next two Sundays or by phoning the church office at 333-1111 daily between 1 and 4 p.m. Likewise, contributions to this missions fund are continuing to be received at services till the middle of October.*

### **News Release Guidelines**

1. Do not consider anything too insignificant for a news release. Let the newspaper people decide what's important. Simply mail out those releases. It is important to send, on the average, three releases per week in order to keep your church in the public eye. The newspaper will print what they want, keeping some, discarding some; that is their privilege and never quarrel with the paper about what they do or do not cover.

Here are some occasions which should be covered by releases: youth gatherings of all kinds, not just the major ones; women's meetings; men's meetings; children's parties; special offerings such as Easter and Thanksgiving missions celebrations. Bible Society offerings, Alabaster Box breakings, even building fund pledge opportunities; Bible studies, either at the church or in homes; special emphasis Sundays, even at times sending out a release stating the upcoming sermon title and further details, such as special music planned (even if it is local talent), choral anthem title, along with names of accompanists (yes, your usual pianist and organist); magazine subscription drives for denominational periodicals (providing an opportunity to describe the accents of each periodical, thus listing the names and addresses of drive chairpersons who can be contacted by an interested readership); public issue statements made by the pastor and/or church board, the latter dealing with current media themes such as need for stricter drunken driving laws, positions taken concerning smoking in public places, statements regarding the nuclear arms race, community discrimination in housing, abortion, racism, and the like; revivals; holiday services such as Christmas Eve family worships and New Year's Eve candlelight watchnight gatherings; annual meeting election results in regard to lay officers of the church; denominational news; guest speakers, complete with photos and biographical sketches; any ecumenical gestures made by the local congre-

gation with other churches in the community; outreach activities such as convalescent home worships made available; socials, fellowship meals, retreats, seminars, conferences and the like.

2. Think "news release" at every turn. Most clergymen do not do this and therefore "news release" comes to mind only when the evangelist is coming to town or there is a groundbreaking for the educational unit. There is an expression around our church that goes like this: When anyone sneezes around this place, the pastor will send out a news release about it. And that is just about the truth of it. The slightest tremor can be cause of the sending out of a news release to those two dailies and that one weekly.

The other Wednesday I mailed out a release about a new series of Bible studies that would be starting on the following Wednesday evening. It was the usual midweek gathering, but I made a release out of it. The study would center on Matthew, so I called it a course entitled, "Marching with Matthew." The release went something like this:

*A new course, "Marching with Matthew" will be made available to the public at the Church of the Nazarene, 777 Main Street, Your City, beginning next Wednesday at 7:30 p.m., gathering in the church's downstairs fellowship hall with the local pastor, Rev. John Doe, instructing.*

*The study is open to anyone, regardless of church affiliation. There is no charge. Nursery will be provided. No preregistration necessary.*

*Enrollees are asked to provide their own study Bibles and writing utensils.*

*The class structure will be informal with accent on dialogue involving those attending.*

*For further information, persons may telephone the church office at 333-1111 daily between 1 and 4 p.m.*

3. Keep the releases filled with factual detail. Do not put personal opinion nor clichés in any release unless such is treated as a quotation, or unless the release deals with a position statement. The following is an example of how *not* to write a release:

*Everyone will truly enjoy the revival services to be held at our church next Tuesday through Sunday with Brother Que Public, my friend from Sheboygan. He is a great speaker and has spo-*  
(continued on page 62)

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7. Quotations not cited with a special designation are from the King James Bible.

# Who Cares About Pastors?

An Interview with Wilbur Brannon  
*Director of Pastoral Ministries, Church of the Nazarene*

**Wesley Tracy:** Wilbur, I know you are excited about your new assignment as director of Pastoral Ministries. I want to ask you about your goals and dreams for this ministry, but first I want to ask some questions about you yourself. Tell me a little about your career as a minister.

**Wilbur Brannon:** Wesley, I spent most of the last five years pastoring the Liberty Towers Church in Sacramento, Calif. To me it is a great church with great possibilities. It has about 550 members now.

**Tracy:** Where did you pastor before your term in Sacramento?

**Brannon:** I was an evangelist for 14 years. My first pastorate was in Seminole, Okla. I was there a little over two years and then I went to Hot Springs, Ark., First Church and was there six and a half years. From there I went to Orlando, Fla., and pastored the Central Church of the Nazarene for six years. Then I went to Lansing, Mich., First Church, and from there went to Point Loma to help establish the church near the college.

**Tracy:** I can see that your experiences are going to provide rich resources for your work in Pastoral Ministries. Where did you receive your ministerial education?

**Brannon:** I graduated from Bethany Nazarene College in 1952 and went right into the evangelistic field. While evangelizing I finished another degree at Goshen College, a Mennonite school in Indiana. I was profoundly influenced by the faculty there, particularly in regard to the relevance of the doctrine and life of holiness. Later I finished a master's degree at Ouachita Baptist University while pastoring in Arkansas.

**Tracy:** Tell me a little about your childhood years, Wilbur.

**Brannon:** Well, I was born in Junction City, Kans., and spent most of my childhood in Indiana where my father pastored.

**Tracy:** During those years between the ages of 6 and 12, where did you live in Indiana?

**Brannon:** We moved to Winchester when I was 5. Then when I was 11 we moved to Auburn.

**Tracy:** How did you heat your home in those years?

**Brannon:** In Winchester we moved into a parson-

age that had a huge base burner fed by coke, hard coal that was fed from the top and formed clinkers about the bottom of the stove and those clinkers had to be removed . . .

**Tracy:** Sounds like you got to do that job occasionally.

**Brannon:** I helped carry the coal in and the clinkers out, but we still couldn't keep that house warm. You would freeze if you got more than two steps from the stove. I squeaked my cords, my corduroy pants, against the front of that stove many mornings trying to get warm.

**Tracy:** We have talked about the center of physical warmth in your home; that coke-burning stove, loosely so called. Who or where or what was the center of human warmth in your home in those years?

**Brannon:** Well, I would say Mother. Dad was somewhat rigid in my upbringing. Mother was more the warm personality and the protector. Dad was a warmhearted man. I respected him highly as a man of God who was a man of deep devotion and prayer, but he was more remote from me personally than Mother was. The kitchen was the *place* where human warmth was felt more.

**Tracy:** What was one of the dishes that your mother cooked that you liked best?

**Brannon:** She was quite a baker. She knew how to make the best cinnamon rolls.

**Tracy:** Did she lead you in family devotions?

**Brannon:** Dad did that every morning before we went to school.

**Tracy:** Looking back on those childhood years, when did God first become more than just a word to you?

**Brannon:** That was at the age of six on Mother's Day. Dr. J. B. Chapman was preaching a Mother's Day sermon and he had everybody who loved their mothers and whose mothers were living to come and stand around the altar. He also invited those who wanted to meet their mothers in heaven, but who were not ready for heaven, to kneel there at the altar. I was six years old and that was a very meaningful experience, and probably the first time that I recall praying specifically for Christ to come into my heart. After the service that morning Mother was

Nazarene

## Update

UPDATE EDITOR, SUSAN DOWNS, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

MINISTERING  
TO CHILDREN  
AND YOUTH

One pastor commented that his ministry to children and young people along with his ministry to the senior adults was the most important phase of his work. Our work among the boys and girls of our church along with our youth embraces a major part of our responsibility.

The children and youth in our Sunday Schools, those in Caravan, those in vacation Bible school, those in quizzing and those in summer youth camping involve pastor and people. Those who teach, train, and serve our children and youth should be spiritual leaders well versed in the Bible and the church's great cardinal doctrines. As ministers we should preach and lead our boys and girls and youth to Christ in a saving and sanctifying knowledge and relationship.

Enrolling children from unchurched homes in Sunday School and VBS provides contacts and access to many unsaved people. We must capitalize on this potentially growing edge of every church.

The year of Christian holiness among our children and youth provides us the opportunity of looking at and meeting

the spiritual needs of our parsonage families and the families in our churches. In every home we must clearly teach and establish God's chain of command for the family. As Christians we confirm the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of the house, the unseen Guest at every meal and the silent Listener to every conversation.

As Christians we are to live by the commandment of love in our homes. Jesus said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12). This love relationship must be exemplified in the home. We need to continually manifest the sanctified spirit and life among those who know and love us best. Where love prevails it is a little bit of heaven; and where love and Christ are absent the home is a little bit of hell.

As Christian parents we need to show acceptance and appreciation to each other and to our children. We accept each other as God accepts us. We should find opportunity to praise our children instead of criticizing them, and, when they do need correction, it should always be done in love and sometimes with tears. David prayed for Solomon and daily praised him. Our children need our praise, and our spouse also needs our praise and support. We all need to be loved and appreciated.

We also need to have respect for authority. Jesus lived under the authority of His Father in heaven. There is a chain of command, and the ultimate authority is God. There is also the need of training and discipline in the home. Some feel that our Western culture has lost real discipline in the home and in our national life. God's command is "Train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6), and not the way he wants to go. As a part of our training and discipline in the home we should have assigned chores and work for each member of the family. Psychologists are saying that children, in order to function normally, need to work and bear responsibility.

As a family we need to pray and read God's Word together. As ministers we need to maintain a family altar where the children, even at an early age, learn to pray, testify, and share together the things of the Lord.

There are many evil forces arrayed against the Christian home, and the parsonage home is not immune from Satan's onslaught. Under God, protect those lives He has entrusted to you, and He will give you grace, wisdom, strength, and love in rearing your family and saving your home.



By General Superintendent  
Orville W. Jenkins



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**MORE EFFECTIVE**

# SLIDE PRESENTATIONS

*(Prepared for your media resource notebook by Media Services.)*

**“If they could **SEE** what I’m saying, they would understand!”**

## WHY USE SLIDE PRESENTATIONS?

- You completely control the content, the pace, and the quality of the program.
- Lets you show the audience exactly what is being discussed.
- Allows audience and speaker to share experiences.
- Can always be adjusted by changing any part of the presentation.

## Planning



### • DEFINE YOUR OBJECTIVE

“How do I want to affect the audience?” Always have a specific purpose: to inform, to motivate, to change, etc.

### • ANALYZE YOUR AUDIENCE

“How can I best accomplish the objective with this audience?” Know your audience: age; knowledge of subject; educational, economic, and religious background.

### • TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

How many projectors? Dissolve units? Front or rear projector screen? Live or recorded narration?

### • LIST AND ORGANIZE YOUR IDEAS

Determine what ideas are necessary to accomplish your objective. Find an effective way to organize your ideas for visuals and narration. You may want to use some type of planning card. (Here is one suggested format for organizing your ideas on planning cards.)

SKETCH YOUR VISUAL HERE.	MAKE NOTES FOR DETAILING PRODUCTION OF THE VISUAL HERE.
MAKE NOTES THAT WILL HELP FORM THE ACCOMPANYING NARRATION HERE.	

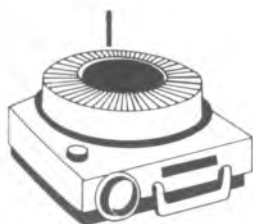
### • WRITE YOUR SCRIPT

Think visually! Try to picture what words and phrasing best complement the visual you plan. (Here is one suggested format for organizing your script.)

VISUAL.	NARRATION.
1. LIST	WRITE IN CORRE- SPONDING NARRATION IN THIS COLUMN.
2. EACH	
3. VISUAL	
4. IN	
5. THIS	
6. COLUMN	

### • GATHER YOUR VISUALS

Know the slides you already have. Make notes of what shots you will need to complete your visuals.



# Photography

- **BE ORGANIZED**

Work from your notes: what shots do I need? where do I need them from? who do I need in them?

- **SHOOT FOR QUANTITY**

Take enough pictures to tell your story. Give yourself a wide selection to choose from.

- **SHOOT FOR QUALITY**

Take time planning each picture. Strive for quality in each frame. Make each picture your best effort.

- **EDIT OBJECTIVELY**

Select slides that are readily understandable, ones that will assist in communicating your message without a lot of explanation. Compare exposure, expression, composition, etc. Look at several slides at one time, putting aside your own emotional or "had to be there" responses, and consider the objective reactions of your audience.

- **PHOTOGRAPHY HINTS**

Get in close to your subject. Make your subject obvious. Keep people busy as you shoot. Photograph from several viewpoints and angles. Keep background simple and uncluttered.

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# Presentation

## **REMEMBER...**

- Content, quality, and pace are far more important than length.
- Make certain you have all the necessary equipment, and have it set up the way you want it. (It's a good idea to keep spare equipment: projector lamps, narration recordings, extension cords, etc.)
- Be sure to be set up and ready well ahead of time.
- Use your introduction and conclusion to complement your slide presentation. Make it short. Let your presentation do your communicating!

# CELEBRATE CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

One of the most important ingredients of successful ministry is long- and short-range planning. The following general church events, with their dates, are provided by the Pastoral Ministries for your convenience in coordinating the local and district church calendar into your total program. We want to help you "Celebrate Christian Holiness." The events and programs should support the theme or be useful in attaining the purpose. We want to assist you in your ministry. Call on us.

## 1982-83—The Year of the Young

August 30—September 5, 1982	Youth Week
September 13-18, 1982	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 20-24, 1982	NIROGA, Schroon Lake, New York
October, 1982	European Military Personnel Retreat
December 13-15, 1982	Evangelists' Conference
January—May, 1983	Simultaneous Revivals
February 21-25, 1983	NIROGA, Lake Yale, Florida
May 30—June 3, 1983	NIROGA, California
May 30—June 7, 1983	NIROGA, Hawaii
June 13-16, 1983	Faith and Learning Conference—ONC
June 20-26, 1983	World Youth Congress, Oaxtepec, Mexico

## 1983-84—The Year of the Diamond Jubilee

August 29—September 4, 1983	Youth Week
September 12-17, 1983	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 19-23, 1983	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 26-30, 1983	NIROGA, Adirondacks
October 9-16, 1983	Diamond Jubilee Week
October 10-14, 1983	NIROGA, Canadian Rockies
October, 1983 (tentative)	Chaplains' Retreat
October, 1983	European Military Personnel Retreat
December 12-14, 1983	Evangelists' Conference
December, January, February	"How to Live a Holy Life" Enduring Word Series Sunday School Lessons
January 3-5, 1984	Conference on Evangelism—Phoenix
January 17-19, 1984	Conference on Evangelism—Fort Worth
January 24-26, 1984	Conference on Evangelism—Tampa
February 20-24, 1984	NIROGA, Florida
SUMMER, 1984	WILCON II, College Campuses
May 28—June 1, 1984	NIROGA, California

## 1984-85—The Year of Church Growth

<i>Goal—75,000 New Nazarenes</i>	
August 27—September 2, 1984	Youth Week
September 10-15, 1984	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 17-21, 1984	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
October 1-5, 1984	NIROGA, Adirondacks
October, 1984	European Military Personnel Retreat
December 10-12, 1984	Evangelists' Conference
February 18-22, 1985	NIROGA, Florida
June 20-22, 1985	General Conventions, Anaheim
June 23-28, 1985	General Assembly, Anaheim
August 26—September 1, 1985	Youth Week
September 9-14, 1985	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 16-20, 1985	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 30—October 4, 1985	NIROGA, Adirondacks
October 14-18, 1985	NIROGA, Canadian Rockies

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**PRESIDENT REAGAN HAS PROPOSED MASSIVE CUTBACKS IN MANY FEDERAL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING EDUCATION. THESE CUTS WILL NOT AFFECT THIS CURRENT YEAR GREATLY. THE AID PROGRAM IS ABOUT THE SAME.**

The fall of 1983 could be different. As of this date, the 1983 budget is not in place. However, sooner or later, it appears that Federal Aid to education will be drastically reduced. Wisdom dictates that we prepare now. Adequate student aid via scholarships, grants, and loans provided by our church and our members will help meet the need.

1. Each college has several limited scholarships, grants, and loan funds. We encourage increased support for these by individuals, local churches, and districts.

2. Increasingly, our people are establishing endowment student aid trusts. The revenue from these trusts will be used. The person's stewardship will be perpetuated for generations.

3. The General Superintendents' Scholarship Fund is growing. Next year 36 students will receive helpful grants.

The general church, through Rev. Robert Crew as director of Life Income and Gifts, and each regional college has trained individuals to give advice in establishing such trusts.

If you wish additional information, write:

**Mark R. Moore  
Secretary, Education Services  
Nazarene Headquarters  
6401 The Paseo  
Kansas City, MO 64131**



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- Preacher's Magazine Online

\*VIDEO-NET, scheduled for release January 1, 1983, is a monthly videotape sponsored by the National Council of Churches. It will focus on the pastor's needs in his leadership role, family relations, and vocational issues. It will provide ideas for enriching church services, sermon preparation, church board interaction, training, and religious news, seminars, etc.

To facilitate our commitment to these many new programs for pastors, we recruited the following qualified personnel:



**NAME:** WILBUR W. BRANNON  
**TITLE:** Director of Pastoral Ministries  
**RESPONSIBILITIES:**  
Direct Seminars  
Serve as Retreat Resource Person  
Develop Pastors' Support System  
Provide Advance Ministerial Study Opportunities  
Engage Counselor Network  
Advise in PALCON/WILCON Preparation and Implementation



**NAME:** DWIGHT DOUGLAS  
**TITLE:** Video/Education Coordinator  
**RESPONSIBILITIES:**  
Initiate and Implement "Video-NET"  
Pastors and Lay Leaders  
Coordinate PALCON/WILCON  
Assist in Providing Enrichment, Training, and Support for the Minister and His Family

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Sync

Line  
Check

Internal  
Check

Storage  
Check

Ready

Status  
Test  
Normal



**NAME:** MELVIN SHROUT

**TITLE:** Staff Assistant (Division of Church Growth)

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Manage Program for Course of Study  
Update Courses, Study Guides, & Exams  
Evaluate Books, Research Proposals,  
and District or Local Programs Related  
to the Educational Qualifications of  
Candidates for Ordination



**NAME:** LeROY BEVAN

**TITLE:** Chaplaincy Coordinator

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Implement Chaplain Endorsement Process  
Supervise Chaplaincy Advisory Board  
Maintain "On-Sight" communication with Nazarene Chaplains  
Formulate and Coordinate Various Functions and Interests of Military,  
Industrial, and Institutional Chaplains  
Act as Liaison with Chief of Military Chaplains  
Serve in Connectional Role with Nazarene Chaplains' Association

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season...

