

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE



MAY 24 '88

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SUITABLE FOR FRAMING

The world has tried in two ways to get rid of Jesus: first, by crucifying Him, and second, by worshiping Him. The first did not succeed. . . . The Cross did not crush—it lifted Him.

The world, therefore, turned to the second, far more subtle and fatal way of disposing of great spiritual leadership—it worshiped Him. Throughout history it has been true that when a spiritual leader has been too powerful to be crushed by opposition there has been still another way to escape his moral insights and his ethical demands, and that is to worship him. To dress him up in elaborate, metaphysical creeds, hide his too-piercing eyes in the smoke of sacramental adoration, build beautiful sanctuaries where his challenging social ideals may fade out in vague mysticism, get him off somewhere on a high altar, pray to him, sing to him, do anything for him rather than let him get back again where he started, walking the common ways of men and talking about how to live—that always has been the most successful way of getting rid of Jesus. . . .

Little people like extravagant praise, adoration, flattery. Little people push their egos to the front, claiming attention and wanting to be idolized; but great personalities are never like that. When a capacious soul comes, standing for something that he cares so much about he will die for it on Calvary, you cannot flatter Him. . . . He does not want His ego idolized; He wants His cause supported.

—Harry Emerson Fosdick
"The Peril of Worshiping Jesus"

CLAUQUE

by Wesley Tracy

An editorial, like a sermon, should look more like a tree than a brush pile. But this one resembles the latter. No matter how long I played mental tug-of-war with the ingredients, no matter where I lugged the notes in my briefcase, no creative flash occurred that would organize the thoughts. Even toying with "clique and cla-que" failed.

It all started when I read a 55-year-old sermon by Harry Emerson Fosdick called "Six Ways to Tell Right from Wrong." Fosdick observed that "often in politics, in church life, in business, in personal character we see things that remind us of a cla-que at the theater hired to applaud a play!"¹ I began to think about claques and claquishness in the church. What in church life today resembles those hired handclappers who cheer for pay even if the performance is lousy?

The first thing I thought of was the "designated seekers" in evangelistic services, particularly the televised ones. It looks pretty claquish to me when the claqueurs begin moving toward the altar from "all over the house. They're coming, they're coming," the evangelist crows. Of course they are coming; the evangelist has pre-arranged it. The claqueurs move forward to induce a flow toward the front, which is supposed to make it easier for sinners to step out and come forward. The surging cla-que also looks good on the TV camera. Can you imagine Jesus using the apostles as a cla-que of designated seekers?

I don't know where to go from here with this thought. Therefore, nearly transitionless, I proceed to the next limb in this brush pile. Have you ever noticed that wherever a powerful church leader goes, he seems to be swarmed by self-seeking, servile, flattering sycophants? They bow and scrape and say, "That was just what we needed," even if the powerful leader's sermon was a theological and syntactical quagmire. Most high-ranking church leaders soon learn to brace themselves for the advance of the cla-que at every stop. A few get conditioned to the clatter of the cla-que, learn to love it, and live

on it. But I have never been a powerful church leader, so I have no more to say on this issue.

Here's another branch in this brush pile. It occurs to me (it should, for Fosdick points it out in the sermon that started all this) that a cla-que at the theater can get away with its false praise only as long as the public does not know the cheering is from claqueurs. Fosdick goes on to say that one way to determine right from wrong is to submit the matter at hand to the publicity test. Does your plan depend on secrecy for success? Strip your decision of secrecy; what if everybody knew just what you are doing? Fosdick claims that the publicity test is "searching and healthy."

Do not some church goings-on depend on left-handed secrecy just like the palm pounders in the cla-que at the theater? What about statistical reports twisted to make costly losses sound like gains? What if you didn't have to read nine different pages of the Ways and Means report to determine what amounts of money were going into what funds and pockets? What if all "salary and cash benefits" reports were truly true? What about all these resignations "for health reasons" (that someone was sick of something is certain)?

I am not calling for the church to do all her dirty laundry in public and thus bring unnecessary embarrassment to those who have fallen or failed. But do we not need to cleanse ourselves of claquishness by way of the publicity test?

Phillips Brooks coached us, "To keep clear of concealment, to keep clear of the need of concealment, to do nothing which [one] might not do out on the middle of Boston Common at noonday . . ."² Brooks goes on to say, "It is an awful hour when the first necessity of hiding anything comes. . . . When there are questions to be feared and eyes to be avoided and subjects which must not be touched, then the bloom of life is gone. Put off that day . . . put it off forever if you can."³

Consider this stick in the brush pile. Claquishness can raise itself on one cynical elbow and smirk at our wor-

(Continued on p. 28)

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Wesley Tracy
Editor

Mark D. Marvin
Assistant Editor

Consulting Editors

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*Director of the Division of
Church Growth
Church of the Nazarene*

Wilbur Brannon
*Director of Pastoral
Ministries
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Wayne E. Caldwell
*General Editor
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R. Donald Shafer
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SERMONS TO PREACHERS

Ministers like you are constantly preparing and delivering sermons, to the point of being intellectually and physically drained. Therefore, for your benefit and enrichment, we offer three "sermons to preachers" by three outstanding preachers in the holiness movement: Earle L. Wilson, Alex R. G. Deasley, and William M. Greathouse. We hope these sermons both challenge and encourage you.

An ordination message from Mark 3:6-15

THE MINISTER'S CALL TO A WALK AND A WORK

by Earle L. Wilson

General Superintendent, The Wesleyan Church

The Lord's ordaining of the Twelve marks an epoch in the development of His work. Some see Christ's selection of the Twelve as a master stroke of organization and administration, contributing largely to the success of His kingdom work. Others see it as an endowment of the Twelve with supernatural powers, automatically transferred to their successors, and ultimately to us. But there's no hint of either theory in Mark's statement. He gives three reasons why Christ ordained these 12; three reasons why He ordains us today. And those three reasons are summed up in three words. The first word is **companionship**. In verse 14, He called, or ordained, them that they might be with Him. The second word is **commission**. He called them (v. 14) that He might send them forth to preach. The third word is **compassion**. He ordained them in verse 15 to do works of mercy and healing, epitomized by delivering those oppressed by all sorts of evils. Here, then, are the three reasons for our ordination.

COMPANIONSHIP

God ordains you first of all for companionship—that you might be with Him. What a marvelous revelation! Stay with that thought for a little while, of our Lord needing and wishing the companionship of people. He, who could command angels to come and minister to Him, was cheered, helped, soothed, and strengthened by the imperfect sympathy and unintelligent love of these humble adherents. Who can fail to hear how He hungered for human companionship when He said, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations" (Luke 22:28). And we'll never forget the Master's plaintive cry in the Garden, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" (Matt. 26:40). It remains true that companionship with Christ is our first priority in our ministry and in our ordination. We must be *with* Christ long before we can ever go forth effectively *for* Christ. For whatever ministry we have, that ministry must originate out of our continual companionship with Jesus Christ. The perpetual temptation of the ministry is to let the ministry, the work, take priority over our personal walk with the Master.

There's so much pressure to put the work first. Somehow we are tempted to move from serving Him in *His* resources, gained from intimacy with Him, to a ministry that arises from our own abilities and resources alone. It's terribly important that we develop daily devotional habits. That will keep Him central in our lives and maintain a perpetual influx of His light and power, our only source of sufficiency. Your calling is first, simply to know Him, to be with Him, and to have communion with Him every day. For mark

it, you will lose the joy, the excitement, and the drama of the ministry if you lose the sense of Christ's presence amid the pressure of your work.

We have a plethora of books telling us how to deal with ministerial burnout. It's understandable why these books were written. This work can burn one out and tear one apart. But the minister's common mistake is to turn to his work to relieve ministerial pressure rather than to seek Christ's presence for restoration and needed grace. Our work, our ministry, must grow out of our time spent with Him. For the freshness, the wonder, and the joy of His presence are what make pressures bearable.

I confess, it took me some years in the ministry to learn that. There was always so much to do, so many calls to make. I was only 21 years old when I took my first church. It didn't matter how often I called on those people, it was never enough. I didn't understand that. I saw them Sunday morning. I saw most of them Sunday and Wednesday nights. Frankly, that was enough for me. But it wasn't enough for them! I felt pressured by all those pastoral calls. And then it was so difficult, and it took so long, to prepare even *one* sermon. There were two to prepare, as well as a prayer meeting Bible study. And amid all the pressure of the work, I discovered something. My *service* for Christ was taking priority over the *presence* of Christ. That's the perpetual temptation of the ministry. And I had to ask the Lord to forgive me for putting my *work*—and it was good work; it was my calling; it was ministerial work—before my *walk*, my ministry before my Master, my preaching before His presence. And I learned the secret. He called me first of all, not to preach, not to build a great church, but to be with Him, for companionship. And if I never preach again, my joy, my fulfillment, is not my service for Him. My joy, my fulfillment, is *Him*.

We sing it, don't we? We pray it as well:

*O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free.*

*Tell me Thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.*

*Teach me Thy patience! still with Thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong.*

*In hope that sends a shining ray
Far down the future's broadening way,
In peace that only Thou canst give,
With Thee, O Master, let me live.*

—WASHINGTON GLADDEN

Your first calling is companionship. He called the Twelve that they might be with Him.

COMMISSION

The second word of our calling is commission. He called them in verse 14 that He might send them forth to preach. Now you see the sequence. The preaching, the fulfillment of our commission, arises out of our being with Him. It's not difficult to tell people about Him with warmth and passion, enthusiasm and fervor, because we know Him so well; we're with Him so much.

In early Methodism, no preacher received a salary.

There are some in the church who think times haven't changed much at that point. But the Methodists made a distinction between salary and what they called "pastoral support." "It's not salary. Don't call it a salary," they said. "It's pastoral support." Why not call it a salary? Because, said the early Methodists, the preacher is not a hireling. He doesn't work for the people; he works for God. And the way he works for God is by ministering to the people. There may be some truth in maintaining that distinction, for after all, a pastor may be a shepherd, but he's not a sheepdog. And there is a difference.

There are two stories from Dr. John R. Church's life that illustrate that the fulfilling of our ministry, our ordination, our commission, arises out of our being with Him. Dr. Dennis Kinlaw relates these stories in his book *Preaching in the Spirit*.

Dr. Church said the first sermon he ever preached had 36 points to it. When he got up to preach, he couldn't remember a single point. His mind was a complete blank. Embarrassed, he sat down in humiliation. It was in a little country church in North Carolina, and he got out the door as quickly as he could. He didn't want to greet or be greeted by anybody. He walked—almost ran—down the little road from the church. His father finally caught up with him, and they walked in silence for a while. When his father finally broke the silence after several minutes, he said, "Son, God knows you can't preach. I know you can't preach, and now the whole community knows you can't preach."

Dr. Church looked back at his father and sobbed. After a while he said, "Dad, I'm sure you know I can't preach, and I know I can't preach, and the church knows I can't. But if God knows I can't preach, why doesn't He lift this preaching burden from me? Dad, whether I *can* preach or not, I *have* to preach!"