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From: *Your Church*



Remember the evangelists who held services in your church this past year with a Christmas gift of \$25.00 or more. Let them know you care.

(Please put this important item of business on your November church board agenda)

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# THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

The editorial team is supported by the wise counsel of a rotating editorial board. Each issue of the *Preacher's Magazine* accents a theme. An advisory board of persons with experience and expertise on the subject is recruited to tell the editor and his staff what needs to be said about the accented theme.

Serving without pay, the editorial board, pictured here, helped us put together this issue of "Ministering to the Young."



**WESLEY TRACY**  
Editor  
*The Preacher's Magazine*



**SUSAN DOWNS**  
Assistant Editor  
*The Preacher's Magazine*



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Children's Ministries  
Director  
Division of Christian  
and Sunday School



**ROBERT TROUT**  
Children's Ministries  
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**JOHN DENNEY**  
Youth Ministries  
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**DEE FREEBORN**  
Professor of Religion  
Education  
Nazarene Theological  
Seminary



**JOHN M. NIE**  
Director of Church  
Public Relations  
Eastern Nazarene

Future issues of the *Preacher's Magazine* will accent these themes:

- The Pastor as Change Agent
- Preaching from the Book of Judges
- Preaching as Communication
- Our Founding Fathers

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**Tracy:** Who was your hero or heroes when you were 12 years old?

**Brannon:** Well, I suppose my music teacher was. He had put a lot of confidence in me and was developing me in my piano playing. He wanted me ultimately to teach under him or to become a performer. Paderewski, the great Polish pianist, in a sense was a hero of mine as well as Rachmaninoff. Harold Volk, the evangelist, made a profound impression on me, too, as did Uncle Buddy Robinson who dedicated me to the Lord when I was a baby.

**Tracy:** I want to shift our discussion now to Pastoral Ministry. Wilbur, they say that in the United States 200 pastors per day leave their churches or leave the ministry. How can this happen?

**Brannon:** Stress on today's pastor is intense. The pastor's job assignment has become unbelievably complex.

**Tracy:** Is it harder to be a pastor now than it was 20 years ago?

**Brannon:** I think it's gotten much tougher in just the last five years. More and more demands are placed on the pastor. Not only is there stress on the pastor but there is tremendous stress on the pastor's family—especially his wife. The pastorate is a profession in jeopardy unless we do something to help pastors cope or somehow control the stress factors. There is always multitudinous administrative demands. And to the pastor who takes pulpit ministry seriously there is great pressure to produce two good sermons and a midweek devotional every week. Further, there is increasing stress because the pastor serves a congregation of people who are better and better educated and thus more critical of the pastor and his leadership. In addition, the tone of the times is to subject all leaders to the closest scrutiny.

**Tracy:** A poll taken several years ago reported that 50 percent of the pastors responding said they would get out of the ministry if they had any other marketable skills. Do you think that's accurate?

**Brannon:** Every pastor has some times when he feels like giving up. I know I have. I'm thankful I never learned any other business. From my teen years I've determined to stay in the ministry whatever happens. Every pastor runs the risk of *burnout*, unless he finds ways of refreshing himself spiritually, vocationally, and functionally.

**Tracy:** Of course, that's not always easy to do with a 70-hour work week.

**Brannon:** That's why we must take Ephesians 4 seriously. Pastors must learn they cannot do it all. Their job is to equip others for ministry. He or she must equip, delegate, and motivate people to minister.

**Tracy:** In considering the difficulties of the ministry, where does the problem of getting along with people rank?

**Brannon:** Near the top. You have to love people, sometimes in spite of themselves, to be an effective minister.

**Tracy:** I received an unsigned letter the other day, sent to me as editor of *Preacher's Magazine*, from a pastor's wife who said something like this, "Many of us out here are slowly dying and our husbands don't even realize we are in trouble." What can a pastor do to help his wife carry her burdens?

**Brannon:** The pastor must realize that his job is important, he cannot effectively do his work if he fails to minister to his own family. I have been fortunate to have a good wife who has overlooked a lot of my faults in order to support me in the ministry. And I have not always been as sensitive as I should have been. A man must constantly find ways of facilitating communications with his wife so that he knows exactly where she is. He has got to be supportive of her.

**Tracy:** Wilbur, if you could give one gift to holiness pastors everywhere, what would that gift be?



**Brannon:** The quality of simple sincerity. Nothing more successfully combats burnout, pressure, and stress like transparent sincerity. Without this the pastor can drift into calloused professionalism—handling holy things so often they become common. But when he or she simply and sincerely follows the call of God he or she knows that recognition, promotion, money, and prestige are beside the point. The devil cannot, then, easily distract and divert such a pastor. Of course, the key to such a quality is keeping the devotional life, one's relationship to God, up-to-date.

**Tracy:** The Church of the Nazarene, after 75 years, has finally created an office of Pastoral Ministries. Perhaps this indicates that the church realizes as never before the need for a support system for pastors. I guess part of your dreams and goals include support systems for pastors.

**Brannon:** Yes, the support systems are in embryo form just now. But we are doing research so we can move quickly in the right directions. I do know that I want to develop support systems that will help every pastor *know* that he or she is important. The job they do is important, but they are important as persons too. We hope to focus on the emotional, functional, spiritual needs of pastors everywhere.

**Tracy:** In what ways?

**Brannon:** For example, I hope we can make counseling services available to ministers. I hope to establish a network of professional helpers, persons to whom our pastors can go for help in a nonthreatening situation. Ecclesiastical structures cannot always provide nonthreatening counseling situations. We hope that a pastor can bring personal, family, professional, and life-transition problems to qualified helpers. We also want to do something in the way of emergency crisis intervention. I have even thought of a hotline that a pastor and his or her family could use so that quick referrals could be made as needed.

On another level we want to give support by facilitating various kinds of forums and dialogs through which ministers can share ideas, concerns, frustrations, and inspiration. For example, pastors who have identified similar needs could be brought together for problem-solving meetings.

**Tracy:** The person who seems quite vulnerable to discouragement is the career pastor who has been on the job for 20 years and still pastors small churches of 100 members. Now he is middle-aged and his dreams of "success" are being quietly surrendered. How can you help this type of person?

**Brannon:** Such a pastor need not feel that he has failed on the basis of mere statistics. He may not be knocking the top out of the graphs, but he is still getting things done for God. Statistics do not show the results of population shifts, factory closings, and the like. On the other hand, if the pastor has simply not seen the results he should, he needs to know that middle-age is not too late to make real adjustments, learn new methods, and see real breakthroughs in ministry.

Further, I am convinced that some of the best quality work is going on in small churches. Frequently such a pastor has the opportunity to work at a deeper, more personal level with his people than does the pastor of a large church who is separated from the lives of his people by an acre of administrative urgencies.

**Tracy:** I've heard you talk a lot about helping pastors become more effective preachers. That gives me the idea that you think that what goes on in the pulpit is rather important.

**Brannon:** It is primary. I think that if there is any time that we need to reinforce the importance of preaching it



is now. I think preaching has gained a new importance in the public's view. It is not important to do it the way it was done 40 years ago. But we must communicate the gospel in effective ways. We must be forceful, convincing, persuasive preachers of holiness.

**Tracy:** Let's talk about continuing education. I know that is a big part of your job assignment and you have done a lot of thinking about it. What would you like to see happen in the way of continuing education for ministers?

**Brannon:** My first concern in continuing education is that it be kept on a practical level for the most part. There should not only be opportunities for intellectual stimulation, but I believe that the primary purpose in continuing education is to sharpen the skills, improve the minister's effectiveness, and to motivate the minister to perform at the highest level of productivity. Continuing education is something that I think links very closely with the support systems that we're talking about. There is a relationship between how I am able to refresh and renew and update myself and how I can best be a minister in the 1980s, or in the next 20 years. Continuing education can affect the way I feel about myself as a minister, and how I can keep myself alive and relevant and responsive to my people as well as to my family.

**Tracy:** I read something the other day that said that times are changing so fast that a person in almost any occupation will need to be retrained twice during his own work career. I suppose you are saying something similar about ministers and continuing education.

**Brannon:** Yes, and I think we know this and are anxious to do whatever needs to be done to keep our ministry relevant.

**Tracy:** I think we all agreed that John Wesley and others in our heritage discovered something quite distinctive about the Christian life beyond conversion. How important is this matter of the doctrine and life of holiness to ministerial success?

**Brannon:** I think it is pivotal. I remember my own struggle at this point. I was brought up in the Church of the Nazarene in a parsonage and trained in a Nazarene college, but it was not until after I was out of college and was already into the evangelism field that the doctrine of holiness became a true theological conviction. Experientially I was maintaining my life with God and I had made my consecration. I had accepted by faith His sanctifying of my life. But I had to make this doctrine my own. If I could not, then I could not remain in the Church of the Nazarene as a minister and keep my integrity. I feel that to be a holiness preacher it's not enough to be an effective communicator. But to be an effective communicator is closely linked with true theo-

(continued on page 62)





# THE HERITAGE OF THANKSGIVING

## *In Word, Song, and Scripture*

by Donna Fletcher Crow

**T**he following readings may be presented by selected members of the congregation, teens, or choir members.

**Pastor:** The idea of setting aside a special day for the nation to give thanks to God did not spring full blown from the mind of William Bradford in 1621. Its roots trace back through many ages and many nations to the children of Israel.

**First Reader:** The Feast of the Tabernacles:

The feast took its name from the fact that everyone lived in booths or tents during the festival in memory of the years when the nation had wandered in the wilderness without a settled home.

In Deuteronomy, Moses gave these directions: "Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: and thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord shall choose: because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice" (16: 13-15).

These thanksgivings after harvest constituted the principle festival of the Jewish year. In the Book of Nehemiah the Lord commanded: "Go forth unto the mount and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people went forth and brought them, and made themselves booths, every

one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate . . .

"And there was very great gladness" (8:15-17).

**Pastor:** A Psalm for the Feast of the Tabernacles, adapted from Psalm 95:

O come, let us sing unto the Lord:  
Let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.  
Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving.  
And show ourselves glad in Him with psalms.  
For the Lord is a great God.  
And a great King above all gods.  
In His hands are all the corners of the earth:  
The strength of the hills is His also.  
The sea is His, and He made it:  
And His hands prepared the dry land.  
O come, let us worship and bow down:  
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.  
For He is the Lord our God;  
And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.

**Song Leader:** Let us think of the children of Israel building their booths of olive and myrtle branches and spending seven days worshiping Jehovah for His goodness to them as we sing the first verse of "We Gather Together."

**Second Reader:** Two Pagan Festivals:

The harvest festival of ancient Greece, called the Thesmophoria, was dedicated to Demeter, the goddess of harvests and agriculture, and was celebrated in Athens, in November by married women only.

Two wealthy and distinguished ladies were chosen to perform the sacred function in the name of the others and

to prepare the sacred meal, which corresponds to our Thanksgiving dinner. On the first day of the feast, amid great rejoicing, the women went to the temple of Demeter. There they celebrated their thanksgiving for three days. On their return a festival was held for three days in Athens—solemn at first, but growing into an orgy of mirth and dancing.

The Romans worshiped this harvest deity under the name of Ceres. Her festival was held on October 4. It began with a fast among the common people who offered her a sow and the first cuttings of the harvest. There were processions with a feast of thanksgiving.

**Pastor:** Truly, we know that “The Lord, He is God” and our blessings come not from pagan deities, as we read Psalm 100:

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.  
Serve the Lord with gladness:  
Come before his presence with singing.  
Know ye that the Lord he is God:  
It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;  
We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,  
And into his courts with praise:  
Be thankful unto him, and bless his name.  
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;  
And his truth endureth to all generations.

**Song Leader:** Let us be thankful that, as we hold our Thanksgiving celebrations, we know and serve the true God, and praise Him as we sing the first verse of “Fairest Lord Jesus.”

**Third Reader:** England’s Harvest Home:

In England the autumnal festival was called the Harvest Home and its roots go back to early Saxon times. This festival included a special service in the village church, beautifully decorated for the occasion with fruit and flowers, followed by a special dinner and sometimes concluded with rural sports.

In earlier times when the sickle was laid down and the last sheaf of corn set on end, the reapers announced the fact by loud shouting and made an image with wheat-ears and dressed in a white frock and colored ribbons. The image was hoisted on a pole by the tallest and strongest men of the party and all followed this “kern-baby” or harvest queen to the barn where they set the image on high and proceeded to do justice to the harvest supper.

**Pastor:** A Psalm for Harvest Home, Psalm 65:

Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it:  
Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water:  
Thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided it.  
Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly:  
Thou settlest the furrows thereof:  
Thou makest it soft with showers:  
Thou blessest the springing thereof.  
Thou crownest the year with thy goodness;  
And thy paths drop fatness.  
They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness:  
And the little hills rejoice on every side.  
The pastures are clothed with flocks;  
The valleys also are covered with corn;  
They shout for joy, they also sing (vv. 9-13).

**Song Leader:** Many of our Pilgrim fathers must have taken part in the English Harvest Home before coming to the New World. Let us think of them as we sing the first

verse of “Come, Ye Thankful People, Come” and notice the reference to harvest home in the first line.

**Fourth Reader:** Thanksgiving Day in Holland:

Since the Pilgrims lived in Holland for 10 years before coming to America, it is likely that they were most strongly influenced in the institution of their Thanksgiving feast by the manner in which their Dutch friends celebrated, on October 3, their deliverance from the Spaniard. This was the most popular festival of the Dutch and was kept as both a religious and a social holiday. The chief dish at dinner was a Spanish stew of meat and vegetables.

**Pastor:** A Psalm of Thanksgiving for National Deliverance from Psalm 18:

I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.  
The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;  
My God, my strength, in whom I will trust;  
My buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.  
I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised:  
So shall I be saved from mine enemies. . . .  
He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me:  
For they were too strong for me. . . .  
He brought me forth also into a large place;  
He delivered me, because he delighted in me. . . .  
As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried:  
He is a buckler to all those that trust in him.  
For who is God save the Lord?  
Or who is a rock save our God?  
It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. . . .  
Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation:  
And thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great. . . .  
The Lord liveth; and blessed by my rock;  
And let the God of my salvation be exalted. . . .  
Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen,  
And sing praises unto thy name.

—selected verses

**Song Leader:** Let us return to the third verse of “We Gather Together,” which refers to God as our Leader and Defender and think, as we sing, of the deliverance He has given our nation from its enemies.

**Fifth Reader:** The First Thanksgiving:

The first harvest festival was held by the Pilgrims in 1621. During the winter the little colony had been sorely tried. Only 55 of the 101 settlers remained alive. They had suffered cold, hunger, and disease.

In the spring of 1621 the seeds were sown in the field and all summer the fields were watched with great anxiety, for the colonists knew that their lives depended upon the coming harvest. The summer crops were fruitful beyond all expectation, and one day, late in the fall, Governor Bradford sent four men into the forests to shoot wild birds. “We will hold a harvest feast of Thanksgiving,” he said, and invited the Indians who had been friendly to the strangers to come and rejoice with them. The Indians came bearing gifts of venison, and the harvest feast lasted three days.

**Pastor:** Psalm 147, a psalm of praise for the First Thanksgiving to God who made the “grass, herb, and beast” to grow:

Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving;  
Sing praise upon the harp unto our God:

Who covereth the heaven with clouds,  
 Who prepareth rain for the earth,  
 Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.  
 He giveth to the beast his food,  
 And to the young ravens which cry.  
 Praise to the Lord, O Jerusalem;  
 Praise thy God, O Zion (vv. 7-9, 12).

**Song Leader:** Thinking of the dedication of our Pilgrim forefathers, let us sing the first two verses of "America, the Beautiful."

**Sixth Reader:** General Washington's Thanksgiving Proclamation, 1789:

Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection, aid, and favors . . . now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the Beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country, and for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.

**Pastor:** Thinking of God's great mercies to our country,

to our church, and to us as individuals, let us read together from Psalm 136. After each line, the congregation will respond "For his mercy endureth forever."

**Pastor:** O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** O give thanks unto the God of gods:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** O give thanks to the Lord of lords:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** To him who alone doeth great wonders:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** To him that by wisdom made the heavens:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** To him that stretched out the earth above the waters:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** To him that made great lights:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** The sun to rule by day:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever.

**Pastor:** The moon and stars to rule by night:

**People:** For his mercy endureth for ever. . . .

**Pastor:** O give thanks unto the God of heaven:

**Unison:** For his mercy endureth for ever (vv. 1-9, 26).

**Song Leader:** We will conclude with the final two verses of "America, the Beautiful," thinking of the heroes and patriots whose courage sustained God's blessing for us.



## J. W. and the Kids

(continued from page 4)

man, who is the physician of souls, that no man can "bring a clean thing out of an unclean." Only God can do that, "but it is generally his pleasure to work by his creatures: to help man by man."<sup>11</sup> Kingswood School still operates today.

Of course Wesley and Co. had other educational projects. Time and space proscribes treatment here of the orphanage in New Castle or the Lying-in Hospital in London. The latter was a place of refuge for destitute expectant mothers. During their stay the young women were not only cared for physically, they were given religious instruction and *vocational training*. One year, for example, no fewer than 300 such women entered this institution. There is no time to show that there were Methodist Sunday Schools at least a decade before Raikes schools. Or to show that Raikes produced his Sunday School only after Sophia Bradburn, a Methodist preacher's wife, suggested it to him.