Dr. Church says now, "I learned a secret early in my ministry that whatever I did by way of attempting to preach or fulfilling my calling, I was not going to do it for the people, I wasn't going to do it for my dad, and I wasn't even going to do it for myself. I was simply going to do everything I did for the Lord. It was toward Him and for Him. He owned me. I was going to serve Him, and I was going to fulfill my ministry for Him no matter how poor it was. And I would have to leave it up to Him to make something out of my poor efforts." That's what lends dignity to our ministry.

Later in his life, Dr. Church was invited to preach the

Earle L. Wilson



commencement message at Asbury College. He took the invitation seriously and prepared diligently. He said, "The place was packed. Excitement was high. God was with me, and I really soared. I had that congregation in the palm of my hand. I could make them laugh, I could make them cry, I could move them as I would. I could do anything I wanted with them. They were mine."

Suddenly, a cold chill came over him. He closed the service as quickly as he could and went to his room. He got on his knees and said, "God, if You'll ever forgive me, I'll never be guilty of that again."

For years afterward he met people who said, "Dr. Church, do you remember when you were at Asbury Commencement? I have never heard such oratory, such eloquence. I've never been so captivated by a preacher. It was marvelous." But none of them could recall either the text or the topic of that sermon. All they could recall was the oratory.

Most of us would have walked away from a service like that saying, "I certainly did well, God. You ought to be pleased with me today." But Dr. Church went away from that service repentant. No one else in the crowd knew what was happening, but he knew. He went to his room and asked God's forgiveness for what the congregation thought was magnificent. Sensitivity to the Spirit of Christ caused him to understand what it meant to serve Christ in our ministry—to work for Christ, not impress people. It's that relationship that gives dignity and integrity to our message. Christ does not call us to glorify us. Christ did not call us to make our personalities shining lights around this world. Christ called us because He has a world to save, and He has nobody else to use to save it but us.

"It's a wonderful thing to know," said Dr. Kinlaw, "that Jesus Christ is, by His Spirit, at work in the preaching event, whether we sense He's at work in it or not."

Are you called to preach? Your number one priority is to get close to Him and stay close to Him. Find out where He is and what He's doing. Find out what He hates in this world, and you hate it too. Find out what He loves in this world, and you love it too. Find out what His passion is in this world. Find out where He's coming from, and let your life and your ministry grow out of that. That's what makes preaching fruitful and ministry effective.

COMPASSION

He ordained 12, that they might be with Him, that He might send them forth, and third, that they might do works of mercy. He ordained them to bring healing and health, and to deliver people from all sorts of demons that plagued them. The miracle-working power is important, but it is least important. Peter understood that better than some of his successors. In Acts, he made the qualification of being with Jesus first, and even witness of the Resurrection second.

Ian MacClaren, that great British preacher, was speaking to a group of American ministerial students. His own ministry had been, from all appearances, a brilliantly successful one in Septum Park. He had built one of the greatest churches of the Presbyterian order. He had a loyal and devoted people. They hung on every word he had to say. And this student in America asked him, if he had his life and ministry to live over again, what

would be its characteristic tone. MacClaren said, "If I had my life and ministry to live over again, I would make my ministry more a healing, helpful, comforting ministry."

That is why He called us. To help people, not to rail at them; to bring people to the Master, not to put them down. The Bible is not primarily a book about sin; it is primarily a book about grace. It tells us sin does abound, but, blessed be God, grace does much more abound!

I'm not making light of the value of intellectual discipline. I've spent too many years in higher education to do that. But after years of ministry and reflection, I've concluded that the ministerial gift we ought to covet most is the ability to comfort the man or woman who has breaking sorrows to bear, that their faith will not fail them. We ought to covet the ability to strengthen the broken person to face temptations with some hope of triumph. We ought to covet the ability to say some word that will help a man to preserve his trust in the love of God amid perplexing circumstances. We ought to covet the ability to establish the hope of the dying so that they can walk through "the valley of the shadow" without fear because they know, even when life closes in around them, that the Lord their God is with them.

If your ministry grows out of your walking often and long with the Master, you'll be tender in spirit. You'll even preach on the stern truths of the Word of God, those frankly threatening passages, with tenderness. For God has called you to be a hope-bringer, a help-bringer, an inspiring minister. People ought to be able to say as they leave our congregations on any given Sunday, "I know it's tough, and I know the pressures are closing in. I know there are temptations, and I know sin is horrible, and I know life and eternity may be threatening. But thank God, Jesus came onto this world's scene one day, and He's still alive. And as long as He is alive, there's hope and help, and there's a way out and a way up!"

What will that do for our congregations, our churches, and the work of Christ around the world? And when it's asked of mankind, "Art thou weary, art thou languid, / Art thou sore distressed?" we ought to be able to say to them in Christ's name, "Come to Me, and, coming, / Be at rest." And if they come, we ought to be able to assure them that sorrow and sadness shall flee away, and He'll give us joy for mourning.

When sophisticated Western man is telling our world that we are destined for annihilation, and when superstitious Eastern man is saying we're destined to some shabby reincarnation, we ought to be saying helpfully and hopefully to people, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). And that's hope. That's help. That's comfort. That's deliverance from the demons that plague humanity. And that's the message.

He ordained 12 (1) that they might be with Him. Companionship is first. (2) That He might send them forth to preach. The commission is second. And (3) that they might bring help, comfort, and healing. Miracle-working power is third.

That's why He called them. That's why He commissioned them. And that is why He calls and ordains us. May God bless His Word and your ministry that arises out of your walk with Him.

A sermon delivered to the theological students at Nazarene Theological Seminary

HOW TO SERVE WITHOUT LOSING HEART

by Alex R. G. Deasley

Professor of New Testament, Nazarene Theological Seminary

Text: *Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. . . . But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. . . . So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal (2 Cor. 4:1, 7-10, 16-18, RSV).*

Paul and the Corinthians seem to have been almost constantly at cross-purposes. We need not take the time here to trace the history of their troubled relationship. Much of it is beyond our power to reconstruct anyway. We only know that in regard to most of the things that matter about the gospel and the proclamation of the gospel, the Corinthians and Paul seemed to see things differently.

The Corinthians thought that eloquence was of the first importance. Paul thought that truth was primary. They thought that high visibility was the prime requisite in the ministry of the gospel. Paul believed that humility and the acceptance of humiliation enjoyed that priority. They thought that dramatic gifts of leadership and not least a dominating ego were indispensable for the proclamation of the Word. Paul believed that the spirit of servanthood was what mattered most. And in the chapters of the Second Epistle preceding that from which the text is taken, it is, I think, fairly clear that their disagreement had been continuing along the same lines. Even a cursory review is sufficient to indicate this.

Paul had said he would visit them, and then he did not show. So they said, "We do not know when this man means 'yes' and when he means 'no,' because it seems as though when he says 'yes' he means 'no,' and when he says 'no' he means 'yes.'" He had apparently written to them defending his behavior. And they said, "This is a defensive individual, someone who is inwardly insecure. How can he ever be a leader in the Church of God?" They said, "He is a man who doctors his message in order to suit his audience. How can we ever see in him a model of what a Christian preacher is supposed to be?" They had concluded that he was a vacillator, that he was a faint-heart, that he was insecure, that he was someone who could not be depended on.

That or something like it seems to be the background of this chapter in which Paul apparently is defending himself against the charge of being faint-hearted or of losing heart. Indeed it is that phrase that acts as a kind of inclusion for 2 Corinthians chapter 4. He says in the first verse, "Having this ministry by the mercy of God,



Alex R. G. Deasley

we do not lose heart," or we do not "faint" (KJV). Again, toward the end, in verse 16, he repeats that same contention, "So we do not faint, so we do not lose heart." Within that framework he spells out some of the reasons why as a Christian preacher, as a Christian apostle, he does not in fact lose heart in the ministry of the Word. I think it might be helpful to us to look at these reasons, because they may have some word to speak to us also as we pursue our preparation, and as we go on from here to pursue our ministry.

To begin with, says Paul, ***we do not lose heart, although our ministry is set in a context of stress.*** "We are afflicted in every way," he writes in verse 8, "but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed." Assuredly there is stress here. Affliction, yes; and not just affliction but perplexity. Even an apostle, forsooth, at some points in his ministry was perplexed and did not know what course of action to follow or which way to turn. And beyond affliction and perplexity there are persecution and overthrow: "We are persecuted, we are struck down." Assuredly there is stress here. But equally assuredly there are strength and resilience. "We are afflicted in every way, *but not crushed*. We are perplexed, *but not driven to despair*. We are persecuted, *but not forsaken*; struck down, *but not destroyed*." We do not faint, although our ministry is set in a context of stress.

Indeed, Paul argues at this very point in his letter that, far from the stress that constitutes the context of his ministry being a drawback or a hindrance or a disadvantage, that stress in some sense serves as the indispensable condition of the success of his ministry. "We have this treasure in earthenware vessels for this very reason," he says, "that the transcendent power may be seen to be of God and not of us." That is to say, the stress of his ministry is so overwhelming that his endurance itself signals to people that he is not surviving because of his own resources; he is surviving because of the power of God that is at work within him.

It exaggerates nothing to say that, wherever Christian ministry has been truly Christian, it has been because it perceived and embraced the meaning of service here exemplified by Paul. Where acclaim and approval and aggrandizement have been coveted and pursued as the unmistakable symbols of victory and success, there the Church has been marching to a Corinthian drumbeat. On the other hand, where the Church has not shrunk from pain and stress, anguish and humiliation, but rather has embraced these in the firm assurance that God would use adversity as the background for the display of His triumphant power, there the Church has been following in the footsteps of its Lord and of His servant Paul.

Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh earl of Shaftesbury, 19-century English evangelical and social reformer, stands out as a shining example. Defeated yet again in

the House of Lords over a law to improve the condition of the poor, he confided his feelings to his diary the following day, finding his mainstay and support in the words of this very passage. "I was defeated last night," he wrote; "cast down, but not destroyed. The stillest, darkest hour is just before the dawn. Righteousness will prevail." To which we may add some words of one of the last century's missionary pioneers and heroes, James Hudson Taylor. Writing from the thick of his unspeakable tribulations in China, he offered the piercing and sober counsel: "It does not matter how great the pressure is, it only matters where the pressure lies—whether it comes between you and God, or whether it presses you near and ever nearer to His heart of love."

"We do not lose heart," Paul says, "although our ministry is set in a context of stress."

But now come further and notice the next profound and profoundly important step that Paul takes in his argument. ***We do not lose heart, Paul says, because our ministry is an extension of the ministry of Christ.*** Our ministry is an extension of the ministry of Christ! Listen to the 9th through the 11th verses. "We are struck down," he says, "but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh." There is a specific reason as to why Paul remains strong amid stress. It is not that he had a cast-iron constitution. It is not that he had a stout nervous system above the average. It is not that he was naturally tough. That is not the reason Paul gives at all. The reason he gives as to why he serves without losing heart is that his ministry is spiritually linked with the ministry of Christ: "always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies."