The limitations of this article also prevent a tracing of the Methodist mania for education in the post-Wesley years. Methodists established elementary schools left and right. Hundreds of such schools were started in England, Ireland, and America. The Conference of 1840, for example, records the 20-year plan to establish 700 new Methodist elementary schools in Britain. Historically the Wesleys have been the most vigorous foe of sin, ignorance, and poverty which they have meant to overcome by Christian education, discipline, and the gospel of grace. For a Wesleyan to be intensely concerned with the education of children and youth is to be intensely loyal to a treasured tradition. I think John Wesley would be proud of this issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*.



## NOTES

1. Paul Sangster, *Pardon My Simplicity* (London: Epworth Press 1963), p. 45.
2. Minutes I, 52, 68, cited by John W. Prince, *Wesley on Religious Education* (New York: The Methodist Concern, 1926), p. 134.
3. *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978), 8:305.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 316.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Minutes I, 81, cited by Prince, *Wesley on Christian Education*, p. 135.
7. *Works*, 8:302.
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9. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
10. John Wesley, "A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children," *Works*, 13:476.
11. "On Family Religion," *Works*, 7:81.
12. "A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children," *Works*, 13:476.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. Minutes, I, 4, *Works*, 5:194, cited by Prince, p. 133.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
18. *Works*, 7:82.
19. *The Instructions for Children* is translated from *Les Principes sociaux de la religion et de la vie Chretienne appliques a l'educater des enfants*, by Abbé Fleury and M. Pierre Poirot. See Richard Green, *The Works of John and Charles Wesley* (London, 1896), Nos. 62, 117, 118, 174.
20. *Works*, 8:269.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 273.
23. A. H. Body, *John Wesley and Education* (London: Epworth, 1936), p. 83.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
26. Charles Wesley, *Hymns for Children and Others of Riper Years*, 35-36, cited by Prince, pp. 91-92.
27. "On the Education of Children," *Works*, 7:87.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
31. *Ibid.*

# LOOK BACK WITH JOY

By Ernest E. Grosse

**E**ven as a child I had a bent toward preaching. As I walked to Sunday School I would preach to fence posts, trees, and even birds. But my real call to the ministry came while I was riding a commuter train to work. There was no audible voice, but the deep impression made on my heart and mind by the Holy Spirit was no less real. No room was left for question or doubt. Since then I have not questioned my call, no, not even for a moment. This call came to me shortly after my experience of entire sanctification. I was sanctified as I prayed in a hayloft on a Sunday afternoon in January when I was 18 years old.

Soon I was attending Eastern Nazarene College. There I found a friend, Prof. Floyd Nease. He took personal interest in me. If anyone ever had a patron saint, Floyd Nease was mine. I grieved sorely when at such an early age, he was called home.

The time came when I began my pastoral career. My first charge in southern New Jersey was comprised of 22 members. The salary was \$12.00 per week. With this we paid our rent, our tithe, and lived on what was left. In the early 20s a dollar was worth 100 cents. We did not get into debt, and only when our daughter was born did I realize that I must take some form of employment outside the church. I went to work in the Du Pont Laboratories. I promised the Lord that immediately, upon receipt of a call to a church financially able to support us, I would resign. Four years later two significant events occurred. I was offered a church in Pennsylvania with a salary of \$25.00 per week plus parsonage. On the same day I was called into the office of the company and informed that the laboratory in Chicago was ready and that they wanted to send me there, at a higher rate of salary. I immediately declined, stating that as a minister I could not continue in their employment. I forthwith resigned. Some weeks later I received a personal letter from the president of the Du Pont empire, expressing appreciation for my work and enclosing a check to purchase a new, four-door Chevrolet sedan, delivered and fully equipped. A bonus for keeping my promise to my God, I presume.

For 27 years I served Nazarene churches in New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. I had made a promise to God (foolish, some may think) that I would never ask the salary paid by a church calling me. Further, I would never ask for a raise, never ask for a church, or ask for a vacation. I put all of these matters in the hands of God and He has never let me down. My final pastorate, Washington, D.C., First Church, covered a period of nearly 10 years. In 1949 the district assembly put

the "horse collar" around my neck and made me a district superintendent, in which office I served for 20 years. God clearly appointed me to this responsibility and, just as clearly, in 1969 released me from further district responsibility. I have now been retired for 12 years, and am being kept busy with revivals, camp meetings, group meetings, vacant pulpits, both in my own denomination and a number of others. God has kept me in health since my hospitalization in 1975, and today I praise Him for perfect health and undiminished faculties. My children are all Christians. Two sons are in the Nazarene ministry. I realize that I am in the sunset of life, and I am determined to "finish my course with joy."

And now, I should like to share with you some insights I have gleaned from my long ministry.

## A Minister Needs a Call

Without the distinct assurance of a divine call to the work, a pastor won't last long. But if he has a positive call, he or she can endure just about anything. The pressure of dire circumstance, opposition, and ingratitude may bring pain, and even depression. "In the world ye shall have tribulation" also applies to the preacher.

The apostle Paul expected it, having been told so by the Lord at the outset of his ministry. And did he get it! Hear him review his experiences: "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life" (2 Cor. 1:8). But Paul saw it, not as a liability, but as an asset, for he states in the verse which follows: "But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God" (NIV).

In his second Corinthian letter he writes:

I have . . . been in prison . . . been flogged more severely . . . exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea. . . . I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. . . . I have . . . often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches (2 Cor. 11:23-28, NIV).

When this pastor who wouldn't, couldn't, give up

came to the end of his journey, hear him exclaim in triumph, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness" (2 Tim. 4:7-8a).

Pastor Paul anticipated this glorious climax to his ministry when he wrote in Acts 20:24, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy."

There will be heartaches, trials, depression of spirit; there will be occasions when it seems to be almost impossible to build a sermon, when the "reservoir" seems to be bone dry. There will be times when you and your congregation can sense the hollowness of your message. This will be followed with such a tormenting by the devil that you will feel like the prophet Jeremiah when he exclaimed, "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them!" (Jer. 9:2). Even the great apostle Paul left footprints in shadowy valleys, but was still able to exclaim, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14).

One of God's greatest and most faithful servants came to the place where he felt that he could take no more. Hear his lament:

Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? . . . that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, . . . I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee . . . and let me not see my wretchedness (*Num. 11:11-12, 14-15*).

However, a veritable wave of glory must have swept over the soul of Moses when God told him to go to church, "I will come down and talk with thee there" (v. 17). My brother pastor, have you never had such an experience? Remember, every storm is followed by sunshine.

A letter from Mrs. G. B. Williamson received recently, stated that her husband made a statement something like this, "I feel that I have pleased God." Then she added that it was like he was already hearing that "Well done" from the lips of Jesus. Every minister of Jesus Christ should keep before him that glowing prospect, "That I might finish my course with joy."

### **A Pastor Must Have "People Skills"**

First of all, let it be understood that the pastor will be dealing with persons—persons of all kinds of temperaments, dispositions, and personalities. Every pastor should be trained in psychology and counselling. It will be of real help, but it will not be the master key to unlock every problem. There must needs be prayer, love, and patience. Like Paul, I as a minister should be able to say to the people, "I seek not yours, but *you*" (2 Cor. 12:14). Note also the setting, in verses 14 to 17.

The pastor must needs have a tender heart, but a tough hide. A certain pastor was plagued by the antagonism of one of the woman members of his

church. He sought by every means to become reconciled, but to no avail. He finally decided to visit her in her home. He knocked at the door but received no response. He knew that she was at home, but apparently was reluctant to admit him. So he finally stooped down and peeped through the keyhole. When he did, he beheld another eye staring at him. He said, "Sister, at last we have been able to see eye to eye, but we had to get down on our knees to do it." We can love people only to the extent that we pray for them.

I shall long remember a certain brother in Washington who did not receive me very cordially when I became pastor. He frequently irked me and seemed to grasp every opportunity to do so. He was a member of the official board. When I was about to dismiss the board, he would bring up a controversial matter and the meeting dragged on into the night. But I determined to win his love and friendship. I seized every opportunity to show kindness to him. Slowly but surely he began to thaw out. By the time I resigned, he was one of my best and warmest friends. Pastor, don't fight them, win them! It has been said: The best way to conquer an enemy is to make a friend out of him.

To work with people is most difficult. Any person in public life will find it so—painfully so. The carpenter works with his tools, they perform as they are controlled by his will. The farmer works with his machinery which he controls without opposition. The musician with his instrument, which responds to his skill. But with people it is different. They have a will which may collide with yours. The elderly particularly are often tradition-bound and are loathe to accept any change. And the pressure of too many of them may, at least temporarily, block the wholesome plans of the pastor.

Do not endeavor to solve the problem collectively. See each one individually. Take him out to lunch or invite him or her to dine at the parsonage. Remember a birthday or wedding anniversary. Show a keen pastoral interest in his children. Then slowly, but with kindly persistence, bring him about to see your viewpoint. Brother, it works! Then, when you bring the matter up at your next board meeting, you will already have the assurance of a favorable vote. You have won your point and preserved the unity of your board.

Furthermore when you counsel with the individual, he will have no help from others to reinforce his position? Psychology? Perhaps, but pastoral wisdom too.

Suffer a bit of further admonition. Never, never, never take a personal grievance to the pulpit regardless of the polemics endured at the recent board meeting. Do not shoot at your antagonist from the security of your pulpit. He may hold his fire for the time being, but he will surely unload on you later.

Such practice will win no battle but will increase the antagonism of a certain element of the flock. In the final analysis you will be the loser. It is far easier to avoid growing opposition than to defuse it at the flash point.

### **A Preacher Should Know the Bible**

Now let us go to another phase of the ministry. A holiness preacher must of necessity be a Bible preacher! The ministry affords ample opportunity to become, in due time, a master preacher. Were I to begin my ministry over again, I would do one thing above all. I would master my Bible. Dr. G. B. Williamson, as you would have noted had you heard him preach, was practically a walking Bible. The people long for the declaration of the Word, preached by a pastor who is a qualified authority on the Bible. Know exactly where to find what. Memorize many portions, particularly those which are of outstanding importance. May I mention for example, the Ten Commandments; Isaiah 6: 9; 11; 35; 40:1-11; 42:1-8; 53; 55; 60:1-5; Matthew 2; 5:1-12; 24; 23:37-39. Memorize as much of the record of the Crucifixion as possible, also John 1; 3; 17; Acts 2; Romans 5 & 8; 12; 1 Corinthians 13; 15; Ephesians 2; Colossians 3; 1 Thessalonians 5. This may seem to be a heavy order, but you have years to do it. You will not accomplish it in a day or a year. Take one at a time, master it, then go to another. In a few years you will have a generous supply of heavy artillery in your armory!

### **A Preacher Should Read Sermons**

Read sermons. One every day, but no more than one. Take one and take it straight. Meditate on it. Digest it. Read sermons by the pulpit masters of all ages—Wesley, Luther, T. DeWitt Talmage, F. W. Robertson, W. M. Clow, J. H. Jowett, Gipsy Smith, Thomas Guthrie, and many others—but especially the great holiness preachers—H. C. Morrison, C. W. Ruth, P. F. Bresee, Beverly Carradine, Paul Rees, Bud Robinson, Tony Anderson, G. B. Williamson, and others. Then, in years to come, you will have stored up sufficient material to enable you to become “a minute man,” ready on a moment's notice to accept a sudden call. Any youthful minister adopting this pattern of discipline may become a master pulpiter. There is no reason why any man should end up a ministerial runt. Ministerial growth is the norm. Ministerial weakness is a tragedy. “Be thou strong and show thyself a man.”

### **A Minister Should Be a Minister**

And now, another word of primary concern: Hear the words of a giant in the Christian ministry, the apostle Paul: “This *one thing* I do” (Phil. 3:13, italics added). How often my saintly father, deeply concerned about the success of his son's ministry, would say, “Son, keep out of business; stick to your calling.” Here is suggested a temptation which has dwarfed many a minister's success. It is a well-known fact that of all professional men, the minister is most poorly paid. He is tempted to make comparisons which can result in dangerous self-pity. He may be strongly tempted to reduce his ministerial labors to a part-time status. To yield is to doom his ministry to a mere fraction of what it could be were he to devote all of his time to his holy calling.

Far better a minimum of material possessions than a minimum of spiritual harvest. However, he

should realize that the higher the caliber of his ministry, the greater the demand for his services. The larger churches with larger salaries will call the productive pastor. Hence it would be wise to patiently apply himself to become an able pastor. The wise minister will resist the temptation, “I want more, and I want it now.” To divide his time must of necessity divide his interests.

Oh, preacher brother, doggedly determine that Satan shall not catch you in this net! Heed the words of Paul to Timothy, “No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Tim. 2:4). Devote all of your time, talents, your interests exclusively to your divine calling!

### **A Holiness Preacher Should Preach Holiness**

Remember, you are called to be a holiness preacher. Bear down on this holy calling. Experience holiness, believe in holiness, specialize in holiness, for that is why you are in a holiness church. Preach holiness, not exclusively, but frequently.

Visitors who attend our services are entitled to know why our church exists. It is our responsibility to teach the untaught about holiness and lead them into the experience. Unless they hear the truth of holiness from our pulpits, they may not hear it at all. As you proclaim it under the unction and anointing of the Holy Spirit, an unseen halo of glory will rest upon your head. Your ministry will be greatly blessed, and your success as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ will be assured.

### **A Pastor Should Shepherd**

Now let us give some thought to the pastoral ministry. This phase of the ministry is most vital. The people hunger for sufficient pastoral care—the shepherd aspect of the pastorate. They lean heavily upon the adequate supply of pastoral care and sincere concern. Failure in this area will ruin the pastor's influence. Hungry sheep are not as eager to follow the shepherd.

It is essential that the pastor show sincere concern for every phase of the lives of his people. Give special attention to the elderly. Theirs is frequently a lonely life, often neglected, even forgotten. They desire love, and how deeply they respond to affection and care. Then, by all means, avoid confining pastoral concern to a certain age bracket. Give special attention to the children and the babies. Take them up in your arms like Jesus did; cuddle them; kiss them. The parents love this. Learn their names and do not forget them. And, by all means, show deep concern for those who are ill. Visit them often. Stay a while and then share their suffering by sincere empathy. Pray with loving concern and do not avoid tears. They may contain a rainbow for the suffering saint.

Extend your pastoral concern beyond your immediate flock. Show no concern for their racial or religious affiliation. Try to minister to your whole community.

In my judgment following these guidelines will help you to eventually finish your course with joy. 

# Social Security Coverage for Ministers and Lay Employees

by Paul Fitzgerald

*Administrative Assistant for Pensions and Benefits Services*

**T**here is much confusion over the manner in which ministers and church-employed laymen are treated for Social Security purposes. Much of the confusion comes from the unique manner in which the church employer is treated in the Tax Code.

Lay board members, who are employees in the business community, will be very aware that an employer must deduct FICA tax from the employee's salary and match that amount out of its own funds. This total amount is sent to the IRS along with a report of the employee's earnings, so that future Social Security benefits can be determined based on those earnings. This would also be the procedure for the church employer if the Tax Code did not contain two very important exceptions.

The first exception is that a ministerial employee is not covered by the Federal Insurance Contribution Act (FICA), but it is covered under the Self-employment Contributions Act. This means that the church employer is not required to withhold or pay FICA taxes on the minister's salary, but the minister must individually pay self-employment tax for Social Security on a quarterly basis, along with the estimated income tax due. (Another special provision in the law exempts the church from having to withhold federal income tax.) The minister must pay a self-employment tax rate which is higher than the tax rate used for the lay church board member employed in secular work. Fortunately, most Nazarene churches provide an additional allowance to reimburse the minister in full for this tax obligation as a part of their provision for his future retirement.

The second major exception is that the local church employer is exempt from participation in the FICA tax program and does not have to withhold and pay that tax for its lay employees. (However, it is not exempt from withholding federal income tax and some state income tax for that employee.) The lay employees are automatically excluded from Social Security coverage on their church income.

For most churches and church-employed laymen, this is probably an advantage. When a lay employee's future Social Security benefit will probably be based on a spouse's income or other full-time employment, reporting additional FICA income and paying the tax may not substantially increase the benefits. Funds that would have been paid for these taxes can then be used to provide other benefits or salary for the employee.

However, the church does have an option to waive this exemption and participate with the lay employee in Social Security through FICA withholdings. The church can do this by filing the appropriate waiver forms with IRS. At the time of the filing of the waiver, each individual lay employee has the option to agree or decline to participate in FICA withholdings. From that time forward, the employer *must* withhold this tax from every new or rehired employee. After an eight-year period, a local church can request permission from the Social Security Administration to regain its exemption. It then must wait the required two years before receiving the exemption again. Once the exemption is regained, it normally cannot be waived again in the future.

The church board will want to carefully weigh this option for participation of its lay employees in Social Security, particularly if there are full-time career lay employees. The FICA tax provides not only a retirement benefit, but also substantial disability, surviving spouse, and Medicare benefits. If these are not available to the full-time career lay employee, these lost benefits may need to be replaced with other protection which would most likely not be available for less than the cost of the FICA tax. Competent legal and tax advice should be secured by the church board in regard to decisions in this very important area.

[The information contained in this article is of a general nature. It is not offered as specific legal or tax "advice." All churches and individuals should evaluate their own unique situation in consultation with their personal legal and tax advisors.]

# In the Worst of Times

by Donald Wood

**C**urrent descriptions of Western society would lead one to believe that there is little hope. Perhaps setting the situation of Wesley's England alongside today will help not only in understanding the present day but will also assist us in a deeper appreciation of Wesley's life and thought. In the worst of times, he was at his best.

The *London Journal* of April 23 and 30, 1725, reported the arrest of seven homosexuals. On May 14 three others were hanged for sodomy, and the *Journal* added, "We learn that they [i.e., the police] have discovered twenty houses or clubs where sodomites meet." Later issues of the same year report similar sorry accounts.