According to Paul, the Christian preacher does not simply stand *for* Christ; the Christian preacher stands *in* Christ. Indeed, Paul goes further and affirms that, in a profound sense, Christ stands in the preacher, so that not only the preacher's achievements but also his failures, not only his successes but also his reverses are part of his discharging of the role of serving not merely as Christ's representative but as Christ's limbs in his individual situation.

The agony and pain of ministry neither originate with, nor are they borne by, the Christian servant as a solitary individual. They are part of "the dying of the Lord Jesus," as the King James Version renders it. The word translated "dying" (*nekrosis*)—used only twice by Paul, as opposed to that meaning "death" (*thanatos*), which he uses 45 times—denotes the *process* of dying as opposed to the resultant state. What Paul appears to be saying is that the anguish and agony experienced through involvement in Christian service are a participation in the suffering of Christ. Nowhere does he express that truth more stunningly than in his letter to the Colos-

sians. "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake," he tells them, "and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister" (1:24-25, RSV). The sufferings of Paul somehow are transmuted into the sufferings of Christ, and the sufferings of Christ overflow and pour into the body of Paul, who himself is an extension of the life and ministry of Christ. And in the same way that the ministry of Jesus was a ministry of death-in-life, which amazingly and miraculously was transformed into a ministry of life-in-death, so it was with the ministry of his servant Paul: "we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

So I say to you: The frustration that you feel as you have toiled and struggled in order to save the marriage of some couple in your congregation; the enervation that almost overpowers and overwhelms you as you have labored in order to save some soul from the ruination of sin; the desolation that you feel as you leave the pulpit some morning, wondering why you ever went there and almost resolving that you will never go there again: these things are not simply your burdens; they are also the dying of the Lord Jesus in you and through you, so that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in your mortal flesh. As you find in Him the experience of dying, it is also in Him that you will find the experience of the renewal of strength and life.

So this brings Paul, by a natural sequence, to his final point, namely that ***we do not lose heart because our ministry is rooted in the eternal order.*** "Though our outward nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. . . . because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal" (vv. 16, 18). The reason why Paul does not lose heart is because he has resources; he has reserves in the eternal world.

How crucially important it is to have reserves. In May 1940, six days after he became prime minister, Winston Churchill flew to Paris. Hitler's Panzer divisions were making a spearhead drive for the French capital, and Churchill flew over to see if anything could be done to avert disaster. He met with the French Cabinet. The commander in chief of the French army gave the latest information on the situation, and when he had finished, Churchill turned to him and said to him in his rather halting French: "Où est la masse de manoeuvre?": "Where are the reserves?" The French commander shrugged his shoulders and said, "Aucune": "None." And Churchill knew then that France was lost.

The Christian servant has reserves, resources, in the unseen world because he has this conviction, that the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are enduring.

There is an episode at the beginning of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, when Christian goes up to Evangelist

and asks him for directions about the way to the Celestial City. Evangelist puts an arm around Christian's shoulder, points forward into the darkness, and says to him, "Do you see yonder wicket-gate?" And Christian peers into the blackness, and says, "No, I cannot see it." Evangelist asks him to look again and says to him, "Do you see yonder light?" The context almost gives the impression that what Evangelist means is, "Do you see out there in the darkness at least some spot that is not quite as dark as all the rest?" And Christian shades his eyes and peers and focuses, and then says, "Yes, I think I see it." "Keep your eye on that light," says Evangelist to him; "that will show you the way."

I say to you this morning: Do not lose sight of the eternal horizon. Do not lose sight of the eternal boundary. Do not lose sight of the eternal dimension. That and only that will show you the way. Busyness will stifle it. Self-interest will suffocate it. Cynicism will kill it stone dead. But an ear that is alert to the trumpet that sounds from the hid battlements of eternity and an eye that is fastened and focused on the eternal horizon—these are the things that will cause the most leaden landscape of earth to be transfigured and illuminated with the light of heaven itself.

We need not faint despite the pressure. We follow in the steps of Moses who "considered abuse suffered for the Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt . . . for he endured as seeing him who is invisible" (Heb. 11:26-27, RSV). We follow in the steps of Jesus himself "who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (12:2, RSV). And we follow in the steps of Christ's servant Paul, who did not lose heart, although his ministry was set in a context of stress; who did not lose heart because his ministry was an extension of the ministry of Christ; who did not lose heart because his ministry was rooted in the eternal order.

As so often, Charles Wesley has said it all.

*Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go
My daily labour to pursue;
Thee, only Thee, resolved to know
In all I think or speak or do.*

*The task Thy wisdom hath assigned
O let me cheerfully fulfill;
In all my works Thy presence find,
And prove Thy good and perfect will.*

*Give me to bear Thy easy yoke,
And every moment watch and pray;
And still to things eternal look,
And hasten to Thy glorious day.*

*For Thee delightfully employ
Whate'er Thy bounteous grace hath given;
And run my course with even joy,
And closely walk with Thee to heaven.*

"So we do not lose heart."



For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline (2 Tim. 1:6-7, NIV).

THE PROMISE OF ORDINATION

by William M. Greathouse
General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene

Today, perhaps as never before, it is imperative for Christ's ministers to live holy lives. Recent scandals have raised serious questions concerning the integrity of the Christian ministry. We know that all Christians are called to be holy as God is holy. However, as ordained ministers, we are expected to set an example in holiness, "in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12, NIV)—that is, to *represent Christ in His holiness* before the Church and the world.

By the laying on of hands we have likewise been set apart to *represent ministry*. Of course, all Christians are called to a general ministry. "To each" of us, to every member of Christ's Body, "is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7, RSV). But the risen Christ has given to the Church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers "to prepare [all] God's people for works of service" (Eph. 4:7-12, NIV). This preparation of God's people for ministry includes training and equipping them, but also *modeling* Christ's ministry before them. We are ordained to *re-present* Christ's full-orbed ministry before the Church and the world.

The traditional distinction between clergy and laity is a fact with which we must reckon, despite all our preachments that every Christian is a minister of Christ. I fear that in most congregations the pastor is still viewed as "the minister." In an effort to overcome this vestige of medieval clericalism, some pastors have gone to an unscriptural extreme. They see their role as simply that of equipping the saints for ministry, to the abandonment of pastoral calling and pastoral care. This is as surely a distortion of New Testament ministry as clericalism. There is no such thing as ministry by proxy. By the laying

on of hands we have been set apart to represent Christ's ministry in its *totality*. As pastors under the Chief Shepherd, we must model pastoral care so that the entire Body becomes a pastoral force. We ourselves must "do the work of an evangelist," as Paul admonished Timothy (2 Tim. 4:5), if we expect our people to do that work. We must be *vicars of Christ*, saying with Paul, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, NIV). We are to embody Christ's *full* ministry for the Church and the world.

All Christians are "called-out ones." But from among the *ekklesia* Christ calls His representative ministers, saying, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16). No one



William M. Greathouse

dare take this apostolic ministry upon himself. And anyone who is truly called identifies with Paul's sense of unworthiness when he penned, "To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8, RSV). "Who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:16). Only those whom the sovereign Lord has called and ordained.

It is reassuring to realize that matching the awesome responsibility that is ours as Christ's vicars, we have the promise of a special gifting of the Spirit signed and sealed by ordination. "I remind you," Paul wrote his ordinand Timothy, "to fan into flame *the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands*. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline" (italics added).

Although not a strict New Testament sacrament, like baptism and the Lord's Supper (since it does not picture the benefits of Christ's atonement), ordination is unquestionably sacramental in character. It is the visible promise of a special gift of the Spirit for the ordinand. *As baptism is a symbol of the ordinary ministry Christ gives all believers, ordination is a symbol of the representative ministry He gives us as successors to the apostles.*

We modern sons and daughters of the Enlightenment find it difficult to enter fully into the sacramental character of biblical religion. For us, symbols tend to be only empty signs divorced from reality; for the apostles and New Testament believers, symbols were the mode of entrance into the reality they signified. My text therefore means that Paul's hands placed on Timothy's head in ordination were a promise to him of a spirit of power, love, and self-mastery for his ministry, to be realized by keeping the gift of the Spirit fanned into flame through prayer, faith, and obedient servanthood.

I. THE PROMISE OF POWER

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a *spirit of power* . . ."

Apparently Timothy suffered from a natural timidity, with which some of us can readily identify. Speaking for myself, I have never had what some call "preacher's itch." From childhood I have struggled with a spirit of timidity. To this day I tend to shrink from the limelight, and, to quote a friend of mine, "Sometimes when I stand up, my mind sits down!" But *God* did not give me this craven spirit; it is a weakness of nature He will help me overcome. He promises every ordinand "a spirit of power," a divine enablement to speak His Word with authority. The gift of the Spirit in ordination is the promise that when we as His spokespersons stand up to preach, we may experience the "unction from the Holy One" (1 John 2:20), making us "the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). To preach is not merely to "share" (a much-overworked word these days!); it is to *proclaim* "the word of God [which] is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, . . . and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). It is to *herald* the gospel, which is "the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith" (Rom. 1:16, RSV). It is to "preach Christ crucified, . . . Christ the power of God and the

wisdom of God. . . the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is greater than man's [boasted power]" (1 Cor. 1:23-25, NIV).

Paul's word for "power" is *dunamis*, from *dunamai*, which means "I am able." Power has been correctly defined as the ability to achieve purpose. Spiritual power means *adequacy in God*. "Not that we are . . . sufficient . . . of ourselves . . . to claim . . . anything as coming from us; but our . . . sufficiency [is] from God . . . Who has qualified us . . . as ministers . . . of a new covenant" (2 Cor. 3:5-6, Amp.). This adequacy includes power to carry out any and every assignment God gives us as new covenant ministers, deacons as well as elders. "I can do all things in him who strengthens (*endunamou*) me" (Phil. 4:13, RSV).

II. THE PROMISE OF LOVE

The power of God that is promised us is the authority of Him who said to His apostles, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:42-45, NIV). The power of the Spirit is the power of agape love.

Remember, the power of God is not the display of resplendent glory; it is the power of Christ crucified. That power is displayed in us, not simply in our preaching, but in our *spirits*. When the Spirit truly abides in us and anoints us, He makes us Christlike in love. That love is our most powerful weapon for ministry.

To the Corinthians who had a worldly understanding of spiritual power, which spotlights human personality rather than Christ, Paul wrote, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails" (1 Cor. 13:4-8, NIV). That is the love Christ promises you and me for the often disagreeable assignments and difficult personalities we encounter in our ministry.

Read again, therefore, the admonition and promise of my text: "I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, . . . *a spirit . . . of love*. . . ." I can assure you that if you have been truly "crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20) and maintain a daily dependence on Him as your life and your holiness, and if you keep the flame of the Spirit aglow in your bosom through prayer, God will give you in every circumstance "a spirit of love" that will make you invincible and undefeatable!