Heterosexual relations were conducted without much regard for the laws of God or the nation. Marriages were performed without licenses in many of the pubs by ministers eager for extra income. At times sailors on leave for a day or two would marry and then be gone for good. Although divorce was illegal without an act of Parliament, adultery was common among many of the non-Puritan population of London.

The men were usually simply continuing the promiscuity of their premarriage years.

Gambling was common as both private and state-run lotteries were available. At times stealing was the means by which a gambler's stake was assembled. Cockfights were especially prevalent with 16 chickens to a team. Teams fought to the death. All sports were opportunities for a wager—even women's boxing matches. Gambling losses were then drowned by alcoholic beverages. Some estimates of beer and ale consumption at this time run as high as a hundred gallons per London male per year. When the government levied heavy taxes on alcohol, the distillers multiplied and went underground.

Those without fortunes witnessed the luxury and looseness of the upper classes of society, and some of them determined to use any means possible to have a fortune of their own. The slave trade, smuggling, and armed robbery were among the means possible. In addition, greedy manufacturers would indiscriminately dispose of waste into the Thames, dilute the purity of prod-

ucts with additives actually harmful to their customers, and then lament government regulations designed to protect consumers.

Will and Ariel Durant, in *The Age of Voltaire*, write, "All in all, this half century (1725-1775) was the most corrupt and merciless in English history."<sup>1</sup> Some of our language's negative words come from associations with this period. "Bedlam" was a prominent home for the insane which was managed with less humanity than a cheap zoo is today. "Billingsgate" was a fish market noted for its raucous profanity. "Slovens" was the name given to rebellious, untidy youth of the day.

Where was the church? What was the salt of the earth doing while the world was rotting away? In terms of the established Church of England, the answer is that she was "fiddling while Rome burned" for the most part. Montesquieu, in his *Persian Letters*, XXI, written in 1731, said, "There is no religion in England . . . if religion is spoken of, everybody laughs." Though these sentiments were extreme, they were a fairly accurate generalization.

Religion had forsaken revela-



tion for reason; her ritual was precise but without power; social distinctions prevailed in local churches, bishoprics went to the highest bidders. David Hume in an essay entitled, "On National Character," wrote that his nation was "settled into the most cool indifference with regard to religious matters that is to be found in any nation in the world." The Durants report that in 1719 a group of Presbyterian clergymen voted 73 to 69 that candidates for the ministry need not subscribe to the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly the Puritans were much more devout at this time; however, their piety seemed content to remain only private with few social implications. The few Anglicans sensitive enough to know the spiritual poverty of the nation seemed to be somewhat resigned to the fact. The great apologist, Joseph Butler, summarized this weariness. When he was offered the post as Archbishop of Canterbury, he de-

clined because "it was too late for him to try to support a falling church."<sup>3</sup> Four years later, in 1751, he expressed his dismay at "the general decay of religion in this nation . . . The influence of it is more and more wearing out in the minds of men."<sup>4</sup>

The contrast of all of this decay with the renewal that the Wesleys and Whitefield sparked was truly remarkable. The preaching to the masses, the songs of devotion, the genius of Wesley's societies, and the plain hard work of men dedicated to God demonstrated that God can do more through a few totally committed persons than through many halfhearted ones.

Wesley was small in stature, probably about five feet three and weighing 125-130 pounds; however, he was a giant by God's grace. Swimming upstream against the tide of corruption described earlier, he helped to redirect the energies of England by the force of his strokes. Begin-

ning with few people, Wesley had, by the time of his death, an estimated 79,000 followers in England. These had an even greater influence than their numbers would indicate.

Church historians have frequently noted that Wesley possibly saved England from a bloody French-type revolution. Without doubt, his radical Christianity was a major factor in such restraint as the English poor manifested. The Durants gauge him as, next to William Pitt, "the greatest Englishman of his times."<sup>5</sup>

(A more detailed account of the situation in England in these days may be read in Will and Ariel Durant's, *The Age of Voltaire*, pp. 45-137.)



#### NOTES

1. Will and Ariel Durant, *The Age of Voltaire* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), p. 68.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
3. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 14th ed., vol. IV, p. 463.
4. Ernest Mossner, *Bishop Butler and the Age of Reason* (New York, 1936).
5. *Age of Voltaire*, p. 137.

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# THE PASTOR AS OOFY GOOFTY

by Dave Steele

*Pastor, Christ Presbyterian  
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I have run across the story of Oofy Goofy and sense it may have implications in our continuing quest for ministerial models. Herbert Asbury tells the tale in his book *The Barbary Coast* (Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1933). It begins like this:

Oofy Goofy first appeared in San Francisco as a wild man in a Market Street freak show. From crown to heel he was covered with road tar, into which was stuck great quantities of horsehair, lending him a savage and ferocious appearance. He was then installed in a heavy cage; and when a sufficiently large number of people had paid their dimes to gaze upon the wild man recently captured in the jungles of Borneo and brought to San Francisco at enormous expense, large chunks of raw meat were poked between the bars by an attendant. This provender the wild man gobbled ravenously, occasionally growling, shaking the bars, and yelping these fear-

some words: "Oofy Goofy! Oofy Goofy!"

Now here is a provocative image! Might we consider the pastor as a caged wildperson, duly fulminating and alternately ranting and raving upon receipt of sufficient offerings? The pastor as one who utters mysterious sounds . . . ? An interesting concept but perhaps a trifle overpentecostal to be of value for Presbyterians.

So let us go on with the tale. For the "wild man of Borneo" phase of Oofy Goofy's career was mercifully brief. It seems the thick tar effectively covered Mr. Goofy's sweat glands, and within a week he was gravely ill. The staff of Receiving Hospital in San Francisco had a terrible time removing the tar without separating Oofy Goofy from his epidermis. A liberal dosing with tar solvent combined with several hours in the hot sun eventually did the job. Oofy Goofy emerged chastened and cleansed.

The experience caused our hero to engage in some serious career evaluation. In his search

for a more fulfilling vocation, he secured a position as an actor in a Barbary Coast floor show. The role called for him to do a brief dance, sing a song, and then be thrown violently offstage into the street by the house bouncer. He performed his part but once, yet it was the doorway to a new career. In the process he discovered what he called his "work." Mr. Asbury describes it thus:

Oofy Goofy was kicked with considerable force and landed heavily upon a stone sidewalk; but to his intense surprise, he discovered that he was, apparently, insensible to pain. This great gift he immediately proceeded to capitalize; and for some 15 years, he eked out a precarious existence simply by letting himself be kicked and pummeled for a price. Upon payment of 10 cents, a man might kick Oofy Goofy as hard as he pleased; and for a quarter, he could hit the erstwhile wild man with a walking stick. For 50 cents, Oofy Goofy would become

the willing and even prideful recipient of a blow with a baseball bat which he always carried with him. He became a familiar figure in San Francisco. It was his custom to approach groups of men in the streets and bar rooms and diffidently inquire: "Hit me with a bat for four bits, gents? Only four bits to hit me with this bat, gents!"

Perhaps this further information now may provide us with a proper model for ministry. Consider the pastor as Oofy Goofty. Here is one who goes from meeting to meeting asking cheerfully "Care to kick me? Want to slug me with this bat?"

The response is heartening. "Bend over pastor! This is for the puny youth program! (Whack!) Have you noticed the empty pews? (Whack!) Why aren't we getting a bunch of new members? (Whack!) What about those General Assembly pronouncements! (Whack! Whack!)"

"Thank you" says the pastor as Oofy Goofty. He gladly receives the blows. "It doesn't really hurt," he comments. "And it is so healthy for folks to have a safe place to ventilate."

The whacking is called "constructive criticism" and "rigorous evaluation." It is understood that the pastor is, after all, finally accountable and that if he can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.


Sometimes a meeting goes by when no one steps forward to accept the offer to kick and pummel. All is not lost. The pastor as Oofy Goofty takes on the task himself. He sees problems, real and potential, which have not yet surfaced. So in the privacy of his study he gets in his own licks: "The Joneses are leaving the church! (Whack!) We're not going to make next fall's budget! (Whack!)" And so it goes.

Blessed is the congregation served by the pastor as Oofy Goofty. Their minister is known

as an open, understanding, and concerned person. The pastor spends a lot of time reading the Beatitudes and Isaiah 53 and is often heard murmuring, "It doesn't hurt . . . It doesn't hurt!"

We need not explore the image further. We have seen that the pastor as Oofy Goofty is a fruitful ministerial model. However, the historical record sounds a note of warning.

Oofy Goofty was knocked off his feet more times than he could remember, but he continued to follow his peculiar vocation until John L. Sullivan hit him with a billiard cue and injured his back. Oofy Goofty never entirely recovered from this encounter. He walked with a limp thereafter, and the slightest blow made him whimper with pain.

The pastor as Oofy Goofty is advised to check the biceps of all committee members. No church cares for a whimperer! 



"Don't you dare turn the other cheek to *me*."



by Alex Deasley

# Dead and Alive: A Picture of the New Testament Christian

*Scripture:* Rom. 6:1-14 (RSV)

## INTRODUCTION

Our discussion of Rom. 5:1-11 discovered a shift in Paul's interest from justification (in chapters 1-4) to Christian life "beyond justification." "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life" (v. 10). This seems to mean that the resurrection life of Christ brings to the believer a fullness of salvation beyond reconciliation or justification: a conclusion that seems to be well warranted by chapter 6. The second section of chapter 5 (vv. 11-21) marks yet another advance. The passage is complex and its meaning debated; there is no space to deal with it thoroughly here, least of all in the introduction to a treatment of a quite separate section of the Epistle. Since, however, in a sense 5:11-21 is the springboard of 6:1-14, some indication must be given of how the latter arises from the former. Two observations may be made.

First, 5:11-21 appears to function in the developing argument as an explanation of how sin comes to be the omnipresent, universal reality it is. The initial word of verse 12, "therefore," implies some kind of connection with what precedes. The exact connection has been disputed. Dodd sees it as replying to the question: granted that Christ lived and died perfectly, how does this affect me?<sup>1</sup> This Paul answers by the concept of racial ancestry or solidarity: all are in Adam and may be "in Christ." Cranfield says effectively the same thing: that if some are reconciled to God (5:11), something must have happened to make this possible for all.<sup>2</sup> In short, Paul is driving back from particulars ("how can we be saved?") to universals ("how does anyone come to need to be saved?").

Second, in consequence of this extending of scale and depth, concepts are deepened and expanded or new aspects brought into play. This is particularly true of the concept of sin. Whereas to this point in

the Epistle the accent has been upon sin as wrong action (2:12; 3:23, 25 are typical; 3:9 is an exception), from here on sin is viewed predominantly as a power which lies behind wrong actions. It is virtually personified as an emperor which rules or reigns (5:17, 21; 6:1, 6, 12, 14). It is this fact which gives rise to the question: "Are we to continue in sin?" (6:1) and lays the ground plan for the thought of 6:1-14.

## I. BACKGROUND

The general background of the passage has just been sketched in the Introduction. However, it is a precise practical problem which gives the argument the turn it takes at this point: the problem of antinomianism. This problem emerges in the Epistle in two distinguishable forms, which form the immediate background of our passage.

1. It emerges in 3:8 as a theoretical charge against the message of justification by grace: indeed Paul's Jewish opponents taxed him with preaching so. The argument of that sequence need not be repeated in extenso here. In general, Paul is rebutting the objection that, if man's sin provides God with the opportunity to demonstrate His grace, then what has God to complain about? Can He justly condemn the sinner? "And," to quote Paul's own words, "why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying." Paul does not stop to deal with his critics further; but evidently through either misunderstanding or misrepresentation his Jewish foes laid this accusation against him. Whether, as Denney alleges, this suggests that the antinomian charge against Paul originated in Jewish circles cannot be proved; it certainly was echoed there.

2. The second form in which the charge emerges was not simply theoretical but ethical. In the development of the Epistle the issue may well have been triggered by statements which laid themselves open to misunderstanding. Thus, the statement in 5:20, "Law came in, to increase the trespass; but

where sin increased, grace abounded all the more," could very readily (though quite wrongly) suggest the inference: "If grace abounds when sin increases, then let sin increase!" However, the issue here is more than theoretical. The question Paul poses in 6:1—"Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?"—was not merely theoretical. For in the sense in which Paul is defining *sin* here—as a power which from time to time asserts its mastery in the life of the believer—there were among his Roman readership those who were victims in that very way. "Do not let sin continue to reign in your mortal bodies," he says (to give a literal translation of 6:12a). Say Newman and Nida: The "present tense intimates that Paul considers the Roman Christians to be in the process of surrendering 'part of themselves to sin'; so the meaning of this imperative is something like 'stop surrendering any part of yourselves to sin.'"<sup>1</sup>

The reason why Paul rejects antinomianism root and branch, in theory and practice, is because the quintessence of the Christian life is death to sin and new life in Christ. The motif of death and life, of the Christian as one who is dead and alive—dead to sin and alive to God—recurs like a double strand throughout 6:1-14. On the negative side "we died to sin" (v. 2); we were "baptized into his death" (vv. 3-4), "we have been united with him in a death like his" (v. 5); we were "crucified with [Christ]" (v. 6); "we have died with Christ" (v. 8); we are to "consider [ourselves] dead to sin" (v. 11); we have been "brought from death to life" (v. 13). On the positive side we are to "walk in newness of life" (v. 4); "we shall be united with him in a resurrection like his" (v. 5); we shall "no longer be enslaved to sin" (v. 6); "we shall also live with him" (v. 8); we are to consider ourselves "alive to God in Christ Jesus" (v. 11) for we have been "brought from death to life" (v. 13). We must turn next to the exegesis of these verses to inquire as to Paul's meaning that the normal Christian is dead and alive: dead to sin, and alive to God.

## II. FROM BACKGROUND TO EXEGESIS

Analysis of 6:1-14 suggests that Paul uses the idea of death to sin and life to God in three distinct but related senses. If one asks the question, When does the Christian die to sin? the answer is, There are three "moments" significant for Christian experience to which Paul points. (It has already become clear that there are two sides to the Pauline view of deliverance from sin: the negative side—death; and the positive side—resurrection or life. Since Paul deals with them in that order in his treatment of each of these three aspects, we may do the same.)

### A. Baptism and Its Implications for Deliverance from Sin (6:3-4)

The first "moment" or "event" in which Paul sees deliverance from sin delineated is Christian baptism. This applies to all Christians; Paul's argument would be stultified if it did not. The Greek phrase underlying the words "all of us who have been bap-

tized into Christ Jesus" does not leave open the possibility that there were some who were not. (In technical jargon: the relative pronoun is not partitive but distributive.) There was no such thing as an unbaptized Christian in the New Testament Church. Paul now proceeds to draw out the implications or significance of this fact. They are two:

1. **Death to sin.** Baptism takes its meaning from the object into which one is baptized. For example, "baptism into Moses" (1 Cor. 10:2) means baptism into the deliverance from Egypt which, under God, he secured. Baptism into Christ carries a similar meaning, namely baptism into His death. The significance of that death Paul does not yet spell out; we must await that in his treatment of the third aspect. Meanwhile, he turns at once to the positive side of deliverance.

2. **Newness of life.** The death of Christ was not an end in itself; it culminated in a resurrection. By the glory (which means the power) of the Father, Christ was raised from the dead to a new kind of life. Again Paul does not here spell out the nature of this new kind of life; that also is reserved for later description in verses 9-10. What he does affirm is that, just as those who are baptized into Christ share His death, so also do they share His risen life. Indeed, the very purpose of His death is that "we too might walk in newness of life" (v. 4c). The word *newness* denotes a quality hitherto unknown (the contrast is like that between a new-model car and one which, though it may be new to me, is really second-hand); while the word *walk* is a standard biblical metaphor for the ethical life. Evidently, then, Paul has in mind a new kind of life to be lived here and now. Here, for the first (though not the last) time, we find Paul's understanding of the verse from Habakkuk 2:4 which he makes the "text" of the Epistle. To this point he has been expanding the first part of it. "He who is righteous by faith." Now he begins to unfold the second part: "shall live." And as Godet comments: "in the expression *shall live*, there is comprehended not only the grace of *righteousness*, but also that of new life, or of *holiness*. To *live* is not merely to regain peace with God through justification; it is to dwell in the light of His holiness, and to act in permanent communion with Him. In the case of the soul, pardon is only the crisis of convalescence; the restoration of health is sanctification. Holiness is true life."<sup>1</sup>

Now all of the above, both positive and negative, Paul claims to be implicit in Christian baptism. He does not say it is *realized* in Christian baptism. Indeed, he implies the very opposite. He does not deny the *validity* of his reader's baptism; he denies that they are living up to its *meaning*. What it means *theologically* they had not yet fully realized *experientially*; for to Paul baptism is a holy sacrament in the full sense of that term, namely, a sacrament of holiness. In this baptismal sense all truly baptized Christians are dead to sin and alive to God; and, since baptism was a fact of his readers' experience, Paul expounds the baptismal sense first.<sup>5</sup>

## B. *Calvary and Its Implications for Deliverance from Sin* (6:5-10)

From baptism Paul turns to that which lies behind baptism: the Cross. The Christian's baptism into Christ's death necessarily presupposes the priority of the latter upon which everything else rests. After a general but confident affirmation of the truth (this time in terms not of baptism but of union with Christ) that to be united with Christ's death means assuredly that we shall share His risen life (v. 5), Paul elaborates the implications for the life of the Christian to what happened at the Cross and the Tomb. Again, they are two:

1. **Death to sin** (vv. 6-7). The substance of these verses may be stated very simply. It is that the reason we died to sin at baptism is because we died with Christ at Calvary. Without the work of the Cross, baptism is a figment. If it be asked how the two are related, the answer is: as potential to application. At Calvary sin was defeated, and in that defeat of sin by Christ resides the power or potential for the defeat of sin by us. Paul refers to this idea as one with which his readers are familiar: "We know that our old self was crucified with him" (v. 6). The tense is corroborative of the interpretation: not "our old self *is* crucified with him" (as KJV mistranslates), but "*was* crucified with him." The primary event in mind is not the believer's experience but that which is prior and fundamental to all Christian experience: namely, the work of Christ. At Calvary Christ died *for* us in such an intimate and individual sense that it may be said that we died *with* Him.