III. THE PROMISE OF SELF-MASTERY

Paul's word here is the difficult term *sōphronismos*, which the King James Version translates "a sound mind"; the *Revised Standard Version*, "self-control"; and the *New International Version*, "self-discipline." It is the promise of *self-mastery* through the indwelling Spirit. No one is prepared to take oversight in the Church of God who does not himself enjoy self-mastery through the Spirit. But thank God! "The fruit of the Spirit is . . . self-

(Continued on p. 13)

The Ministry of Photography

Is there someone in your church who enjoys photography? This can be used as an effective ministry. Anyone willing to serve as the church photographer can be given the following job description:

1. Have your camera at all church services and functions.
2. Take individual pictures at the following events and give those involved a copy:
 - a. Baby dedications
 - b. A baby's first Sunday at church
 - c. Church membership
 - d. Baptism
3. A month before the end of each church year, take a picture of the following individuals functioning in their places of service:
 - a. Organist
 - b. Pianist
 - c. Choir director and members
 - d. Sunday School teachers
 - e. Board members
 - f. Caravan workers
 - g. Ushers
 - h. Greeters(These will be included in a thank-you letter from the pastor.)
4. Take pictures of church functions that can be used for publicity purposes (newsletter, fliers, posters).
5. Be willing to take slides for use at programs as requested (VBS, Baby Day, Children's Day, Christmas, Easter).

A church photographer may choose to fund his ministry personally. Or perhaps it will be necessary to budget this important expenditure each year.

—Betty B. Robertson
St. Louis, Mo.

Looking Forward to Wednesday

"We have to wolf down dinner to get to church by seven." "I'm sorry we never make it to Wednesday night Bible study; but I don't get out of traffic till 6:30, and by the time dinner is over, it's too late to come." These were the type of comments my pastor was hearing two years ago. Midweek Bible study attendance ran between 1 and 10 people.

Now we average over 40 every week. Mothers say, "It's my favorite night of the week. It's such a relief not to have to

fix dinner!" For my husband and me, Wednesday night is a dinner date, and a bargain at only \$4.00.

Why has the midweek service become such a hit? We have dinner together every Wednesday night. From 6:30 to 7:30 we eat together in the fellowship hall, like one big, happy family. From 7:30 to 9 o'clock, we split up into age and interest categories for Bible study.

Would this new tradition be a good idea for your congregation? Ask yourself these questions: Is your Wednesday night attendance dwindling? Is your congregation composed primarily of busy, young families? Do many of your members have a long commute? Do you have kitchen facilities available?

Food preparation need not be a burden on any one individual. If the church secretary posts a sign-up sheet, a different family can take that responsibility each week. For us, it works out to about a two-month rotation.

The "family of the week" shops, prepares the meal, and is reimbursed for their expenses. The charge for dinner is \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children. This usually covers all costs, often with money left over.

The dinner is set up buffet style. We've had everything from enchiladas to giant salad bars. During the summer we had frequent barbecues. One night, for a special dessert, we made a 10-foot-long banana split!

After the meal, everyone pitches in for a quick cleanup. We use paper plates and cups to make the task easy.

Mealtimes are conversation times. Problems and triumphs are shared. One evening I mentioned that I didn't like staying alone while my husband was out of town. I promptly got three offers of a bed for the night. Work difficulties are discussed, and so are children and discipline problems. Prayer is requested and answered prayer is praised.

True Christian fellowship is evident in this intimate setting as it often cannot be in the more formal Sunday service. We see people as they really are, and learn to accept each other. We are able to admonish and encourage each other informally.

After dinner and cleanup, the Bible study time has something for everyone.

The smallest children are cared for in the nursery. The older children go to their club meeting, where they earn badges and work on crafts.

The adults usually have two or three electives to choose from. Last quarter we had a choice between a study of James or the "Happy Marriage" class. This summer we alternated between James Dobson's *Focus on the Family* and volleyball games. Members who prefer not to come for dinner are welcome to come just for the study.

Our unusual midweek tradition evolved to meet the needs of a modern congregation. It provides family time, flexibility, and variety. It combines opportunities for developing friendships and studying the Scriptures. And now we look forward to Wednesday nights.

—Kristi G. Streiffert
Joshua, Tex.

The Ministry of Print

Several years ago our church began a library with the tithe from an inheritance received by one of our members. It grew rapidly as people donated new and old books, but we didn't have a lot of avid readers in our small congregation. We decided to add a line in our Sunday morning worship bulletin and, with the pastor's consent, are now giving from three to five minutes to the "Ministry of Print" to give stimulating book reviews to whet the appetites of readers. The reviewer then asks anyone interested in reading the book to ask for it after the service. Our books are getting much better circulation.

An interesting sidelight: One sharp young couple, new in our city, recently said that the thing that tipped their decision to attend our church instead of two others they were considering was the Ministry of Print. They wanted, they said, to be part of a church interested in what was being said and done in the Church as well as in the world.

Ministry of Print simply follows the format of our bulletin, which lists also the Ministry of Music, Ministry of Tithes and Offerings, Ministry of the Word, and so on.

—Nina Beegle

For Labor Day Sunday

Three months before Labor Day my husband and I took our 35-mm. camera

and clipboard and headed for the job market. Our objective was to visit every member and regular attender of our church at their jobs.

We obtained permission where needed and notified each one of the day we would be stopping by to see him.

After taking a couple of photos of each parishioner in his work setting, we interviewed him. We asked:

1. How long have you worked here?
2. What do you like best about your job?
3. What do you like least about your job?
4. How are you able to minister for the Lord in this setting?

We visited a letter carrier, a farmer in his combine, an electrician, a waitress, a secretary, a heavy equipment operator, a store clerk, a potato processing plant worker, a milk distributor, and others.

We also photographed and interviewed a housewife and a retired person to represent those areas of responsibility.

On the Sunday evening before Labor Day we showed the slides and read the responses from the interviews.

Many said they enjoyed the service. We certainly enjoyed the visits. They helped us to better understand our congregation. We have been able to minister to our people more effectively by knowing their job situations.

—Elaine Cunningham
Naches, Wash.

Dedication Ceremony for a Christian Family Life Center

Act of Dedication

Pastor: To the glory of God, our Father,
by whose favor we have built this
house;

To the honor of Jesus Christ, the Son
of the Living God, our Lord and Saver;
To the praise of the Holy Spirit, the
Source of guidance and comfort,

People: We solemnly dedicate this
house.

Pastor: For worship in prayer and song;
For the ministry of the Word;
For observance of the church ordi-
nances,

People: We unitedly dedicate this
house.

Pastor: For fellowship that strengthens
the Christian's life;
For the edification of God's people,

People: We earnestly dedicate this
house.

Pastor: For the service that may be ren-
dered in meeting the spiritual, educa-
tional, and recreational needs of peo-
ple, relating God in Christ Jesus;
For the application of the whole gos-
pel to the whole man in the totality of
life's experience,

People: We wholeheartedly dedicate
this house.

Pastor: For the comfort of those who
mourn;
For help to those who are discour-
aged;
For strength to those who are tempt-
ed,

People: We sincerely dedicate this
house.

Pastor: For the release of those who are
burdened with sin;
For meaningful fulfillment for those
who are empty and searching for the
Savior,

People: We zealously dedicate this
house.

Pastor: For the building of character and
the molding of lives after the pattern
of the Lord Jesus Christ;
To maintain a school of intelligent
faith, where we may learn to give a

reason for, and know the source and
foundation of, that faith,

People: We purposefully dedicate this
house.

Pastor: For bringing to men the blessed
hope of the coming again of Christ,

People: We hopefully dedicate this
house.

Pastor: For the winning of the lost to
Christ;

For the sending forth of workers into
His ministry through His Church for
the service of all people at home and
abroad,

People: We joyously dedicate this
house.

Pastor: In loving memory of all whose
hearts and hands have served this
church in this and past generations;
with deep gratitude to all who have
made this great venture for God and
our fellowmen possible; and with high
hope for all who will enter this building
who need new and abiding life in
Jesus Christ, who seek friendship
and acceptance and the meaning-
fulness of positive Christian relation-
ships,

People: We consecrate ourselves and
dedicate this house.

Unison: Our Heavenly Father, as You
know both the thoughts and intents
of our minds, help us now to prove
the sincerity of our words by deeds
and service. Keep constantly before
us an awareness of the futility of ded-
icated buildings that do not house
dedicated people. To this end, we
have presented to You the works of
our hands that we may more ade-
quately maintain the ministry of our
Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, where
we live and to the farthest place of
our influence, through the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

—Luther S. Watson
Nashville



THE PROMISE OF ORDINATION

(Continued from p. 11)

control" (Gal. 5:22-23, RSV). To those of us who have the awesome task of guarding the deposit of Christian faith that has been entrusted to us, and of preserving the order of the church as the house of God, is given a spirit of self-mastery. As we assume oversight of "the church of God, which he bought with his own blood" (Acts 20:28, NIV), we have the promise of "the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us" (2 Tim. 1:14, NIV). "I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control" (vv. 6-7, RSV, italics added).

By comparing my text with a companion text in First Timothy, we may conclude that Timothy was ordained in a service not too different from our services of ordina-

tion: "Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you" (1 Tim. 4:14, NIV). As the apostle laid his hands on Timothy's head, he was joined by the body of elders. In this service there was also "a prophetic message," perhaps by the apostle himself, pointing out Timothy's divine calling (see 1:18).

The rite of ordination we practice today is not a man-made service; it is an apostolic service that has been perpetuated through almost 2,000 years of Christian history. It is more than an empty ritual, it is a New Testament rite full of symbolism and promise, assuring a divine adequacy for ministry to each of us upon whom the body of elders have laid their hands. Ordination is a scriptural pledge of the promise to us of a spirit of power and love and self-mastery, so that we may truly represent Christ in ministry before the Church and the world, for whom He gave His life.



MONDAY MORNING DEVOTIONS

by Reuben Welch

Associate Professor of Religion
Point Loma Nazarene College
San Diego, California

For Monday, June 6, 1988

WITHOUT GRUMBLING OR QUESTIONING

Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world (Phil. 2:14-15, RSV).

What hard words for a preacher, especially on Monday—they could wipe out half our conversation for the whole day! We could, I suppose, assume they were written for some laymen we could name and just ignore. But since we really can't do that, let's go ahead and think about these verses in relation to ourselves.

The exhortation does not stand by itself. God is at work among us, working for His good pleasure as we, with reverence and awe toward one another, work together for the health of the Body. That's why we are to "do all things without grumbling or questioning." Murmuring and arguing contradict the spirit of reverence we are to have toward one another and deny the practical working of the presence of God in our common life.

The terrible judgment of God on the Israelites for their murmuring (Exod. 16:8; Num. 11:1) came precisely because they neither revered themselves as the people of God nor trusted His presence among them, working for their good.

There are times—Monday kind of times—when we are tempted to feel that the church is full of the dumb and stupid of the world, and that whatever good work God is doing is surely going on somewhere else! The Holy Spirit would cleanse us of such self-centeredness and inspire us to reverence our people and trust the active presence

of God in His church—and stop complaining.

For Monday, June 13, 1988

CHILDREN OF GOD

Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world (Phil. 2:14-15, RSV).

I don't talk about these words again because I want to, but because it is a busy and distracting season, and we need to. And because they are very serious ones for Paul. Look at them: "blameless," "innocent," "without blemish," "shine," "lights in the world," and "children of God." They sound like part of the Sermon on the Mount.

Paul is not telling us, as we would tell our children, "Be nice. Stop arguing and complaining!" In that case we would simply add them to the list of dos and don'ts we already carry around on our backs, and go on trying to be nicer. But what if these verses describe what Christians really are to be in the world? What if they express the difference grace makes in the life of a Christian? What if they define what it means to shine in the world of darkness?

It is not that there is nothing, actually, to complain about—on the contrary! Nor are we ready to say that if we would only quit griping, everything would be all right. But our complaining and arguing are directly related to two great relationships: our relationship to God as His children, and our relationship to the crooked and perverse world as lights. God our Father is working in us. The lost world is looking at us. And we are complaining! I hear the Holy Spirit say again, "Surrender your spirit of murmuring to My cleansing presence, and let My light shine."

For Monday, June 20, 1988

LIGHTS IN THE WORLD

... blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast (as you hold out, NIV) the word of life (Phil. 2:15-16, RSV).

We live "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation"; there is no question about that. The question I have this morning is, How are we to "shine as lights" in it? It is not a confronting, guilt-producing question of the sort we can well do without on Monday. The plain fact is that we *are* lights in a dark world, not because we have any illuminating quality or ability within ourselves, but because while we live in a world of night, we reflect the light of day. We shine because the One who said we are "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14) is the One who said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

I think the phrase "holding fast the word of life" (RSV), or "as you hold out the word of life" (NIV), is helpful for us right here. Having no inner illumination of our own, we can only hold tightly to the Word of Life. Not only the Sacred Scriptures but the incarnate Word, in whom is life, is the "light of men" (John 1:4). There is no light in us; Jesus is our Light, and we are illumined as we hold fast to Him.

At the same time, we can only "shine as lights in the world" as we "hold forth" or "hold out" the Word of Life to others. Paul uses different words to say the same thing in 2 Corinthians: "For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (4:5, RSV). We shine in this dark world, not because we shine, but because Jesus illuminates us. We have light to share because we

have a word of life to "hold out," Jesus, the Light of Life.

For Monday, June 27, 1988

POURED OUT

Even if I am to be poured as a libation upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all (Phil. 2:17, RSV).

"Poured out" may be a good title for today. It describes our feelings perfectly. It also describes our ministry perfectly! If we take the New Testament seriously, we understand that ministry is, after all, slave labor. That blesses me less than it should and blesses some laymen more than it should, but it is true.

Part of what slave labor means is being "poured out" or "used up." Paul viewed his own coming death as a "drink offering," "poured out . . . on the sacrifice and service coming from" their faith (NIV). It is difficult to discern the implications of his sacrificial language. It is not difficult to understand that the pouring out of his life is related to the faith of his people. His life was no sacrifice for them; but what would their faith have been if he had held back and protected himself? What would have happened if he had exercised his apostolic prerogatives instead of engaging in slave labor in their behalf?

Well, what did happen was that he loved them and served them in total commitment, and his life was filled to overflowing with confidence and joy, even in prison! "I have run and labored, but not in vain. My life is poured out on the altar for you. But don't weep for me; rejoice and be glad with me!" I am hearing again the words of 1 John, "He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (3:16). Poured out in service—is there any other way to be filled up with joy?

For Monday, July 4, 1988

ORDINARY FREEDOM

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I may be cheered by news of you. . . . I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me (Phil. 2:19, 23, RSV).

For Americans, today is the day for politicians, picnics, and fireworks in a grand celebration of freedom. Sometimes I think our compulsive efforts to celebrate freedom are in inverse proportion to our genuine experience of it. Rather like the extravagant anniversary

gifts and parties given by unhappy marriage partners. Why isn't anything all right the way it is? We will hear again how wonderfully free we are; and I suppose we are, if you don't count AIDS and addiction and poverty and illiteracy and crime and such. But the fireworks will be the best ever, and we will feel good about ourselves for a while.

Do we do this with the gospel? Do we "sell" the Christian life by such means? How many sermons yesterday declared the great and wonderful freedom we have in Christ? And it is wonderful, but somewhere we've got to include the pains and hurts and doubts and fears that limit us. Our talk of freedom in Christ cannot ignore our bodies and our loved ones and our jobs and the ways they tether us.

There is, in fact, one thing that is all right the way it is—the Christian life. Part of the grand freedom granted us in Christ Jesus is freedom from hype, from hard sell, from exaggeration for effect. That's why I love these verses in Philipians. They tell us of Paul's ordinary freedom to do and feel ordinary things in the process of ordinary goings and comings under the extraordinary Lordship of Jesus. I hope you will read Phil. 2:19-30 and think about the ordinary character of the Christian life and the gracious gift of freedom to be ordinary.

For Monday, July 11, 1988

CHRISTIAN EMOTIONS

I hope . . . to send Timothy . . . so that I may be cheered . . . anxious . . . as soon as I see how it will go with me . . . longing for you all . . . distressed . . . he was ill, near to death. . . . sorrow upon sorrow. . . . that you may rejoice . . . and that I may be less anxious. . . . with all joy (Phil. 2:19-20, 23, 26-29, RSV).

I think I have found a definition of Christian emotions: emotions Christians have. We usually think of Christian feelings as the good ones—cheer, rejoicing, and joy. But look at the remarkable combination of feelings, bunched together in two short paragraphs. Paul hopes he can send Timothy, Paul needs cheering up, Timothy is anxious, Paul doesn't know how things will go. His friend, recovering from desperate illness, is longing for them and distressed. Paul doesn't know if he can handle any more sorrow and anxiety. And these feelings are all mixed up with rejoicing and joy. What is most remarkable of all to me is that these are the feelings of Paul and his apostolic co-workers, chosen missionaries of God, working in the power of the Holy Spirit under the Lordship of Jesus!

There is no indication that Paul is praying to be relieved of his stress or anxiety, nor any suggestion that his relationship with the Holy Spirit is not what it ought to be because he is needy and sorrowful and anxious. Brothers and sisters, this is a very good word for us in July.

We know Paul experienced other times and other feelings—times of deliverance, miracle, and ecstasy. But this was not one of them, and he did not have to pretend that it was. He was free to be real and open before the Lord. The wonderful thing about authentic relationship with Christ is that through the whole range of our human experiences and feelings, we may be who we are, feel what we feel, and go on trusting His presence, obeying His Spirit, and living in openness before Him.

For Monday, July 18, 1988

JESUS IS LORD

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy . . . I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself shall come also. . . . receive him in the Lord (Phil. 2:19, 24, 29, RSV).

There is nothing unusual about members of a missionary party coming and going between newly established congregations. What is most unusual is that into this ordinary process Paul drops the phrase "in the Lord." The Lordship of Jesus is exercised through ordinary comings and goings and ordinary feelings of anxiety and joy. Jesus is Lord of ordinary Christian life, and that makes the Christian life most extraordinary!

That does not mean that ordinary life thereby becomes extraordinary. Paul still doesn't know what will happen. Epaphroditus is not healed. Timothy still anxiously cares about the Philippians—and Jesus is Lord. He is Lord of the Church, but it is still made up of the same ordinary humans. Make Him Lord of your study, and it is still a struggle to get down the books and work on the sermons. He is Lord of our families, and we still act suspiciously like families.

The wonder of His Lordship is that it is exercised not up in some unreal, spiritual realm, but in the daily round of our daily lives. He is Lord, we are still human. He is our incarnate Lord, present with us on our human journey. That is most extraordinary!

For Monday, July 25, 1988

JESUS IS PRESENT

I have no one like him [Timothy], who will be genuinely anxious for your well-
(Continued on page 45)

A WESLEYAN CONCERN FOR A PERSONAL AND SOCIAL HOLINESS ETHIC

by Leon O. Hynson

Evangelical School of Theology, Myerstown, Pa.

The Wesleyan theology of Christian holiness offers a substantial foundation and inspiration for personal and social ethics. Despite the stereotypes and caricatures of the Wesleyan reform movement in England (i.e., it was based on Wesley's warmhearted ministry rather than on rational, ethical, and biblical analysis), Wesley proposed a significant moral theology, which combines both *theory* (e.g., natural law, role of conscience, Trinitarian ethics) and *application* (the critique of slavery, poverty, political constraint, war).

In anticipation of the formal structure of the paper, with its theological comparisons and contrasts, I suggest three caveats. First, we must exercise all possible care in our theological language lest our position either be misunderstood, or understood too well, as exaggeration or illusion. If we ever *represent* ourselves as standing on loftier logical ground, we shall lose our right to a hearing. Second, we must never allow our commitment to spiritual insight to weaken our intellectual zeal in pursuit of the truth. We must not fail to critique our own theology. If we are intellectually lazy, we shall never make a proper Wesleyan contribution to ethical dis-

course. We have the resources, the right, and the responsibility to offer a distinctive (especially pneumatological) Wesleyan moral theology, characterized by rigor and integrity. Third, it is obvious to all of us that theology and life must be complementary. Our experience orientation must be shaped by and consistent with Scripture. A theology unproductive of consistent lifestyle is artificial and even hypocritical. Wesley believed in what Stanley Hauerwas has called an "ethics of character." Wesley insisted that "integrity between what Christians believed and what they did was uncompromising because any temporizing on the part of Christians betrayed the character of their belief."¹

Here I wish to offer a series of theses, stated in processive categories, which outline aspects of a Wesleyan ethics. Here "processive" is intentional, describing a pattern of movement, including both *stages* and *states* of Christian life, that gives unity (order) to our Christian ethics. Wesleyan ethics affirms movement:

1. Toward an Ethics of Realization
2. Toward an Ethics of Sanctification
3. Toward an Ethics of the Spirit

4. Toward an Ethics of Love
5. Toward a Humanizing Ethic

These statements are not exhaustive but represent particular emphases in the larger concept of Christian holiness. Discussion of each emphasis should offer insight on personal and social ethics. I suggest, then, that the Wesleyan heritage proposes:

An Ethics of Realization, which builds upon aspiration and moves toward achievement. This concept is derived from William R. Cannon's view that Wesleyan theology teaches a realizable Christian life-style.² We are not restricted to hope, important as that is. An ethics of aspiration is fundamental to fulfillment. Wesleyan ethics is grounded in aspiration, in hope; hope draws us to the goal, aspiration moves to realization. Most Christian ethical discourse has not been generous to this Wesleyan position. Reinhold Niebuhr describes the Christian ethic as an "impossible possibility." The goal of perfection may be a dangerous illusion. However, Wesleyan

NIV). We are rightly concerned to insist upon a correlation between Christian character and behavior, between being and doing. Nevertheless, we must avoid overexpectation in performance. That creates despair or pretense.

It is not enough to affirm the fundamental significance of holy living. We must soon or late apply our theology of sanctification to a practical ethics of holiness. For example, what does Wesleyan holiness teaching have to say about sexual ethics? What are our answers to these questions? (1) Does holiness alter our sexual humanity? No, we remain thoroughly human and thoroughly sexual! (2) Does holiness heal all our sexual misconceptions? No, we do not always hold conceptions of sexuality that fit the biblical commentary. (Augustine and Freud have garbled our minds too much on that issue.) (3) Our sexual deficiencies? No, our deficiencies remain, attenuated by a culture that demands excessive emotional expenditures offering either a paradise of

What does holiness do for our sexuality?