However, although the event was not experimental for the Christian, its effects are. These are twofold, the former heading to the latter: first, "so that the sinful body might be destroyed," and second, so that "we might no longer be enslaved to sin." The "old self" (literally "our old man") seems to refer to the unregenerate nature in its totality, Adam-life in its wholeness.<sup>6</sup> In Kasemann's words: "The 'old man' is Adam individualized and represented in us."<sup>7</sup> This was crucified with Christ. The end purpose of this crucifixion was the destruction of the sinful body, and the ending of the Christian's enslavement to sin. The "sinful body" denotes not the physical flesh, but rather the self as dominated by sin, the sinful passions which rule the self (v. 12), in a word *sin* as the power behind *sins*. At Calvary Christ so routed sin that its power may be neutralized in the life of the Christian.

2. **Life with Christ** (vv. 8-10). Once more, however, death to sin is but the negative outcome of the work of Christ. The positive result is life with Christ. "If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" (v. 8). The form of the saying raises the question as to when we shall live with Him. The context suggests strongly that, in line with earlier references to the resurrection in verses 4b and 5b and the moral results traced to Christ's death in verse 6, the reference is to the life of the believer here and now. This is confirmed by the exhortations of verses 11-14 (to be examined more fully below) whose focus is the ethical life.

Of particular interest is the description of Christ's resurrection in verses 9-10. First, it is a life of a new quality, namely an indestructible life. In His incarnate life He was subject to death, but in His resurrected life, "death no longer has dominion over Him." In dying to sin, He finished sin once and for all. He now lives "in newness of life"—life of a new kind. Second, His enduring life has not the character of dreary, endless duration: "the life he lives he lives to God." The implication is that what was true for the Redeemer is true for the redeemed who are united to Him: they will walk in a newness of life whose distinctive characteristics are an end of the dominion of sin and an eternal service of God.

This, then, is the death and life which took place at Calvary: the power or potential for a death and life in the soul of the believer. That it has ethical consequences Paul repeatedly makes plain. Even so, in verses 5-10 he is strictly describing what is available in potential through the work of Christ.

## C. *Christian Experience and Its Implications for Deliverance from Sin* (6:11-14)

With this third section we come directly to the question: How is everything that is made available in provision at Calvary and received in potential at baptism realized in Christian experience? The answer is found essentially (though not exclusively) in verses 11-14. Its most obvious feature even on a superficial reading is that it consists of a series of imperatives or commands: "consider yourselves" (v. 11); "let not sin therefore reign" (v. 12); "do not yield your members to sin . . . but yield yourselves to God" (v. 13). Now this is a common phenomenon in the Pauline Epistles: what is known in technical jargon as the motif of the indicative and the imperative. The indicative is the mood which expresses facts; the imperative, that which gives commands. It is a uniform feature of Pauline teaching that the ethical commands are always subsequent to the salvation facts. To put it otherwise: man is never commanded by God to do anything for which God has not first provided the enabling. Now this is the order of Paul's argument in Rom. 6:1-14 (and beyond). The foundation of all is what God has done through Christ's death and resurrection. This has been accepted by the believing response sealed in baptism. Paul's final plea, then, is: realize in experience all that Christ has made yours in provision and that you have received in potential. If it be asked how this is done or what is the substance of the moral imperatives, the answer is twofold.

1. **Faith.** "Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (v. 11). *Consider* is a crucially important term in Romans, denoting not a forlorn hope which might conceivably prove false but a certainty based on faith (see 2:26; 3:28; 4:3-6, etc.). Defining *reckon* or *consider* as "a mental calculation," Agar Beet continues: "Since it is followed by an assurance resting upon God's word and revealed purpose, it is the mental process of faith."<sup>8</sup> In other words: the response of the believer



to the power of sin in his life is to consider himself by faith dead to sin and alive to God.

2. **Full surrender.** Faith, however, must be accompanied by a distinct and deliberate act of surrender. It must have substance, a subject and an object. The subject is the believer who must make the surrender; the object is God to whom the surrender is made; and the substance is “your mortal bodies” or “your members.” There are two points of importance here!

(a) What is to be surrendered is the natural self insofar as it is hostile to God and uses the self for sinful purposes. To obey the “desires” or “passions” of the “mortal body” means to obey the “desires of your natural self” (TEV). Newman and Nida say: “Paul has in mind not merely one's bodily passions, but the whole range of sinful desires and intentions which place one over against God.”<sup>9</sup>

(b) The surrender called for is decisive. The first example of the word *yield* (“do not yield members to sin as instruments of wickedness”) denotes continuity: “don't keep on yielding”; the second instance (“yield yourselves to God”) denotes decisiveness. To quote Newman and Nida again: “The first verb, a present tense, intimates that Paul considers the Roman Christians to be in the process of surrendering ‘part of themselves to sin’; so the meaning of this imperative is something like ‘stop surrendering any part of yourself to sin.’ The second of these imperatives is an aorist and suggests that they are now to give themselves once and for all to God.”<sup>10</sup>

The passage coincides with a ringing reaffirmation of assurance with the indicative statement: “Sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under the law but under grace” (v. 14). Law could diagnose what was wrong; only grace could give the power to put it right.

### III. FROM EXEGESIS TO EXPOSITION

The passage under consideration, like most others, is capable of expository treatment in a variety of ways. If it were desired to preach on the passage as a whole then, following the theme of this article one could preach on the topic: “Dead and Alive: A Pauline Picture of the Normal Christian.” The division headings could be made more suitable for homiletical digestion by employing parts of the suggestion of W. M. Greathouse<sup>11</sup> who, seeking the answer to the question, “When did I die to Christ with sin?” finds the reply:

- I. *I DIED WITH CHRIST IN PROVISION WHEN HE DIED ON CALVARY* (vv. 6-10).
- II. *I DIED WITH CHRIST IN PROFESSION WHEN I SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN BAPTISM* (vv. 3-4).
- III. *I DIE WITH CHRIST IN PRESENT EXPERIENCE WHEN I YIELD MYSELF TO GOD IN FAITH AND CONSECRATION* (vv. 11-14).

Individual verses or groups of verses also lend themselves to expository treatment. For example, “The Meaning of Consecration” is the essence of verses 13-14. It involves:

- I. *A WILLING SUBMISSION*: “Yield yourselves” (v. 13). Self-yielding—the only yielding acceptable to God. Had an Old Testament background in Deut. 15:16 f.
- II. *A DECISIVE SUBMISSION*: “Don't go on yielding . . . but yield yourselves” (v. 13). See exegesis above.
- III. *A LIBERATING SUBMISSION*: “Sin will have no dominion over you” (v. 14). Submission, which has the overtone of subservience and even slavery, is in truth emancipation from the power of sin by the power of grace.



### NOTES

1. C. H. Dodd, “The Epistle to the Romans,” *Moffatt New Testament Commentary* (London: Harper and Brothers, 1932), pp. 78 f.
2. C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: Clarke, 1975), 1:269.
3. Barclay M. Newman and Eugene A. Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Romans (Helps for Translators, Vol. 14)* (London: United Bible Societies, 1973), p. 118.
4. F. Godet, *Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892), 1:392.
5. For a succinct statement of the baptismal sense, see Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, p. 299.
6. The phrase has been variously interpreted. For a clear review of the various possibilities see W. H. Taylor in *Beacon Bible Commentary*, 9:217-21 (on Ephesians 4:22).
7. Ernst Kasemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 169.
8. Joseph Agar Beet, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 8th ed. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1892), p. 186.
9. *A Translator's Handbook*, p. 118.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Beacon Bible Commentary* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1968), 8:140-41.

# The Person I Have Trouble with Most

by Carole Mayhall

I was singing as I worked in the kitchen—enthusiastically and slightly off key. Jack came in, put his arm around me, and observed, “Some women can cook. Some women can lead Bible studies. Some women can grow plants. Some women can sing.”

He paused, and a teasing twinkle flickered in his eyes. Then he said wryly, “Oh, well, three out of four isn’t bad!”

I can laugh at my inability to make beautiful music, but other defects in my life are no laughing matter! My husband, Jack, so wonderfully accepts me with my idiosyncrasies and faults that he has helped me accept myself and also see how God accepts me in an even greater way. But still there are many things about myself I just don’t like. Truthfully, the personality I have the most trouble with is my own!

One of the things I like least about myself is my propensity to have to say something (usually the wrong thing) when there is an uncomfortable silence in a conversation. Because of this inclination, I can totally identify with Peter and his reaction to the astonishing wonder of the Transfiguration in Mark 9:1-13. When he saw Moses and Elijah talking to a transfigured Christ, Peter was awed, terrified, thunderstruck, and he “did not know what to say.”

As I read the passage, I thought, Didn’t know what to say? Who had asked him anything? Yet Peter had to blurt out something, so he suggested that three tabernacles be built to honor the three who were conversing. In my nervousness, I, like Peter, think I’ve got to answer when no one has asked.

But the incredible thing to me about this incident is that God the Father didn’t rebuke Peter. Neither did Christ shake his head in anger at Peter’s remark. Instead, God used Peter’s inane suggestion to point out dramatically that Christ was His beloved Son. When Peter looked about after suggesting that three tabernacles be erected, Christ alone stood on that mountain. God thundered from heaven, “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!”

The lesson God whispered to me as I studied this incident was that I am to keep my eyes on Jesus rather than on my own disheartening tendencies. I am to remember that God not only understands these propensities, but at times graciously uses them. My task is to focus only on Jesus. When I see him clearly with my spiritual eyes, I can *forget myself*, and those things I don’t like about myself.

Numerous articles, books, and people tell us we must love ourselves in order to love others or even love Christ. Phrases such as “a healthy self-image,” “self-love,” “self-acceptance,” and “I’m okay” dot the landscapes of our live like mounds of hay in a farmer’s field. We as individuals and as a society are reaching out for a good self-image, a feeling of worth, a sense of genuine acceptance from those around us. We want to be liked and loved and to know we are. Surely there is nothing wrong with that.

Or is there? Has giving attention to our self-image detracted from giving attention to the image of Christ? Has our search for self-worth blocked our view of the worthiness of Jesus? Has our desire to be loved and accepted overcome our desire to know God?

I have a feeling our focus has been on the wrong object. We have gotten self in our sight and blocked the Savior from view. It is no wonder our search for Him gets more and more frantic.

I am becoming increasingly convinced that the answer to a healthy view of myself lies not in reading books and learning formulas by which I grow to love myself, but the answer lies in experiencing fully a God who sees me as worthy to be loved. In knowing His love, I feel loved. In seeing His beauty, I don’t think of myself as beautiful or not beautiful; I stop thinking of myself at all so I can better fill my heart with Him.

Sounds simplistic? Maybe. But most of the books I’ve read on self-image only describe the problem and the fact that I shouldn’t have it. They may give me some steps to take,

such as being aware that I’m responding to a situation immaturely and trying to respond differently, but rarely does a book help me do it. It really doesn’t help much to know that the child in me is speaking if I don’t have the capability or power to change that child.

I don’t mean to minimize the help these books can give. Some are helpful in letting me know why I am the way I am. But knowledge alone leaves me impotent. When I try to work on loving myself so I can love you and God, I find myself powerless and helpless. But when I look at Jesus and let Him fill my life, then I know how worthwhile I really am because I am worthwhile to Him. Because of His love, acceptance, and understanding, I am free to like myself—love myself, if you will—and the overflow of that is an acceptance of and love for others.

A friend of mine who was quite overweight came to visit me once. Without thinking I said, “Sit down, friend, and take the load off your feet!”

As soon as it was out of my mouth, I realized the embarrassing implications of my remark. But what could I say then to make amends?

I could have given myself a pep talk something like this: “Now, Carole, it’s okay.” (But it *wasn’t*.) “You don’t often make such thoughtless remarks.” (Oh, yes I do!) “You are really a great person.” (Who says?) “You must love yourself.” (Yes, but how?)

Frankly, I don’t think that would have helped much. And to keep thinking about my blunder wouldn’t help either.

But to talk to my Father about it, to ask Him to help my friend not to be hurt by my thoughtlessness, to ask Him to deliver my thoughts from dwelling on myself and my inadequacies, and then to set my mind on God who loves me anyway—this helps me experience a feeling of acceptance and even a joy in being me.

So how can I alleviate the trouble I have with myself? Perhaps we could call it the FACTS principle.

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# SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS



## Fear and Fishing

In Africa is a lake where the fishermen have a unique way of catching the fish. At noon the fishermen go out with a long line tied between the boats. To this line, at short intervals, are attached wooden floats. The sun, shining overhead on the clear waters, sends shadows of these floats right to the bottom, and the fish eye view, apparently, is that of a series of bars running from the surface to the bottom. Gradually, the fishermen tow the floats to shore, with the fish being driven before these insubstantial bars, until the fish come to the shallow water where the men stand and throw the fish ashore.

—Walter D. Wagoner, *Mortgages on Paradise* (Abingdon, 1981).

## On Forgiveness

In his book *Another Chance* Dean Merrill cites the case of a young woman who became pregnant out of wedlock. The people in the church tried to get the pastor to kick her father off the board. They also tried to force her and her boyfriend to stand up on Sunday morning and confess that they had done wrong.

The couple married and, believe it or not, stayed in the church. Twenty years later this woman was still battling guilt. One day in a Christian counselor's office she was weeping convulsively over her past.

"Evelyn . . . have you asked the Lord to forgive you for this?"

"Ho!" she said. "Have I asked the Lord to forgive me? I've asked him a hundred times!"

"Well . . . do you believe he has?"

"Oh, yes, I believe the Lord has forgiven me—but how can I forgive myself?"

And then I said quietly and slowly, "Oh . . . are you holier than God is?" I paused. "Must God sacrifice *another* Son just for the sake of your conscience?" Another pause. "If the death of Christ was good enough for God, isn't it good enough for you?"

It is hard for me to describe the beautiful scene that transpired as the Holy Spirit pressed that truth to her heart. She broke down and wept for ten minutes or more. The expression on her countenance when she finished weeping was obviously changed. After we prayed to end our session that day, she said, "This is the first time in over twenty years that I feel no condemnation."

—Dean Merrill, *Another Chance* (Zondervan Publishing House, 1981).

## Recommended Temptation

Oscar Wilde once told the story of how the devil was crossing the Libyan Desert when he met a number of people tormenting a holy hermit. They tried to involve the hermit in sins of the flesh, tempting him in every way they knew, but to no avail. The sainted man shook off all their suggestions. The devil then whispered to his workers, "What you do is too crude. Give me a chance to show you how." The devil told the holy man, "Your brother has been made bishop of Alexandria." And a scowl of malignant jealousy crept across the face of the hermit. "That," said the devil to his crew, "is the sort of thing I recommend."

—James R. Bjorge, *The Love Road to Calvary* (Abingdon, 1982).

## Stewardship

Among the Franks whole armies were baptized in rivers. But they held their right hands out of the water. They fought with their right hands forever unbaptized. Today many pocketbooks are unbaptized.

—Halford Luccock, quoted by Robert L. Eddy in *Minister's Saturday Night* (The Pilgrim Press, 1980).

## Truth in Advertising

I heard about an epitaph in an old cemetery in Girard, Pennsylvania, which reads:

In memory of  
Ellen Shannon  
Aged 26 years  
Who was fatally burned  
March 21st 1870  
by the explosion of a lamp  
filled with R. E. Danforth's  
Non Explosive  
Burning Fluid

—Ernest Campbell in *The Miracle of Easter* (Floyd Thatcher, ed. Word Books, 1980).

## Prospective Preacher

Robert Ingersoll is reported to have said that a typical ministerial candidate would be "A young man of religious turn of mind and consumptive habit of body, not quite sick enough to die, nor healthy enough to be wicked."

—Cited by G. Curtis Jones in *The Naked Shepherd* (Word Books, 1979).

## Fatal Flaw

Mark Antony was known as the "silver-throated orator of Rome." He was a brilliant statesman, magnificent in battle, courageous, and strong. And he was handsome. As far as personal qualities are concerned, he could

have become a world ruler. But he had the very vulnerable and fatal flaw of moral weakness, so much so that on one occasion his personal tutor shouted into his face, "Oh, Marcus, oh, colossal child! Able to conquer the world, but unable to resist a temptation."

That indictment, I'm afraid, applies not just to Mark Antony, and not just to the people of the unsaved world. If the truth were known, it is applicable to many in the evangelical ranks. We all face temptation, and it is a very real fact that many do not yet know how to resist it and overcome it when it appears.

—Charles Swindoll, *Three Steps Forward/Two Steps Back* (Thomas Nelson, 1980).

### Together

The giant redwood trees of California are among the oldest living things on earth. Seeing their size, one would think they are so strong and self-sufficient that they would be completely independent. Such is not the case. Redwood trees do not have a very deep root system. For this reason, they seldom would be found growing alone. They grow in groves, for they need the intertwining of roots with the other trees to give them support. They are dependent on each other. Love admits this while arrogance denies it. That is why on a Sunday morning we confess that we believe in the communion (community) of saints.

—James R. Bjorge, *The Love Road to Calvary* (Abingdon, 1982).

### Patience

Have you heard the American's prayer?

"Lord, give me patience . . .  
And I want it right now!"

—Charles Swindoll, *Three Steps Forward/Two Steps Back* (Thomas Nelson, 1980).