It is easier to finance buildings than salaries, but human priorities cry for attention in our institutions.

theology leads us toward the wholeness of love, not a perfection of performance.

An Ethics of Sanctification, which builds upon justification and leads to holiness of heart and life. An ethics of sanctification is never to be divorced from the firm ground of justification. When that happens (in our heritage or elsewhere), the result is legalism, a works orientation, and spiritual frustration. When justification is not followed by sanctity of life, then the result is the stifling of the Christian's life. Our theology, however, proposes continuity between justification and sanctification. Faith works through love. Reconciliation and forgiveness are joined by purity of heart.

Luther's ethics has been described by Paul Althaus as an "ethics of justification." Justification by faith is "the presupposition and source of the ethical life." Beyond the grace of justification there is progress toward sanctification with the subduing, but never the elimination, of original sin. The believer must wait for death, "which will set his whole person free to serve God with perfect purity of heart," but our works are approved by God. "Christian behavior, . . . however imperfect and sinful it may be in and of itself, is good because it is grounded in . . . that divine approval which the Christian does not have to seek because it has already been given."³

Wesleyan theology asserts both objective and subjective holiness, realizable even now. Christian behavior is indeed imperfect in performance but is energized by a moral integrity, a purity of intention. The focus here is upon character and the ethical streams that flow from holy character. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, telling how he urged them "to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2:12,

sexual delights, or a sterile desert, a Gehenna of sexual perversion; a culture that simply separates wives and husbands too much for healthy sexuality to mature. (4) Does sanctification take us back to the pristine sexual world described by Roman Catholics as a world without passion where cool, calm sexuality prevails? No, that world never existed.

And what *does* holiness *do* for our sexuality? It transforms our affections so that we will to please God, who created us *in His image*. "Purity of heart is to will one thing," wrote Kierkegaard; that is, full commitment to love God. This same God created our sexuality, and His love in us shapes our whole being toward wholesome behavior. Richard Foster has written: "Did you notice that unashamed eroticism existed before the fall? The fall did not create eros; it only perverted it. In the creation story we find the man and the woman drawn to each other naked and unashamed."⁴ If homosexuality is an acquired sexual distortion, then holiness regulates its expression either in celibacy and singleness, or in a Christian morality within marriage. If the married homosexual is not bisexual, another, perhaps impossible, hurdle remains for the spouse.

An Ethics of the Spirit will offer ethical perspectives on the level of motivation or spiritual adequacy. I believe that two primary questions surface in ethical discourse. First, how do I know what is the right thing to do? What is the good that I ought to (or may) do? Second, what is the source of empowerment, adequacy, motivation? The 18th-century German pietist John Frederick Stark prayed thus:

Blessed are ye, if ye know, but blessed are ye if you do it also. Give me power that my faith may be not a

lifeless faith of the brain and of the lips, but a living faith.⁵

An ethics of the Spirit offers both illumination and empowerment. The Spirit leads us into all truth. The Holy Spirit convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:13, 8-11). The Spirit teaches (14:26) the message that Christ left. The Spirit is God's Gift of spiritual adequacy. Through His life in us we put to death the misdeeds of the body and experience spiritual life (Rom. 8:9-14). Through the Spirit we are led, not to self-gratification, but toward life in the Kingdom (Gal. 5:13-25). Paul emphasizes the gift of "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also," he continues, "that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you . . . and his incomparably great power for us who believe" (Eph. 1:17-19).

I propose that the spiritual ethic offers a deepening insight into the moral dimension. Paul prays that "love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:9-10). Professor Outler writes concerning Wesley's ethics:

Both "inward holiness" (our love of God) and "outward holiness" (our love of neighbor) are equally gifts of the Spirit so that one can speak of Christian ethics as the venture of *living in the Spirit*. [Thus] it may be that the idea of our ethics of *Christian virtue* (the fruit of the *Spirit*) is one whose time has come. Such an ethic is, of course, aimed at the fulness of humanity and against all that thwarts any such fulfillment.⁶

We affirm that our participation (our sanctification) in the life of the Spirit promises a heightened sensitivity regarding the Christian moral life. It is presumptuous for us to assume superior knowledge apart from a diligent search of information related to a given moral issue. The Spirit will not become a surrogate intelligence for the undisciplined mind but will *lead* us into truth. We may expect that moral discernment and judgment will accompany the Spirit's presence in our lives. The Spirit convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment. This, I suggest, means that a refining of the moral sense occurs in the believer. Paul's desire was that sanctification might be preserved blameless (1 Thess. 5:23-24). If holiness is "aimed at the fullness of humanity," that is, the process of restoring the image of God in us, then it is proper to claim a renewal and improvement of the moral sense in the process of sanctification.

Not only is the moral consciousness expanded but also the capacity for the obedient discharge of moral duty. The believer walks in the Spirit and lives in the Spirit. The New Testament repeatedly describes the empowering relationship between the Spirit and the Christian in moral living. Wesley wrote: "Without the Spirit of God we can do nothing but add sins to sin; . . . it is He alone who worketh in us by His almighty power, either to will or to do that which is good."⁷ Paul's Galatian readers were advised: "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. . . . Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit" (5:16, 24-25).

How does an ethics of the Spirit shape our practical approach to specific moral issues? We may decisively insist that adultery, fornication, homosexual practice, lying, stealing, and enraged passion are not characteristic of the Christian life-style. Some other issues receive less precise attention in Scripture, for example, abortion, Christian responsibility to a corrupt political system (such as the payment of taxes for sinful purposes), prudence in the matter of entertainment. The Spirit will lead us into truth and will empower us to achieve the moral ends to which holiness points. That means that we may affirm the Spirit's strength to resist cultural patterns such as the abortion decision of *Roe v. Wade*, an example of the triumph of shifting social norms over theological values. We may affirm the Spirit's support in marriage and family relationships by our own example and by our teaching ministry. This will mean that pastors, church leaders, and college and seminary teachers will need to carve out space for their own families. Many

"In-principled" love is the basis of social ethics.

of us live on the margins of financial exigency, often leading to second jobs and to spousal employment. As a result we are drained emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. Is it too much to suggest that the ethic of holiness will lead us to more care for the Lord's servants? I know that is easier to finance buildings than salaries, but human priorities cry for attention in our institutions.

An ethic of the Spirit may be our distinctive contribution to ethical dialogue. The centrality of pneumatology in our Christian Holiness Association origins and development gives us the perspective from which to address contemporary issues with insight and power, providing we also accept the mandate to work hard at this task. The Reformation sources of Protestant thought stressed God's sovereignty and Christology very well. However, the role of the Spirit is less apparent. That may become our task and opportunity in ethical dialogue. We have a reservoir of energy beyond imagining. Let us make Christian ethical formation a matter of priority!

Ethics of Love—Heretofore we have been emphasizing the theory and practices of ethics in personal and social aspects. Now it is apropos to indicate as clearly as possible the biblical manner of advocating and linking personal and social ethics. The key is love, agape love. Wesley would take Jesus' summation of the law, to love God fully and to love one's neighbor as oneself, as the description of Christian holiness. Here the Christian ethic finds its cruciform character, where the love of God joins love of humanity. Wesley described love in social application: "Above all, remember that God is love, he [the Christian] is conformed to the same likeness. He is

full of love to his neighbor: of universal love. . . . The same love is productive of all right actions. It leads him into an earnest and steady discharge of all social offices. . . . It guides him into an uniform practice of justice and mercy, equally extensive with the principle whence it flows."⁸

The Pauline formula of "faith energized by love" (Gal. 5:6) became one of Wesley's "favorite tenets." Without faith love could not be born and mature. Without the growth of love, faith would not stand. Faith and love flourish together; faith gives to love its theonomous ground; love gives to faith an ethical framework. Paul Ramsey's opposition to Joseph Fletcher's situationism points up the Wesleyan concern that love must include justice, truth, and integrity. Fletcher wrote of situationists: "They cannot give to any principle less than love more than tentative consideration, for they know, with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 'The question of the good is posed and is decided in the midst of each definite, yet

conceptions of sexuality, economic patterns based on racial or sexual prejudice, and so on. What happens to a young Christian who is pure in heart but muddled in mind? Do moral aberrations take place in such lives? I fear so. The teaching magisterium of the church must clearly declare biblical norms. That corrective task is evident from Jesus to Paul to the latest issue of *The Sounding Board* (the official paper of CHA).

The holiness people have not offered a uniform or monolithic approach to these issues. Does purity of heart include the moral cleansing of the subconscious? E. Stanley Jones thought it does not. J. Kenneth Grider questions whether homosexual tendencies, racial prejudice, or addictions are "extirpated" in entire sanctification.¹⁴

While I am disposed to affirm cleansing of the motivational springs, I would propose that it is maturity in holiness that will bring victory over acquired tendencies.¹⁵ I do not question the subterranean force of re-

We have not dealt adequately with the serious human problems that flow from our flawed human condition.

The Bible teaches a "sexuality without shame" expressed in wholesome and joyous ways.

unconcluded, unique and transient situation of our lives.'"⁹ Ramsey called for an "in-principled love,"¹⁰ or a love that has content (e.g., justice) and is based on no reciprocating benefit from the other person in order to express itself. It is controlled by principle—by its own integrity, by justice, by holiness. In-principled love is the basis of social ethics. In Ramsey's negation: "No social morality ever was founded, or ever will be founded, upon a situational ethic."¹¹ Situationism disallows "any connective tissue between one situation or moment of experience and another."¹²

Wesleyan theology will concern itself with the relation between Christian love and performance. Wesley introduced the problem by addressing the difficulty of moving from intention to execution. He taught that Christian perfection does not eliminate ignorance of mistakes. "A mistake in judgment may possibly occasion a mistake in practice." These mistakes in practice were called "involuntary transgressions," which "cannot bear the rigour of God's justice, but need the atoning blood."¹³

In all candor, I assert that we have not dealt adequately with the serious human problems that flow from our flawed human condition. We have at times led our hearers or readers to conclude that we are very uncommon saints in contrast to their failures, or that we have promised what our delivery systems could not handle.

We may begin a corrective by recognizing that ethical judgments will be imperfect until we have complete knowledge. Since we still see only part of the picture, we must expect and allow for failures. We should not allow for moral failures like sexual deviations—adultery, fornication, practicing homosexuality—but practical failures based on such realities as unhealthy and confused

pressed experiences. These appear especially in moments of crisis, evoking guilt and pain. The guilt is not rooted in moral failure wherever forgiveness and cleansing have been given by Christ's grace. It may be the false guilt of a conscience attuned to scrupulous pulse taking. Overexpectation is as perilous as underexpectation. The "impossible dream" is a nice lyric but a damaging ethic. I suggest that the equation of purity with maturity is so perilous that it drives some to equivocation, others to hypocrisy, and some to despair. The theological safeguard for us is the maintenance of the firm ground of God's justifying and accepting grace. Remove that substructure and we fall back with Paul to Romans 7, Luther before his "tower experience" of conversion, or Wesley before Aldersgate. The more we (rightly) point up the need for moral maturity, the more we must affirm the triumph of grace. Without grace our moral development becomes religious moralism. Finally, ethical performance does not follow perception of the right or pure intention in an orderly, always progressive manner. For this reason let us always proclaim the advocacy of *Christ for us*.

A Humanizing Ethic. One final concern will occupy our minds in this article: the issue of the humanizing influence of holiness. This concept achieves its clearest theological legitimacy through the alignment in Wesleyan hymnody of such concepts as holiness, health, happiness, wholeness, and perfection. What this suggests is the restoration through God's grace of the human; of that which makes us sons and daughters of the Second Adam; of the renewing and completing of the work of the Holy Spirit; of a renewed humanity in the *imago Dei*. Whatever made us human in the fullest

sense of creation (see Gen. 1:27-28; 2:20-25) is now in process through the graced work that is making us whole (1 Thess. 5:23-24). We dare not depreciate being *human* because a misuse of the theology of original sin leads us to be suspicious of the human. We need to reinvest the concept of the human with its original dignity, that is, man and woman as the bearer of the *imago Dei*.

In ethical discourse this means that we will need to assert the meaning of holiness (wholeness/renewing/the new man) in relation to all aspects of our humanity. We must include our family relations, our sexual identity, our social and political relations. As a starting point, we may illustrate by reference to Paul's admonition (1 Thess. 4:1-8) that describes our sexuality as controlled and channeled in sanctity or a "sexuality without shame."¹⁶ Sexuality may be expressed in wholesome, joyous, passionate ways. When it is carried out in any sort of staged setting, or when it oversteps the bounds of the divine order, as defined in Genesis 1 and 2, and affirmed by Jesus (Matt. 19:1-12), it is shameful and wrong, sometimes even pornographic. Or, take the teaching regarding the state, which, like a gem in its setting, is bounded by love. Rom. 12:9-21 and 13:8-10 surround the admonition to submit to God's order in government. Expressed differently, Paul's comment suggests that love leads us to a conscience-regulated (13:5) relation to the state. It teaches a prior obligation to God, which will sometimes alter the shape of our sub-mission.

The Wesleyan heritage was early called "to reform the nation, particularly the church, and to spread scriptural holiness over the land." Jesse T. Peck, an important re-

source for the holiness movement, taught that reform of nation and church would occur in the preaching of holiness.¹⁷ We are called to that mission. May the Holy Spirit flow through us in rivers of living water.

NOTES

1. Hauerwas, "Characterizing Perfection: Second Thought on Character and Sanctification," in *Wesleyan Theology Today*, ed. Theodore Runyon (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1985), 251.
2. Cannon, *The Theology of John Wesley* (New York: Abingdon, 1946), 225-39.
3. Althaus, *The Ethics of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 3-24. Luther does distinguish between alien and proper righteousness, allowing that the Christian is both reckoned righteous and *becomes* righteous.
4. Foster, *Money, Sex, and Power* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 93.
5. See his *Daily Handbook for Days of Rejoicing and Sorrow* (Philadelphia: Kohler, 1855), 63.
6. See Outler's "Foreword" in Leon O. Hynson, *To Reform the Nation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 12-13.
7. Wesley, *Standard Sermons* 1:268.
8. *John Wesley*, ed. Albert C. Outler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 185-86.
9. Fletcher, *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), 33.
10. Ramsey wrote "Faith Effective Through In-Principled Love," *Christianity and Crisis* 20 (May 30, 1960): 9.
11. Ramsey, *Deeds and Rules in Christian Ethics* (New York: Scribners, 1967), 20.
12. *Ibid.*, 146.
13. See "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," in *Works* (reprint, Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978), 11:394-95.
14. See Grider, "Carnality and Humanity," in *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (Spring 1976), 81-91. He cites Jones here.
15. W. T. Purkiser, "Translating Holiness into Daily Living," in *Strategies for Vital Christian Living*, ed. Wesley Tracy (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, n.d.), 25-29, rightly indicates that "psychological weakness is not necessarily spiritual wickedness" (he quotes James McGraw). "We must not forget that people may be pure in heart but immature in personal development" (27).
16. Lewis Smedes states, "There are two situations in which people feel no shame. First is in a state of wholeness. The second is in a state of illusion." *Sex for Christians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 47. See Foster, 93.
17. See my "Reformation and Perfection: The Social Gospel of Bishop Peck," in *Methodist History* (January 1978), 82-91.

THERE IS LIFE AFTER THE VOTE

by G. Elmer Danner
Glendale, Ariz.

In reference to your article in a recent *Preacher's Magazine*, "Is There Life After the Vote?" I want to say that God gave me 30 good years of ministry after I was voted out in 1950. Certainly there were periods of soul-searching and discouragement, but with a great God and a wonderful district superintendent, I came out on the winning side.

We never went to pastor a superchurch, but we had a good ministry nonetheless. We moved from there to a home missions church, where we stayed 12 years. While the records show that the church did not grow, we had a total turnover of people in those 12 years. Some of those people are in heaven, and some are serving God

in other churches, as a result of our ministry there.

We moved to another church, and again we were able to see souls saved. We stayed there three years.

We stayed nine years in our next church, and God blessed our ministry once more. There especially we were able to minister to people in all walks of life—college professors, medical doctors, town officials, optometrists, hippies, blue-collar workers, and many others.

The next year I moved to a small town with a small church, but I was able to minister to many of the people there. One man was saved on his deathbed as a result of my ministry there, and others are in heaven as well.

In 1977 I accepted another church. There God gave us a rich ministry and helped us to close out our pastoral ministry with His blessings.

But the end is not yet. In our retirement years, we are still able to minister through the special ministries of our church, as Sunday School teacher, general handyman, assistant to our pastors, and other things.

Over the past 35 years, some of the people who cast a negative vote have remained loyal friends. The secret to life after a negative vote is in the attitude. With the wrong attitude, there could have been a bad relationship, and it could well have been the end of my ministry. I'm so glad it was not!

PLANTING CHURCHES IS HEART WORK

*An Interview with Rev. Mary Lou Rutgers,
Wisconsin District, Church of the Nazarene
by Nina Beegle, Church Growth Division,
Church of the Nazarene*

CHURCH GROWTH: Rev. Rutgers, I understand that you have gone to Neenah, Wis., to plant a church where there has never been a Church of the Nazarene. Is this a new venture for you?

RUTGERS: No, this is the third church I've planted in a little over seven years. I planted a church in Holland, Mich., and one in Plover Point, which services the Stevens Point-Plover communities in Wisconsin.

CG: How do you make inroads into a community where you have no prior contacts?

MLR: Actually we've had to adapt to each situation, but ultimately growth comes with one-on-one, persistent, hard work.

In Holland we began with a nucleus of three or four families who were wanting a Nazarene church there, and in four weeks after we began, the church was organized. But in Plover Point there was not one Nazarene family, friend, or acquaintance with whom to begin. Much of the first year and a half was spent gaining presence and acceptance in the community, getting to know the banker, the post office personnel, the business people.

CG: I perceive that you are an outgoing, friendly person who would not find it hard to make new acquaintances. Are there other methods you use to gain community awareness?

MLR: I advertise on the TV community events channels, and when I can scrape together enough money, I put spot ads in the newspaper and on the radio. I get news coverage also with releases and articles on the church pages and have, on occasion, even placed fliers in the weekly advertiser. We always list location and service times in the regular local listings of churches.

Another thing I do is place the denominational magazine in public places like bus stations, the library, doctors' offices. I always get permission first, and that in itself is a way to meet new people who are involved and influential in the community.

CG: I guess that is one of the ways you do the one-on-one kind of outreach you mentioned. Are there other ways to do this besides door-to-door, cold turkey contact?

MLR: Oh, yes. As soon as possible I affiliate with clergy groups. I frequent restaurants and coffee shops and strike up conversations with employees as well as customers. Even when we never see those people in church, it often happens that they will refer someone else to the new church. Even church people will refer a relative or friend because they've tried and failed to get them into their own churches. They see this as a new hope, a new opportunity.

Ladies' craft classes and men's fellowship groups have been especially effective ways of making new con-

tacts. Another way is to have an office in a central location so that it's easy for people to walk in or to find you if they have a need.

One of our most recent contacts is a couple who lost a baby to crib death eight weeks ago. Their names were given us by a concerned mutual friend. I called and phoned the couple several times. I don't ask them to the church right away. Rather, I show love and concern without pushing the church on them. We are working for Christ. Anyway, a couple of nights ago this friend told my husband that he would not be surprised if the couple showed up in our church soon because they were impressed with our concern for them.

CG: It must take many months for this kind of effort to really make an impact in the community.

MLR: It went more slowly in Plover Point because Glenn and I were both working to keep the wolf from the door. But every time I'd reach the point of discouragement, where I'd say it was time to call it quits, one new person would come, or one person would get saved. Then we'd say, no, we can't leave because of them.

Other than that it was a process in which God brought people from all over the country and placed them in the community. I could name person after person and family after family who came just that way to the area and are now strong members—from Michigan, Ohio, Maine, and Wisconsin. When a couple of Nazarene families moved in, the work gained momentum, of course.

CG: Did people usually find the Lord in church services, or in their homes when you called on them?

MLR: It happened both ways, but again it was the one-on-one and the friendship bridge-building that laid the foundation. One couple lived right next door. Dale, the husband, tells people now about how he made a beeline for the back door every time I came over, but eventually he came to the church and was saved. I was aware that when I came in one door, Dale went out the other, but I did not let that intimidate me. Well, actually, the Lord did not let me be intimidated, because ordinarily that would affect me adversely. Anyway, I kept going back, and the wife and daughter did begin attending services.

At Christmastime hard times came for the family. The church gave them several bags of groceries, and I added a little personal touch, giving the little girl a teddy bear. That really got to Dale, and he came to church the very next Sunday. That was the third time in his whole life he had been in church. The other two times were for a wedding and a funeral. It wasn't long then until he received Christ and wanted to be baptized.

CG: Apparently church planting is not the only role in your life besides wife and homemaker. How many children do you have?

MLR: We have five children, two adopted and three born to us. We just adopted one in June 1985. She will be two in March. Matthew, who is four, was adopted June 25,

1984, exactly a year before. He was two when we got him, and our little girl was six-and-a-half months old.

CG: Raising five children is a big job. Church planting is not an easy assignment either, even in an ideal situation. And then I understand you've held a full-time job concurrently with some of your church planting assignments. You don't *look* like Superwoman!

MLR: Well, that's why, when we moved here to Neenah in September 1986, I said I was going to take six months off before I tried to do much. It seemed like a good time to take a break, but what happened was that in two months the Lord did what I thought would take six, and by November 15 I was on salary. We had our first service December 7.

CG: That sounds too easy. Was there something already in place at Neenah?

MLR: The only thing in place was one family interested in getting a church planted in Neenah. They belong to the Appleton church and still attend and carry responsibilities there. Then they come to our afternoon services and help in our church. That has been a real boon to getting started.