### Love Gives

One of the main characters in *A Tale of Two Cities* by Dickens is Sidney Carton, who is wasting his life away. He is very much in love with a young woman who marries another man. This woman's husband finds himself imprisoned in France during the revolution and is facing the guillotine. Sidney, moved by the power of love, pulls off a daring disguise exchange as he changes places with the imprisoned man. He goes on his death ride with a young girl, who is also going to be executed. He holds her hand and comforts her. Then before he walks to the guillotine, he says, "It is a far, far better thing that I now do than I have ever done. It is a far, far better rest I go to than I have ever known." It is a scene that stirs the soul. Love bears the burden of another to the point of giving its life.

—James R. Bjorge, *The Love Road to Calvary* (Abingdon, 1982).

### Always on Sunday

A man hitchhiking to the Mardi Gras was picked up by a driver who noticed that his passenger was carrying a Bible. The driver asked, "Where are you going?" "To the Mardi Gras. I understand that is a wide-open town. I'm going to spend all my money, go to night clubs, drink too much, gamble and paint the town red." "Well, good luck," the driver replied. "By the way, what's the Bible for?" "Oh," the hitchhiker

said, "if things go well, I might stay over until Sunday."

—Walter D. Wagoner, *Mortgages on Paradise* (Abingdon, 1981).

### Prize Patience

Christian patience was demonstrated in the life of Dr. Martin Niemöller. He spent most of the war years in a concentration camp. He was a kind of Daniel in a Nazi Babylon, with his windows opened toward the city of God. He watched Germany plunge down the path of national ruin. He watched his countrymen slip away from the strong principles that shaped them. Yet, in the midst of turmoil, he had an abiding confidence in God. He seemed to hear the quiet ticking of an astronomical clock that declared that whatever the years might be saying, the centuries belonged to God. When he heard the threats of Hitler, he replied, "Because there is God, *mein Fuehrer*, we can wait. But we cannot give to man the things that are God's to save our bodies and lose our souls."

—James R. Bjorge, *The Love Road to Calvary* (Abingdon, 1982).

### Theology of Prosperity

Hugh McNatt of San Antonio, Texas, recently sued his hometown church for a refund of his eight-hundred-dollar yearly pledge. McNatt charged that he had donated the money in response to the pastor's promise that in return would flow "blessings, benefits, and rewards from God."

McNatt had had no such luck!

—Walter D. Wagoner, *Mortgages on Paradise* (Abingdon, 1981).



# SERMON OUTLINES



by Kenneth Culbertson

*A few months ago as I lay in bed resting, I was interrupted by my five-year-old son, Derek. Before long I knew this was not Derek's ordinary delay tactic. He sat on the floor beside my bed, trembling. Noises were coming from the closet in his bedroom. It was a father's privilege to be*

*able to say, "Don't be afraid, Derek! It's just the wind, and it's pushed the window in your closet open." After sharing this good news, then verifying it for him, Derek was able to go to sleep peacefully.*

*I believe all people are like Derek, trembling and frightened, in need of*

*God's Word of comfort, in need of hearing the Heavenly Father say, "Do not be afraid!" It is amazing how often this scene is reenacted in the biblical narrative of the encounter between God and man.*

*The following are a series of messages drawn from such situations.*

## DON'T BE AFRAID— GOD WANTS TO SHARE HIS LIFE WITH YOU

**Scripture:** Luke 12:13-34

### I. God Knows Right Where You Are ... (vv. 29-30)

- A. Jesus knew "what was in man."
- B. He knew we are often anxious over food, clothing, shelter.
- C. He knew that this preoccupation would keep us from seeking His kingdom first.

### II. God Knows Exactly What You Need Most ... (5:31)

- A. To seek His kingdom is to seek Him.
- B. Jesus taught Martha the importance of seeking Him (Luke 10:41-42).
- C. Finding Him, we find all we need.

### III. God Wants to Share His Kingdom, and Himself, with You ... (v. 32)

- A. Some are afraid that they could never find such a relationship with Christ.
- B. But you can ... cf. 2 Peter 1:4, NEB—(illustration from *Come Share the Being*, by Bob Benson, regarding the Sunday School Picnic).

**Conclusion:** Sometimes we put on a brave front, when inside we are really afraid. We're afraid of life. We're afraid of God. And it's all so foolish. For God is saying to each of us, "Don't be afraid. I want to share My life with you."

## DON'T BE AFRAID— GOD WANTS TO BLESS YOU WITH HIS PRESENCE

**Scripture:** John 13:31—14:18

**Text:** John 14:6

**Introduction:** Jesus, knowing Peter's hidden fears and weaknesses, warned Peter prophetically of his soon-coming denial. He continues (in 14:1-3), not with a funeral text, but with a promise of the possibility of sharing His presence forever.

### I. "I Am the Way"

- A. It's easy to lose your way in life.
- B. Unless you are on the right way.
- C. Jesus is the right way.

### II. "I Am the Truth"

- A. Everyone seems to be seeking for the truth.
- B. Everyone will find the truth when they find Jesus.

### III. "I Am the Life"

- A. It is easy to be confused about what "really living" means.
  - 1. Medical question—brain function?—breathing?
  - 2. Cynical view as illustrated in popular song of the 50s, "That's Life."  
*That's life! What's life?*  
*A magazine.*  
*How much does it cost?*  
*It costs 20c.*  
*I only got a nickel.*  
*That's life!*
  - 3. Heathen philosophy—"You only go around once in life."

B. Jesus' answer is found in the Lazarus story.

- 1. "I am the resurrection and the life." = "Where I am, there is life. Whenever I come, there is life."
- 2. Even when men are dead in trespasses and sin—Lazarus symbolizes each of us.
- 3. Even when hearts are breaking—like Mary and Martha's.
- 4. If you'll respond to Him in faith—"remove the stone."

5. If you'll move beyond your fears—"by now he stinks."

6. You'll find He is Life.

## MY FATHER'S HOUSE

**Scripture:** Psalm 84

**Introduction:** I expect that the people I will meet in heaven will be those I meet in church on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and, yes, even again on prayer meeting night. You know, they're the people who love their Father's house of worship. Notice in this psalm:

### I. The Place of Worship

- A. A place for which the heart of man longs ... (v. 2).
- B. A place of security ... (v. 3).
- C. A place of blessing ... (v. 4).

### II. The Man of Worship

- A. A man who is blessed ... (v. 5a).
- B. A man who is helped ... (v. 6).
- C. A man who receives strength ... (v. 7a).
- D. A man who sees God ... (v. 7b).

### III. The Treasure of Worship

- A. The best choice ... (v. 11).
- B. The wise choice ... Notice in v. 10 that simply *standing in the threshold* of the Father's house is better than *dwelling* in the tents of wickedness.

**Conclusion:** How important is your Father's house of worship to you?

## HANDLE WITH CARE

**Scripture:** Matthew 18

This entire chapter may be interpreted as a parabolic suggestion as to the proper handling of people within the Church, as follows:

### I. The Reception of Believers ... (vv. 1-11)

**II. The Restoration of Backsliders**  
... (vv. 12-19)

**III. The Reconciliation of Brethren**  
... (vv. 20-35)

**DON'T BE AFRAID—  
GOD WANTS TO BLESS YOU  
WITH HIS HOLY SPIRIT**

**Scripture:** Matt. 16:21-27

**Text:** Matt. 16:24

**Introduction:** Pogo comic strip—Swamp characters returning to report to Pogo—"We have met the enemy and he is us."

**I. "Let Him Deny Himself"**

- A. We are to deny the sinful self.
- B. We are to surrender the self to God.

C. We are to do for God, as He has done for us.

1. "The Lamb at the heart of the throne" ... (Rev. 7:17, NEB).

2. The Christ of the Cross at the center of our faith ... (Phil. 2:1-6).

3. The invitation to surrender ... (Rom. 12:1, NEB).

**II. "And Take Up His Cross"**

A. The experience of Paul ... (Gal. 2:20).

B. The plea of Dietrich Bonhoeffer—"Jesus bids us come and die with Him."

C. The privilege of every believer

1. To attend the crucifixion of his own carnal mind ... (Rom. 8:6-8).

2. To surrender willingly to this crucifixion as Jesus did to His.

**III. "And Follow Me"**

A. Keep the self hid ... (Col. 3:1-3).

B. Keep the self surrendered ... (Luke 9:23).

**Conclusion:** Household illustration based on Rev. 3:20.

When Christ enters our "house," He immediately cleans up and makes it a glorious dwelling. After a time, He finds that one "back room" which is our "own room." He will ask entrance to that room and must have it if He is to remain a welcome guest. When the door is opened to Him, He does not destroy the room, but fills the whole house with His presence.

Now don't be afraid, God wants to bless you with His Holy Spirit!

**I DON'T KNOW  
WHEN HE'S COMING,  
BUT I DO KNOW...**

**Scripture:** Acts 1:1-11

**Text:** Verse 11

**Introduction:** Dr. Ted Martin suggests that in the Upper Room the disciples were shut in by their fears until Jesus came into their midst and adds, "Though we're beset by many a fear, Someone greater than our fears is here."

We should be reminded of this in the light of the current popularity of dramatic, perhaps sensational, "prophetic" interpretation.

We should look carefully at the truths presented in this passage of Scripture.

**I. I Don't Know when He's Coming,  
and Neither Do You**

A. "No man knows the hour."

B. All men can discern His nearness.

C. All men need to be wise, but not afraid.

1. "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom."

2. Cf. Exod. 20:20.

3. Fear is only the beginning. We must move beyond fear to loving trust.

4. We must be "pan-millennialists"—believe it will all pan out in the end, and be ready when it does!

D. A preoccupation with prophetic interpretation to the exclusion of other biblical doctrines:

1. Is dangerous.

(a) Cf. Thessalonian problem

(b) Cf. Matt. 25:23-27, 35-44

(c) Cf. Matt. 12:39

2. Is contrary to Acts 1.

**II. I Don't Know when He's Coming,  
but I Need to Know and Do His Will**

A. The focus of the entire passage in on the Holy Spirit ...

B. And on His power—*dunamis* (dynamite)

1. to purify—Acts 15:8-9

2. to strengthen

3. to send them hurtling out into the streets

C. And in Him

1. "Without Me you can do nothing."

2. Now they had Him—with them and within them.

3. Now He would:

(a) teach them all things

(b) give them strength—  
Comforter = *com* + *fortis* = to stand alongside with strength

(c) help them to know and do His will

**III. I Don't Know when He's Coming,  
but I Do Know I must Be His Witness Till He Does**

Verse 11 = "What are you standing around here for? Get with it. He'll be back. Get ready. Get others ready. Get going."

A. You are not called to preoccupation with His second coming.

B. You are called to an expanding sphere of influence in your world (v. 8).

**DON'T BE AFRAID OF DEATH**

**Scripture:** Psalm 23 and 1 Cor. 15:56 ff.

**Introduction:** When I was young I was "scared to death" of death. My fear of death became nearly pathological. One of the most glorious changes Christ brought to my life was not only a personal assurance facing death, but also an assurance to share with others.

**I. Death, the Enemy**

A. An enemy physically!

B. An enemy spiritually!

C. An enemy eternally?

**II. Death, Defeated**

A. The sting gone.

B. The assurance come.

**III. Death, Answered**

A. Physically (Ps. 23:4; cf. 2 Sam. 12:15 ff.).

B. Spiritually (Ps. 23:3).

C. Eternally (Ps. 23:6).

**Conclusion:** F. B. Meyer wrote to his friend Lindsay Glegg while on his deathbed: "I have raced you to Heaven. I am just off. See you there. Love, F. B. Meyer."

You and I needn't be afraid of death. We can have the same assurance—through Jesus Christ the Lord.

Excellent material to illustrate and expand this outline may be found in: *Is Anyone There? (And Does It Really Matter?)*, by David Watson, Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, Ill., 1979.

## DON'T BE AFRAID, GOD WANTS TO BUILD YOUR CHURCH

**Text:** Matt. 16:18

**Introduction:** All of us sincerely desire to see our churches grow. Many of us are afraid ours never will, or will stop. But God invites us to hear His words: "Don't be afraid! I will build My Church, and the very gates of Hell shall not be able to withstand it."

### I. God's Objective

A. It is God's will to build the Church.

1. We should not wonder at it.
  - (a) Would you question if it is God's will to sanctify the believer?
  - (b) Why not?
    - (1) The testimony of Scripture
    - (2) The experience of others
    - (3) Personal experience
  - (c) All these reasons also apply to God's promise to build the Church.
2. We should believe it.
3. We should work at it.

B. God has given us the Great Commission

1. To make disciples
2. To teach them of Him—cf. importance of S. S.

C. You must believe it! If you don't, no one else will.

### II. God's Ownership

A. It's His Church, not ours.

1. *Ecclesia*—It refers to your local church, but it belongs to Him.
2. Thou art Peter—a piece of the rock . . . Upon this Bedrock—the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

- B. It's His problem.
- C. It's His program.
- D. It's His glory!

### III. God's Opposition

A. The opposition is hell itself. . . . Not all victories will be apparent.

B. Christ holds the key (Rev. 1:18; cf. Matt. 16:21 ff.).

1. Gained through suffering, death, and resurrection.

2. The Church is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

3. Note in verse 23, God's interest—to build the Church.

### IV. God's Outcome

- A. Victory is promised.
- B. The Church will be built.
  1. With "living stones"
  2. Using the full armor of God (Eph. 6:10-12).
    - (a) Using the world's weapons won't work.
    - (b) Prayer, sacrifice, commitment, love, faith, and believing will.

**Conclusion:** Abraham's example—Rom. 4:3 with emphasis on believing faith; cf. James 2:17-24, with emphasis on the perfecting of that faith through putting it to work.

**Application:** BELIEVE GOD . . . THEN WORK LIKE YOU BELIEVE HIM! And don't be afraid! God wants to build your church.

### WHY DOES HE WAIT?

**Scripture:** 2 Pet. 3:3-15, TLB

This message could be developed in coordination with "I Don't Know when He's Coming, but I Do Know . . ." The themes are similar. I use *The Living Bible* because the paraphrase expresses the two-point outline so clearly.

**I. He Is Waiting for You to Repent . . .** (v. 9b).

**II. He Is Waiting for You to Witness . . .** (v. 15).

*An alternative outline might be:*

**I. He Is Waiting for You to Get Ready.**

**II. He Is Waiting for You to Help Others Get Ready.**

### IF YOU DANCE YOU HAVE TO PAY THE PIPER

**Scripture:** Mark 6:14-29

**I. The Dance of Sin . . .** (vv. 21-24)

**II. The Trap of Sin . . .** (vv. 25-29)

**III. The Haunting of Sin . . .** (vv. 14-16)

**IV. The End of Sin** (The very person whom Herod feared most could have led him to repentance, to freedom, to the Christ.)

**Conclusion:** You needn't be like Herod. You can leave your sins with Jesus.

### NO NEED TO BE LEFT OUT

**Scripture:** Matt. 11:25-30

**Introduction:** There are some who view Christianity and the things of Christ as being only for a select few—

the spiritually elite, the morally superior, and the intellectually advanced. These words of Jesus correct that error. They show us:

**I. The Elusive Truth . . .** (vv. 25-26)

**II. The Exclusive Way . . .** (v. 27)

**III. The Inclusive Invitation . . .** (vv. 28-30)

**Conclusion:** There is no reason to be left out. All, who will, may come to Him.

## THE TRAGEDY OF LOSING CHRIST

**Scripture:** Luke 2:45-47

**Introduction:** What a tragedy it was for Mary and Joseph to awaken to the fact that they had gone off and left Jesus in Jerusalem. Of all the people in the world, you would never have expected Mary and Joseph to lose Jesus.

### I. They Went Off and Left Him.

A. People lose Him in the strangest places.

B. They lost Him in the Temple.

1. They were caught up with other people.

2. They were caught up in other cares.

### II. They Were Filled with Sorrow.

A. Joy was gone.

1. Some hearts here today are heavy.

2. Some homes are not what they ought to be.

B. Fear and anxiety had come. (There are no truly happy backsliders.)

### III. They Tried to Find Him.

A. They turned back toward where they had left Him.

B. Their search was thorough.

C. They searched with sorrow.

D. They searched with deep resolve to find Him again.

### IV. They Found Him About His Father's Business.

A. And so will you!

B. You'll find Him seeking for you. Cf. the prodigal father

### V. The Journey Back May Be Difficult.

A. They had journeyed just one day away, but they searched for three.

B. Though difficult, the journey was worthwhile.

**Conclusion:** Some folks need to take the same journey. Some folks need to replace the tragedy of losing Christ with the joy of finding Him again.

# A SERMON MANUSCRIPT



## The Establishing Grace

by Neil Hightower

Text: *The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints* (1 Thess. 3:12-13).

Too many Christians would rather picnic along the foothills of Christian experience than climb the Rockies of divine love and heart holiness. They, and the Church are suffering the consequences of low spiritual vision and anemic spiritual achievement. We have become a generation of spiritual mumblers with no clearly defined standing place. We have become a congregation of spiritual hypochondriacs, with our fingers always on our spiritual pulse, and our medicine cabinet full of sugar-coated "experience pills."

We would rather be entertained, or spoon-fed with the success syndrome of TV evangelism.

Holiness, both as a crisis experience and a progressive experience, is the Gibraltar of God's plan for His people. Any increase in perfect love is accompanied by an increase in holiness, which is the developing life of the entirely sanctified. Holiness isn't some solitary discipline of cloistered saints, but the sensitive and robust life of holy love practiced in the Body. Holy people have a "family concern" for each other (cf. 1 Thess. 2:7-8, 11-13). Perfect love is dynamic, worked out in the crucible of social interaction.

It is in this context of "social holiness" (as John Wesley identified it) that God's people find the establishing grace of entire sanctification. This spiritual interaction and support serves notice to the world that a *peculiar* kind of fellowship exists. It means that holiness is a *community experience* more than an individual experience. This is what the apostle is saying in this chapter, under four headings:

1. Abounding love is the source from which our being established flows.
2. Our steadfastness encourages others to stand.
3. Christ's preachers are instruments of our being established.
4. The end of perfect love is establishment in holiness.

These are principles of establishing grace. They are proof that God wants a people grounded on rock, not shifting sands of spiritual feelings.

### I. ABOUNDING LOVE IS THE FOUNTAIN FROM WHICH OUR BEING ESTABLISHED FLOWS (v. 12)

What is *abounding love*? is a significant question for God's questing people. There are two Greek words in verse 12, which the inspired apostle instructively uses—*increase* and *abound*. *Pleonazō* means: "in excess of the amount decreed," "to be more than enough." *Perisseuō* means: "over and above," "to exist in full quantity," "to be richly furnished," "surplus." Here is a divine sentence

expressing the overflowing, superlative quality of perfect love. It is like a river at flood tide. It is like Lake Superior, the largest inland lake in the world, where there is more than enough water. It is what happens to the heart and life of a believer when he is inundated with the perfecting presence of the Holy Spirit. There is more than enough because God is enough! What Arnold Airhart says in *Beacon Bible Commentary* is certainly true: "The whole emphasis of this prayer is upon the inwardness of personal character. . . . It is more than blamelessness of outward behaviour. It is a blamelessness of inward devotion to God brought about by an infusion of the pure love of God."

This abounding love is a work of God's grace, not the result of human achievement. The apostle says: "*The Lord make you to increase and abound.*" God's grace not only infuses us at the beginning, but all the way along the Lord sustains us by His grace. That is what John Wesley meant when he talked about there being no stock of holiness poured into a man, but that every moment the most holy need the merits of Christ.

The direction of this abounding love is threefold, according to our text in verse 12. It is toward our fellow Christians; and also toward all men. It is reciprocal, "even as we do toward you."

This abounding love requires that "what is lacking in our faith" be perfected, according to verse 10. What is lacking is a complete and total consecration. What is needed is what Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn describes as the consuming passion of every political prisoner: a total commitment to survival. With entire sanctification comes a total commitment to a deeper level of the experience of God in your life. It is the realization of the fullness of the Spirit in the believer.

There is also another principle revealed here:

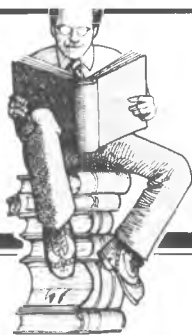
### II. OUR STEADFASTNESS ENCOURAGES OTHERS TO STAND (vv. 5-8)

By God's grace we are made *models* whether we desire to be or not. The apostle reminds us that the knowledge of our faith is a source of strength (v. 5). This knowledge is not theoretical but applied. It is faith demonstrated.

He also reminds us in verse 6 that temptation is both a means of strength and an opening for failure. In other words, spiritual opportunity is often wrapped up in temptation. In verse 7, St. Paul shows that the example of victorious faith reaps itself and multiplies itself. Such victorious faith issues in the twin-streams of comfort and encouragement.

The steadfastness of mature Christians, according to verse 8, gives cause for the perseverance of new babes in Christ. You are the only "Bibles" which some persons will ever read. The quality and stability of your faith will convince believers on the threshold of spiritual development.

(continued on page 59)



# TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

## SPIRIT FRUIT

By John M. Drescher, Herald Press, paperback, 351 pp., \$5.95.

In recent years there has been a great deal written on the gifts of the Spirit, but almost nothing on the fruit of the Spirit. This meaty volume fills that need.

The author is a Mennonite (former Mennonite bishop). He has read widely on the subject and writes from an excellent perspective. We question whether one could find a more valuable book on this important topic.

The bulk of the book, of course, consists of a thorough treatment of each of the nine virtues listed under "the fruit of the Spirit" in Gal. 5:22-23. The introductory chapter, "Spirit Fruit," emphasizes the greater importance of the fruit of the Spirit than the gifts of the Spirit (which are emphasized so much today).

The alert preacher will find here excellent help for a series of sermons. For instance, here is one paragraph: "Someone has described the fruit of the Spirit as the eight elements of love. Joy is love's cheerfulness, peace love's confidence, long-suffering love's composure, kindness love's character, faithfulness love's constancy, meekness love's comeliness, and self-control love's conquest" (p. 15).

We should like to quote one more sentence: "Real love must become incarnate in persons rather than in pronouncements and programs" (p. 63.)

Broken up into 68 short sections, the book is excellent for daily devotional reading. This could be a really transforming experience.

—Ralph Earle

## WHO IS THE MINISTER'S WIFE? *A Search for Personal Fulfillment*

By Charlotte Ross, Westminster Press, paperback, \$5.95.

From extensive research developed by the Task Force on Women of the United Presbyterian Church, author Charlotte Ross attempts to portray the changing nature of the "clergy wife" role. The author, herself a min-

ister's wife of 38 years, draws from information provided by the clergy wife, the clergyman, and the layperson. She recognizes the great diversity among ministers' wives and is very aware that what may be a frustration for one is opportunity for another.

With the changing of women the role of the clergy wife is continually changing too as new tensions and struggles affect the minister, his family, and the church. Though the role of the clergy wife is difficult to portray against a diverse backdrop, the author feels there is a common ground. For the most part, the answers to the questionnaires reflect a sense of mission and commitment, a dedication and a zeal that is exemplary.

The author openly and frankly discusses the pressures on ministers' wives from church members, expectations of her mate, marriages under stress due to time pressures and working wives, and the clergy family and divorce. Some of the responses to the questionnaires are rather surprising and would scarcely fit into the context of our Nazarene denomination. However, in the light of our rapidly changing world it is well for us to look at these concerns and build a hedge for the ministry of our denomination.

The author suggests that with a growing consciousness of the effect of the clergy marriage upon ministry, seminaries and church-related colleges could well be engaged in supplying some basic educational tools for the clergy wife. Over and over the clergy wives expressed a desire for retreats, workshops, and informal opportunities to share growth experiences with one another and with their husbands. Others asked for a variety of helps to meet their personal needs in the form of written vehicles such as newsletters, articles, and features for the clergy wife in church periodicals.

Charlotte Ross concludes her definition of the clergy wife as "one who, for the love of a man—her husband—is a partner in love to THE Man—her Lord Jesus Christ. The giving of herself is a cherished gift to be held in honor and used by Him."

—Marion Rich

## A THEOLOGY FOR CHILDREN

By William L. Hendricks, Broadman Press, 269 pp., \$9.50.

First off, this is not a book on theology written for children to read! It has been written "for pastors, parents, workers with children at church, and others who are concerned about the religious education and the theological development of children." Dr. Hendricks is professor of theology and philosophy of religion at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. He has written from the Baptist perspective, but this does not present any major conflicts in the material.

Subjects considered are those included in any basic volume of systematic theology. The author uses the games and learning devices of childhood as a vehicle for presenting his ideas. For instance, the chapter dealing with the Trinity is titled, "It Takes Three to Play." Practical suggestions on how to use the ideas in teaching/learning experiences are given frequently, and areas where special caution needs to be exercised are often pointed out.

The first part of the book deals with the way God reveals himself and a threefold description of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, based upon what God does. "I Have a Friend," the chapter on the person and work of Jesus, is excellent.

The second part of the book considers evil, salvation, living the Christian life, the Church, and God's plan for finishing what He began at creation. Concerning sin, Dr. Hendricks writes, "Sin is doing what we should not do and not doing what we should do. Sin is also doing things we should with the wrong motive." Of conversion, he states, "Do not tell children how bad they are. Tell them how good God is. . . . Any plan of salvation that does not begin with and lay predominant stress on God's good act on our behalf is out of focus."

Don't overlook the appendices, especially B, "The Age of Accountability," and C, "Spiritual Gifts."

This book is well worth the time and effort (it will take some!) of any person involved in ministry with children.

—Robert D. Troutman



# BEST BOOKS ON CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

JAMES DOBSON. *Hide or Seek*. New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1974

JAMES DOBSON. *The Strong-willed Child*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1978.

JOHN M. DRESCHER. *Seven Things Children Need*. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1976.

JOHN M. DRESCHER. *What Should Parents Expect*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980.

MIRIAM HALL. *New Directions for Children's Ministries*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1980.

WILLIAM L. HENDRICKS. *A Theology for Children*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980.

WALTER A. HENRICHSEN. *How to Discipline Your Children*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1981.

PAUL D. MEIER. *Christian Child-Rearing and Personality Development*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977.

ANNE ORTLUND. *Children Are Wet Cement*. New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell, 1981.

RICHARDS L. STRAUSS. *Confident Children and How They Grow*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1976.

CHARLES R. SWINDOLL. *You and Your Child*. New York: Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, 1977.

GENE VAN NOTE, ed. *Positive Parenting*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City.

Order from your publishing house.



## The Establishing Grace

(continued from page 57)

### III. CHRIST'S PREACHERS ARE INSTRUMENTS OF OUR BEING ESTABLISHED (vv. 2-3)

Christ himself established the principle of shepherding the sheep of God's pasture. His instruction to the apostle Peter in the restoration experience beside Lake Galilee, after the Resurrection, was: "Feed my sheep." That apostle, in his First Epistle, describes Christ as "the great shepherd of the sheep," and intimates in his advice to priests and pastors that theirs is a parallel assignment.

Some preachers are called by God to lonely wrestling, according to verse 1. At some periods in the life of the Body of Christ, a few St. Anthonys of the Egyptian desert are needed. There are times when God has to isolate the preacher in order to give him an "everlasting word" for the people. This becomes a means of establishing the people of God.

Young preachers are useful to the establishing process (v. 2). They too are "brothers and fellow workers." They are close to the beginning struggles of maturing, and empathize with the knocks and bruises of growing up spiritually. They become sources of comfort and strength, their zeal covering their inexperience. They very often succeed simply because they are not aware that "it can't be done," and they do it! Charles Kettering, a great automotive engineer and inventor, was interviewed by a brash young reporter. At 70 years of age, he was asked the secret of his success. The inventor replied: "Every man needs a quality of intelligent ignorance to succeed."

Our pastors are pictures of steadfastness through affliction and become sources of inspiration to sagging believers.

Finally, the apostle is saying to members of Christ's Body,

### IV. THE END OF PERFECT LOVE IS ESTABLISHMENT IN HOLINESS (v. 13)

We are not sanctified wholly for some "power kick." Nor are our hearts purified so that we can become cloistered saints, too high and holy to mingle with common mortals. Holiness of heart and life is the grand design of the Lord.

The apostle says our increase in divine love is "to the end that he may establish your hearts . . . in holiness." It is our hearts not our heads. When the center, or the seat, of the affections is purified the circumference will reflect it. Our perfection is not of performance but of intention. Like a mother who sees beyond the crumpled love-gift of her little one, so God accepts our gift of "dandelions."

The divine extent of the saving work is "without blame." Scripturally this means our lives are made transparent, no inward flaws to hinder the reflection of light. We are made, by the grace of God, sincere, or "without wax."

We are made holy and without blame "before God." The Person to whom we are responsible is the Almighty. A servant is subject to the commands of his master, not the opinions of bystanders.

The length of our proving period is "until Jesus comes." Standing grace depends on where you are standing—in Christ or in the world of your own self-centeredness. Galatians 5:1 says: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

God wills that we should not be unhinged and wobbly Christians, but established and firmly rooted. The Holy Spirit puts spiritual steel in our backbone; but we have to do the walking. God's great purpose is that we should be established in holiness.



# OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Harvey E. Finley



## *Names and Titles for God in the Old Testament*

This column continues our study of *El* and its compounds. Last time *El*, *El Shaddai*, *El Elyon*, and *El Olam* were explored. Five more names will be treated in this column.

*El Roi*, "God Who Sees." *El Roi* occurs once, in connection with Hagar's flight from Sarah (Gen. 16:13). It means "God of Seeing," one who takes notice and shows concern for one in need. An interesting cognate parallel occurs in the Amarna Letters, *ba'al roi*, "Baal who sees." Both the patriarchal religion and the Canaanite religion seemed to have shared in the emphasis upon their deities' concern for their worshipers. Specifically for the patriarchal times, *El Roi* is noteworthy in its emphasis that *El* (God) was constantly concerned about His own, His worshipers, and acted to alleviate needs or to solve problems.

*El-bethel*, "The God of Bethel." This compound on the analogy of others occurs in Gen. 31:13 and 35:7, both in narrative about meaningful incidents in the life of Jacob. In 31:13 the "Messenger of God" affirms to Jacob in a dream: "I am *El-bethel* ("The God of Bethel"). The Messenger also reminds Jacob of the pillar he anointed years earlier when he was fleeing from Esau (Gen. 28:18-19) and of his vow to return to his father's house (Gen. 28:20-22). In 35:7 *El-bethel* is the name of the place where Jacob built an altar after his safe return to the land of his father. One occurrence indicates the use of this name as a name for God; the other, as a name for a place of a significant self-disclosure of God. Both occurrences of *El-bethel* reaffirm forcefully to Jacob the authenticity of God's first self-initiated encounter with him (again, Genesis 28; especially verses 18-21). Further, they draw attention to the God who continually showed concern for and granted blessing to Jacob during the time of his stay with Laban and of his vow-keeping return to Canaan.

*El-Elohe-Yisrael*, "God, the God of Israel." This expanded compound occurs only in Gen. 33:20. It is given in transliteration as *El-Elohe-Israel* in

many English translations (AS, ASV, RSV, NASB, NIV, NEB). It may be translated either: "God, the God of Israel"; or, "God is the God of Israel." This expression interestingly identifies *El* as the God of Israel. While this name is associated in Genesis 33 with an altar built after Jacob's purchase of land from the sons of Hamor, the Shechemites, it primarily identifies Jacob as a worshiper of Deity different from the one worshiped by the Shechemites.

In the context of the narrative about Jacob's purchase of land, this name carries connotations as to Jacob's purposeful identification with the land promised to Abraham, his recognition of his return to his spiritual heritage, and his witness to the concern and power of *El* who enabled him to return.

*El-berith*, "god of the Covenant." *El-berith* occurs only in Judg. 9:46. The narrative in which this occurs is an account of Abimelech's rule in Shechem over Israel for three years (Judg. 9:22). His rule preempted the theocratic rule of his time, the time of the judges. His preemptive attempt to be king was indicative of a general lack of faith in God, especially among the people of Shechem.

Before Abimelech's three-year reign, Gideon had torn down an altar of *Baal* at Ophrah, and his father Joash gave him the name *Jerubbaal* (Judg. 6:21-32). This name means, "Let Baal contend." It was in effect a name intended to taunt *Baal* whose altar Gideon had demolished during the previous night. Later, he allowed himself to assume the role of the high priest by making an ephod, which became a snare to him and his house (Judg. 8:27).

After Gideon's death the people of Shechem made *Baal-berith*, a Canaanite deity, their god, thus reverting to their earlier pagan worship (see Judg. 8:33). It was with monetary support from persons of the "temple of *Baal-berith*" that Abimelech was able to exterminate his 80 "brothers," except Jotham (Judg. 9:1-5).

*Baal-berith*, as indicated in the biblical tradition, was the god of Shechem. Further, the temple or house of *Baal-berith* was evidently standing there for some time even prior to and

during the time of Gideon and Abimelech, for excavations at Shechem have confirmed the existence there of a large temple of the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1500-1200 B.C.). There is also extrabiblical evidence suggesting that the divine name *Baal-berith* was invoked to establish an agreement between the Shechemites and others.

The Amarna Letters (15th-14th centuries B.C.) refer to a *Lab'ayu*, name of the Canaanite ruler of Shechem, who made a treaty with a people called *Apiru* (the Hebrews). Thus this treaty invoked in the name of *Baal-berith*, antedating Abimelech's rule in Shechem, could have well been the model for a covenant or treaty which was in all likelihood established between Abimelech and the Shechemites as the basis for his reign as king. *Baal-berith* obviously would have been the deity whose name was invoked for any such agreement. The name *El-berith* (Judg. 9:56) is a name with the substitution of *El* for *Baal*; *El*, as mentioned previously, was the divine name used in cognate form by Canaanites and others. This change, therefore, kept this divine name (*El-berith*) within the context of Canaanite worship as the Judges account clearly narrates.

*El Qanno*, "The Jealous God." This divine name occurs, with a slightly varied spelling less than 10 times; the most interesting occurrence is Exod. 34:14: "For you are not to worship any other god; as for *Yahveh*, 'The Jealous (One)' is His name. Jealous God is He" (trans.—H.E.F.). This passage and others with *El Qanna/El Qanno* have *Yahveh* as the main divine name of these contexts; its usage therefore is in a different manner from that of the others already discussed. (It will be given additional attention in a later study in connection with that on *Yahveh*.)

The patriarchal understanding of God inherent in the *El* and *El*-compound divine names "tracks" with that of other people of the ancient Near East with respect to several aspects of general revelation—God is all-mighty, above all, exalted, everlasting, and caring (He sees). These aspects are in the category of natural attributes, using the systematic theologian's term.

(continued on page 63)



# NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

## John 7:38—10:20

### Belly (7:38)

It is true that *koilia* does literally mean "belly." But this is not all it means. Arndt and Gingrich give three uses of the word. The first is "an organ of nourishment: the digestive apparatus in its fullest extent." So it can very properly be translated "stomach," as in 1 Cor. 6:13 and Phil. 3:19 (NIV). The second use is "as an organ of reproduction," the "womb" (Luke 1:41, NIV). In the third place, "*koilia* denotes the hidden, innermost recesses of the human body," so "innermost being" (NASB) fits very well. Arndt and Gingrich suggest for John 7:38: "rivers of the living water shall flow from his heart" (*Lexicon*, p. 437; cf. RSV).

J. H. Bernard writes: "'Out of his belly' is only an emphatic way of saying 'From him shall flow'" (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John*, 1:283). So a good rendering here is simply this: "Streams of living water shall flow from within him" (NIV). We are told in verse 39 that this prediction refers to the Holy Spirit, who wants to fill our hearts and flow out through our lives.

### John 7:53—8:11

The notes on this passage in NASB and NIV are accurate. The story of the woman taken in adultery is not found in the oldest and best Greek manuscripts. No Greek Church Father before Euthymius (12th Cent.) comments on the passage, and he declared that the accurate copies of the Gospel did not contain it.

While the evidence is overwhelming that 7:53—8:11 was not a part of the Gospel of John as originally written, New Testament scholars agree that it is probably a correct oral tradition of an actual incident in Jesus' life. So it may be used for purposes of illustration.

### Bearest Record . . . Record (8:13)

The Greek has the verb *martyreo*, "testify" and the noun *martyria*, "testimony." So the literal translation is:

"You are testifying about yourself; your testimony is not true." The same combination, basically, is found in verse 14 (cf. NIV).

### Honour (8:54)

The verb twice is *doxazo*; the noun is *doxa*. The regular meaning of the verb is "glorify" and of the noun "glory" (NASB, NIV).

### Clay (9:6)

The noun *pelos* occurs twice in verse 6, and once each in verses 11, 14, and 15. Elsewhere it is found (in NT only in Rom. 9:21, where the reference to the "potter" definitely favors the translation "clay." But its first meaning in classical Greek was "mud" (TDNT, 6:118; cf. NIV).

### Blind (9:8)

"That he was blind" (KJV) is not found in any early Greek manuscripts. They all have: "that he was a beggar" (cf. NASB, NIV).

### Son of God (9:35)

Both of our third century papyrus Greek manuscripts of John's Gospel, as well as our two fourth century manuscripts and two of the fifth century have "Son of Man" (NASB, NIV), which is undoubtedly the correct reading. It is the title that Jesus regularly used for himself (over 80 times) and it identified Him as the Messiah. Jesus was asking the healed man if he believed in Him as the promised Messiah of Israel.

### His Own Sheep (10:4)

The best Greek text has *taidia panta*—"all his own" (NASB, NIV).

### Parable (10:6)

Our word *parable* comes from the Greek word *parabole*, which literally means a "placing beside," and so, a comparison. The word occurs 50 times in the New Testament—all but 2 of those in the Synoptic Gospels (the others in Hebrews).

But that word does not occur in John's Gospel and so "parable" should not be in the English. The Greek word here is *paroimia*. In 2 Pet. 2:22 it means "proverb," which was

its common connotation in ancient Greek literature. Aside from that passage it occurs (in NT) only in John's Gospel (10:6; 16:25, 29). Here it "means 'hidden, obscure speech,' which stands in need of interpretation" (TDNT, 5:856). What we have in John 10:1-5 is not a "parable" (KJV), but an allegory. The word *paroimia* is correctly translated "figure of speech" (NASB, NIV). It is generally agreed that there are not parables in John's Gospel.

### Fold (10:16)

In the KJV the word *fold* occurs twice in this verse. But there are two different Greek words here. The first is *aule*, which is correctly translated "fold," or "sheep pen" (NIV). But the second is *poimne*, which means "flock."

Is this distinction important? It is! The Roman Catholic church has insisted that it is the only true "fold," into which everyone must come in order to be saved. But what Jesus said was that there would be one "flock," His own sheep, though they belong to many denominational folds.

### Power (10:18)

Again the KJV translates *exousia* as "power." But the correct translation is "authority" (NASB, NIV). This fits in also with the last sentence of the verse: "This command I received from my Father." His Father had authorized Him to do it.

### Is Mad (10:20)

The Greek verb is *mainomai*. Arndt and Gingrich say that it means "be mad, be out of one's mind" (p. 486). Herbert Preisker writes: "In the NT *mainomai* is used only to characterize the messengers of God with their unheard of proclamation. Thus we read in Jn. 10:19ff. That a division arose among the Jews because of the message of Jesus. Those who did not understand His claim or preaching who had no ear for the uniqueness of His Word, rejected Him, and their reason was that he had an evil spirit and was out of His mind. The unheard of seems to be madness to unbelief" (TDNT, 4:361).



## MAKING THE NEWS

(continued from page 31)

ken in many of our churches for years. He is also the author of a number of books. Some of these will be available at the services.

We are at the Church of the Nazarene here in Your City. Services will be at 11:00 on Sunday and 7:30 every night. Some of our people will be singing. Do you want to hear a dynamic, Spirit-filled man of God? Then you will not want to miss hearing this man. Invite your friends to join you.

There is a blessing for everyone who comes to our church. Each night there will be a special surprise, especially for the children. Lots of goodies. Come, you will be glad you did.

We are at the corner of Elm and Oak.

4. Take advantage of position releases on moral topics. Note the following article which was printed in our daily just this week:

WALPOLE—Rev. J. Grant Swank, Jr., of the Church of the Nazarene, sent communications, dated December 30, to Massachusetts Governor Edward J. King and Massachusetts Secretary of Public Safety George Luciano, urging stiffer laws for drunk drivers. The letter reads:

"We as a concerned congregation support you in your efforts 'to get tough' with the drunk drivers in our state.

"It is imperative that new laws be enacted as soon as possible in order to curb the killing on our highways.

"We understand that you, working together, have concluded to form a task force to suggest new statutes covering drunk drivers. It is our prayer that such a task force will not become lost in the debris of a new year. Instead, we urge that a time limit be superimposed on the guidelines of the task force so that this matter of highway murder can be handled most efficiently, that needless killing come to a halt.

"We hope that you will communicate regularly with the media so as to keep the public informed concerning all details. It is important that our attention is continually alerted in regard to this matter."

The denomination consistently refrains from any alcoholic servings at any church functions and members' homes are known for being alcohol-free. "It is a sound tradition with us. It makes sense and leads to a fuller life," Pastor Swank said.

5. Do not bother your newspaper people with a lots of visits and phone calls. This, they do *not* want. Communicate with them only when you desire special coverage of an event or issue. They will be satisfied simply with your regular releases coming into their offices several times a week. Then let them do what they desire with the information you mail. Sometimes they will give you meager space; on other pages you will be the big news of that day. In the long run, your church will be known throughout your community.



## Who Cares About Pastors?

(continued from page 34)

logical convictions. If a person does not believe what he is supposed to preach, he is not going to be an effective preacher. That is the reason I say our proclamation must be supported by the strength of an abiding faith. Holiness must be the bedrock of our faith for preaching. Holiness is not just something to preach once or twice a year, but must be the kernel of all that we believe and preach. Love out of a pure heart is the essence of holiness.

Tracy: I know that you have some other areas of responsibility. You are going to work with the Nazarene Multiple Staff Association. The Chaplaincy Program is yours, and the Course of Study. Share with us anything you would like to say about those.

Brannon: The church has finally recognized the importance of the chaplaincy ministry. Not only military chaplains but institutional chaplains, industrial chaplains, prison chaplains, and college chaplaincy will come into our direct concern. We will have a full-time coordinator who will take on the responsibility of our chaplaincy ministries. The Pastoral Ministries office also acts as sort of a liaison between such organizations as the Nazarene Multiple Staff Association, and the Senior Pastor's Association. I will simply serve as a coordinator and facilitator and headquarters contact person for these groups.

Tracy: That term *serve* has come up in a number of your statements. If I understand you properly, it is your idea that this office is not a dispenser of information or a dispenser of orders, but rather is here to serve. Your office only exists to serve the needs of ministers.

Brannon: Yes. I want to underscore the fact that Pastoral Ministries is not interested in sending out more programs. Primarily, Pastoral Ministries wants to know two things: What helps do pastors need? and, How can we in Pastoral Ministries help? There are really no questions I need to ask myself more often than those. We want to know how can we serve, how can we help. We want to help pastors be more effective, more fulfilled, more satisfied in their God-called service.

Tracy: In that statement, Wilbur, I hear an invitation to all of our *Preacher's Magazine* readers to feel free to write to you, to call you, to share, to suggest any ideas they would like to pass along to your office.

Brannon: I solicit that. Sincerely, I want to hear from everybody and anybody and whatever ideas or desires they have—or expectations they might hold for me or my office.

Tracy: One final question, Wilbur. Is there anything that you hoped I would ask that I didn't?

Brannon: I do want to say that I want this office, and preachers everywhere, to hold high the challenge of the ministry to youth. I hope that young people will see in our pastors qualities of character that draw them to the ministry, and to being sensitive to God's call. I hope the youth will see such strength of character, virtue, and moral qualities in our pastors that they will pray for God to call them into the ministry. I hope to help produce more and more ministers who attract youth by their integrity, courage, sincerity, transparency, and credibility. It's that kind of ministry model that made me love ministry more than music. Of course, what I'm talking about is seeing more and more of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. This will develop great ministers. This requires purposeful development intellectually, professionally, and personally.

Tracy: Thank you, Wilbur. We pray that your leadership can help move us all "God-ward."



## I Have Trouble

(continued from page 50)

**F**ocus on a God who loves me beyond my comprehension.

**A**ccept my idiosyncrasies with humor, knowing God can even use them for His glory, or change them as He will.

**C**oncentrate on His Book a great deal more than on self-help books.

**T**otally desire to know God better than I know anyone else.

**S**tudy Him through life's experiences.

There are many rough edges on me which God wants chiseled away. I know that. My responsibility is to not hinder Him in His work—to try not to resist His tools. Other than that, I can relax and rest in the fact that God made me the way He wanted me.

This may not be how I wish He

had made me or what others want me to be. But as a unique member of the Body of Christ I have a special task—an obligation to be exactly what I was created to be. I want the fragrance of my life to be sweet, not because of what I am at this moment, but because of what God is making of me.



Excerpted from *Lord of My Rocking Boat*, by Carole Mayhall. © 1982 by Carole Mayhall. Published by NavPress. Used by permission.

## OT Word Studies

(continued from page 60)

At the same time the patriarchal understanding of God goes beyond the general understanding of other peoples. This understanding deriving from God's self-disclosure to them includes the following: (a) God has made His personal will known in call and giving His promise, as in the case of Abraham and Jacob; (b) God as Creator stands apart from Nature, a point carried to its fullest implications in the OT in contrast to the Canaanite

literature wherein forces of Nature are deified; (c) God is indeed One who makes covenant with particular persons, thus indicating His love and concern for the creature "made in his image." This last point is to be seen in God's covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17:1 f.), not from the term *Ei-berith* as occurring in Judg. 9:56. Thus the theological understanding inherent in the *Ei* and *Ei*-compound names is a significant foundation for the superstructure of later revelation, the base for an enlarging theological understanding of the OT from its beginning

to its end which on many counts may be discerned in study of other divine names and titles.



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## MINISTERING THROUGH MUSIC

(continued from page 25)

at the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade levels. Boys' voices are at their best during the ages represented by these intermediate grades and many times are clearer and lovelier than the girls!

The junior high age should be separated from the older adolescents in the larger church. Boys' voices are changing in early adolescence, frequently starting around the sixth grade, but this does not mean they cannot sing. Music for this age-group needs to be selected with care to avoid demanding notes too high or too low, but the early teen and the preteen boys should keep singing!

The music program need not be limited to vocal groups. Recorder ensembles make an excellent music group for young children, as the public schools have discovered, and offer a delightful addition to vocal members. The inexpensive recorders have a range from middle C to high G and can be formed as two- and three-part choirs.

Bell choirs are also becoming increasingly popular. Although expensive, the bells offer an excellent outlet for the interests of junior and senior high youth. This type of choir demands a high degree of dedication and loyalty, for a player's absence means that bell is not played, leaving a noticeable gap. Such responsibility is valuable training for teenagers.

Another decision which must be faced involves taking choirs on tours. Elementary age children are not mature enough to engage in this activity and tours should be an adolescent opportunity. The well-planned and properly supervised youth choir tour offers the excitement of exploring unfamiliar places and of making new friends. Frequently,

strangers will demonstrate their appreciation of the group more than the home folks. Usually it is easier for a youngster to witness to those he does not know and strangers are more likely to accept the teenager as a teenager, instead of still holding a childhood image in mind.

The tour is also an opportunity for the director to become better acquainted with the teenagers, and the teenagers with their leader. The youth see the choirmaster from a different perspective and may recognize their director as really human after all! The teens also get to know each other better, but most of all, this is an opportunity for real spiritual growth. Lives can be changed. In 12 years of touring, I find each tour to be a time when a number of the choir entered into a lasting relationship with the Lord. During each tour there was a melting of spirits and a great outpouring of God's presence on the group.

Tours must be planned months in advance. Money must be raised, sponsors chosen (one adult for every six teens), and music prepared. Bell choirs have a particular advantage in touring as they are unique enough to be readily invited to churches considering a bell group of their own or simply interested in hearing such a concert. The bells also make a nice complement to a vocal group and some churches have had great success in combining the two on tour since many will be in both groups

"Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord: Selah" (Ps. 68:32). Carefully planned, clearly identified, and thoroughly organized, a preadult music program can give young people an experience they will never forget and provide a new dimension to the church as it seeks to nurture the coming generations.



# Feminine Feedback

The editorial staff of the *Preacher's Magazine* would like to know how we can better serve you, the minister's wife. Won't you please help us? Take just a few minutes and complete the following questionnaire.

1. Would you tell us your age?

- ☐ 19-25      ☐ 46-55      ☐ None of your business  
☐ 26-35      ☐ 56-65  
☐ 36-45      ☐ 65-above

2. What is your present level of education?

- ☐ High school      ☐ College degree      ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Some college      ☐ Postgraduate

3. How many years have you been married?

- ☐ 0-5      ☐ 11-20      ☐ 31-50  
☐ 6-10      ☐ 21-30      ☐ Too many

4. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_ What are their ages? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you own your own home or live in a church parsonage? \_\_\_\_\_ Own home      \_\_\_\_\_ Parsonage

6. Please check the following roles and responsibilities which you are currently holding in the church:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SS Teacher       | <input type="checkbox"/> Missionary president       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pianist          | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's church director |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir member     | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian Life director    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Janitor          | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Committee           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir director   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organist         |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church secretary |   |

7. Does your local congregation negatively compare you to former pastors' wives?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No

8. Do you feel competent in counseling other women in the church? ☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ Sometimes

9. Do you consider yourself a spiritual leader in your church? ☐ Yes      ☐ No

10. How many nights a week do you spend together as a family? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Is loneliness a problem for you?

- ☐ Seldom      ☐ Often      ☐ Always      ☐ Never

12. What effect has the Women's Liberation Movement had on today's evangelical Christian woman?

- ☐ Positive      ☐ Negative      ☐ No effect  
☐ Undecided

13. Do you see yourself as more than 15 pounds over or under your ideal weight? ☐ No      ☐ Yes (Over) (Under)

14. How many women do you presently consider as close, personal friends? \_\_\_\_\_

15. How many of these women are in your local congregation? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Do you work outside the home? ☐ Yes  
☐ No

17. If you answered yes to No. 16, is your work full time,

part time, or volunteer? ☐ full time      ☐ part time  
☐ Volunteer

18. What are your reasons for working? ☐ personal fulfillment      ☐ We need the income      ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

19. How does your local congregation feel about a working pastor's wife? ☐ Supportive      ☐ Understanding      ☐ Indifferent      ☐ Strongly opposed.

20. What is the greatest liability of the working minister's wife? \_\_\_\_\_

21. What is the greatest asset of the working minister's wife? \_\_\_\_\_

22. To whom do you go with your problems? \_\_\_\_\_

23. What is the most fulfilling aspect of your role as a pastor's wife? \_\_\_\_\_

24. What do you find most difficult about your role as a pastor's wife? \_\_\_\_\_

25. What is the biggest stumbling block to a healthy relationship with your husband? \_\_\_\_\_

26. If you could, what about your life would you most like to change? \_\_\_\_\_

27. What do you consider the greatest need or concern of the pastor's wife that is NOT being met or addressed today? \_\_\_\_\_

28. How old is your husband?

- ☐ 19-25      ☐ 36-45      ☐ 56-65  
☐ 26-35      ☐ 46-55      ☐ 65-above

29. What is his present level of education?

- ☐ High school      ☐ College degree      ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Some college      ☐ Postgraduate

30. How many years has he been active in the ministry?

- ☐ 0-5      ☐ 11-20      ☐ 31-50  
☐ 6-10      ☐ 21-30      ☐ 51 or above

31. What is the size of your current congregation?

- ☐ 1-35      ☐ 100-150      ☐ 300-500  
☐ 35-50      ☐ 150-200      ☐ 500-1,000  
☐ 50-100      ☐ 200-300      ☐ 1,000-above

32. What district or region of the country is your husband currently serving? \_\_\_\_\_

33. Which setting most accurately describes your church's location? ☐ Rural      ☐ Suburban  
☐ City

THANKS for your help! Now, just tear this out and address it to: Editor, the *Preacher's Magazine*, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. We'll let you know the results as soon as possible.



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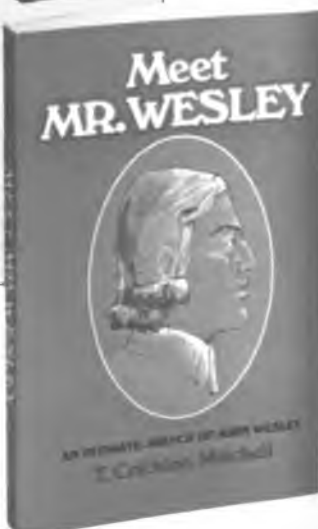
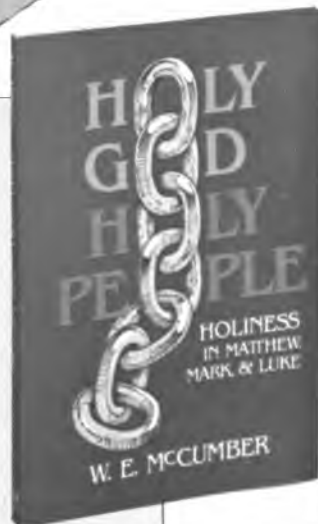
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