CG: And where do you meet?

MLR: We've been meeting in the YMCA. We have Sunday School at 2 P.M. and worship service at 3:30. We began as a church right from the start, not as a Bible study group or anything like that.

CG: Is the Appleton church your sponsor church?

MLR: Well, not in the strict sense, but they are giving us partial support, and this one family is attending and helping us. The district is picking up the rest of my salary. It's adequate as a supplemental income. My husband's job gives us good benefits, and that helps the church as well.

CG: Are you usually expected to accept a supplemental kind of salary?

MLR: There is that mind-set that, well, her husband is working, so she can give her services without remuneration.

CG: That doesn't sound fair. No one says to a male preacher, "We will not need to pay you, since your wife has a salary." Right?

MLR: That's the way I see it. I am a Nazarene elder, and I have enough years of experience that I feel I should not be expected to work without pay just because my husband works. However, I'm probably willing to accept less because of that. If I have to take outside employment, then I'd rather do this work than anything else; and if I have to accept a lower salary to do it, at this point I would.

CG: What is the hardest thing about being a church planter?

MLR: Knowing that my husband has had to sacrifice as far as his career is concerned. The moves we make

Pontius' Puddle



don't usually help him to get ahead. However, I had said at our last church planting assignment that I would not move the family again unless he benefited from it. It happened that way here. We came because he was transferred with a promotion.

You don't stop being a woman because you are called to pastor. I want my husband to have due consideration. Actually he gets calls from all over the district to fill pulpits. He gets the calls instead of me.

CG: Is that because of discrimination against a lady pastor?

MLR: I'm inclined to think it's more a matter of availability. Glenn isn't required to be here at the times other churches need someone, and I am. Of course, Glenn can handle it well, or they wouldn't call him.

CG: So being a female is not a handicap to your work as far as you are concerned?

MLR: No, not usually. Of course, Glenn is very supportive, and that influences people. Being the weaker sex in the physical sense threatened me once or twice. You remember Dale, whom I mentioned earlier. When he wanted to be baptized, I sought the assistance of a male pastor, as I always do at baptisms. But I couldn't find an available pastor when Dale was to be baptized, so Glenn was there in case I had a problem. Dale weighs 250-300 pounds and often relates the astonishment he felt as he stepped into the water: "*She* is going to baptize *me*?" I think Glenn, Dale, and I were all a bit apprehensive; but I tell you the truth, he felt as light as our young son who entered into baptism the same day. God gives me special help when I need it!

CG: How do you feel about other pastors coming in and taking over where you've dug out a work?

MLR: Some plant, some water, and God gives the increase; and I get excited about that. I don't say I don't have any struggle. Elmer Towns says that the hardest thing for a church planter to do is to let go of his baby. We put in five years at Plover Point, and Glenn felt it was time to leave, but I wouldn't give up on it at first. However, there was a point when I also knew it was time to

let go of it. And since we moved to Neenah, I'm more sure of it every day.

CG: When you move into a church planting situation, do you look for a meeting place before you come, or do you just assume your living room will be the first step to acquiring a congregation?

MLR: Whether the opportunity comes before or after we arrive, I start looking for possible property sites, especially where the community is building up. I plan for future growth from the beginning, making contacts with real estate agents and getting acquainted with business people. We start a building fund early in the life of the church.

In Plover Point land was donated to us by a business couple in the community with whom we made contact our second week in town. They were attending another church. We didn't ask them to leave their church—we don't do that—but we included them in special events and things that did not interfere with their own church services. We had become close friends with them and their children so that they even included us in their family Christmas activities. Two years after they donated the land for a Church of the Nazarene, they joined it.

CG: Mary Lou, I've heard people say, "Don't try to plant a church unless God calls you to do it." Do you consider church planting a God-called ministry?

MLR: Only in the sense that I've had friends who tried it, and they were unsuccessful. They admitted that they were too traditional. You have to be ready to try new things and to break out of tradition. It's not traditional to have Sunday School at 2:00 in the afternoon, for instance. I never felt like church planting was my call; but there were times when things got so tough financially that if it hadn't been a real priority in our lives, we wouldn't have stuck it out. Glenn and I know that we won't stay in church planting forever because of the toll it takes on us. Right now, though, I'm attending the advanced church planting classes at the Nazarene Theological Seminary, and I'm so superexcited about the things I'm learning that I can hardly wait to get back and put them into practice.

BETTER THAN GIMMICKS

An Evangelist Points to the Biblical Way to Build Revival Attendance

by D. W. Hildie
Evangelist, Cheyenne, Wyo.

Rev. Clovis G. Chappell observed that the announcement of a revival in the average church is no longer a clarion call for revival or rallying of the hosts of Zion. It is rather a warning gong that calls, "To your tents, O Israel." He goes on to say, "The announcement of a revival today in the average city congregation would be about as effective in bringing together a congregation as if the pastor were to say, 'My brethren, next Sunday we are to have on exhibition in this church some very interesting cases of contagious disease. If you will come and bring your families, you may be able to contract one or more of these interesting diseases.'"

While I may not be able to tell you, pastor, just how to build your revival attendance, I have observed some efforts that have *not* been productive.

The first of these futile gestures is to stand in the pulpit and ask the congregation to "bring your friends to hear this good preacher." "This good preacher" has sat on the platform and heard countless pleadings like that—and wondered if that same pastor had any friends whom he would be bringing! In almost every case, *no*. Thus the pastor is in

the position of asking his people to do that which he is unable to do. If he has been in that community for any substantial length of time, he has unsaved friends in the community, too.

In some cases gimmicks have been useful. Giving a prize to the one who succeeds in getting the largest number to attend for him on a given night is a timeworn method that can be depended upon to bring people from neighboring churches who want to help their friend win his "bauble." Even if this succeeds in bringing out a few extra people, they are not usually people whom we can expect to see saved and brought into the church.

Then there are the special night attractions. In some places and at some times this has been useful. "Sunday School Night" can usually be depended upon to produce polite bedlam as the evangelist vainly struggles to hold the interest of the toddlers and primary children while at the same time he endeavors to minister to the soul needs of an adult congregation. While it may be *interesting* to see how he can cope, the *results* are seldom impressive.

I have found that there is one universally effective method. It is the

method the Early Church employed when men and women with burning hearts came to grips with the social and spiritual needs around them and proclaimed, "Silver and gold have I none; but . . . In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). They who first employed that method had been to an all-night prayer meeting that had climaxed with the infilling of the Holy Spirit. That is not to say that we do not now have the Holy Spirit, but I believe that there may be some indications pointing to the fact that we have come to a time in our church history when we may be depending too much on past spiritual achievements. We may need a fresh anointing of that same Holy Spirit, an anointing that will help us to see the spiritual needs of our community in a fresh light and will endue us with the spiritual power to say to our friends and neighbors in spiritual need, "Rise up and walk!"

In previous generations our church seemed to have this kind of charisma. Churches were frequently on the wrong side of the tracks, often with pastors whom we would classify as men with inferior education, and the denominational name was sometimes confused with Holy

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Rollers. Still the statistics of that day cause us now to be embarrassed with our achievements. Nor can it be said that the preaching of that day was vastly superior to that of today. To be sure, there were the "greats": Bud Robinson, John and Bona Fleming, C. B. Fugit, and many others. But read and compare their sermons with the sermons of evangelists of this generation, and we honestly must concur that while those men of the past sometimes carried their message in the vehicle of a unique personality, the heart of the message was no different, nor was it more eloquently proclaimed than today.

Well then, what can we do? While it is true that youthful memories tend to carry the gloss and gild of a glamour beyond reality, I seem to recall that there was a soul burden for the lost, carried by my peers, which by far exceeded any that I detect in the churches I visit today as an evangelist. I wonder if that same sense of burden for the lost was not productive of prayer meetings that were the real source of power in some of the great revivals of previous generations.

Way back in history (well before my time) I read how the New En-

gland Revival began with the ministry of a preacher by the name of Jonathan Edwards. Certainly his sermons, while solidly evangelical, were of a different slant than those of Billy Graham. But history records that as he preached the great sermon that is said to have triggered a great evangelistic explosion in that day ("Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"), from out of the horse barn behind the church came the audible groans of saints so burdened for their lost friends and relatives that they were experiencing the agony of soul travail.

Within the span of my memory of the church, I believe I can detect a difference in soul burden as evidenced by the testimonies of the saints. Youthful recollection takes me back to days when the pastor asked the congregation for prayer requests, and one or more would rise, often in great emotional distress, to request prayer for an unsaved loved one or friend. Now that same opportunity is met with a request for prayer for someone who is physically ill. (That is not to say that physical healing requests are in any way out of line or unimportant.) Are you among those ancients who, like me, heard the saints speak of "pray-

ing through," followed later with reports of fresh miracles of divine grace? I fear that "praying through" is becoming a lost art, and that there is danger that the very term may become unknown.

Dr. W. D. McGraw told of a pastor on the West Coast who set up a gospel tent in the community. He had gone to the lumberyard manager, and that kindly disposed individual had loaned 2' x 10' planks for the seating and for the platform. Now the pastor was back in the office of the lumber dealer with a request for some 2' x 10' planks of clear pine stock with which to build an altar. This aroused the curiosity of the lumberman, and he said, "Lumber for the seats and platform I understand, but what in tarnation is an altar for?"

The pastor responded, "We will be having an evangelist come and preach, and he will invite people to come to the altar to pray through."

"Pray through," said the lumberman. "Now if it is something you want to pray through, I have some sections of steel culvert that would be a whole lot easier to pray through than a solid pine board!"

Perhaps what is lacking in our midst today is the supernatural

working of the Holy Spirit—miraculous, if you please—that causes the unsaved to feel their lostness.

Is it conceivable that the kind of prayer that produces the miraculous in our services would also restore some of the emotional pyrotechnics that characterized the church of yesterday? Not that I am contending for mere emotionalism in our worship services (my Methodist background will attest to that), but I feel that the atmosphere of rejoicing and enthusiasm born of souls finding help at our altars is attractive to the unsaved people we are trying to reach. While that kind of emotion may be as unstructured as the demonstration that follows the winning touchdown, it still is a lot more attractive to our unsaved, sophisticated friends than all the dignity and beauty of a funeral service conducted in a mausoleum!

I suspect that many of you are in at least partial agreement with what you just read. The question is, what can we do to recapture the evangelistic thrust? Perhaps it would be a good idea to look at what we have already tried. We have already observed that gimmicks have been unproductive in achieving the results we seek. Add to that list some other items such as religious entertainment, which in my opinion has contributed little statistically to the number received by profession of faith.

Under the list of "Things I Can Most Easily Do Without" would be Sunday night services given over to gospel rock musicians. Next on the list would be services given over to religious films. Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying religious films are wrong or have no place in the church. My contention is that they do not take the place of "the foolishness of preaching" (1 Cor. 1:21). We have come through a time in our church when we have more educational programs and full-time, paid specialists in church programming than ever before, and yet our statistical reports are alarming! Have we overlooked something?

Once again I recall some time-worn methods practiced by our forebears, such things as prevailing prayer that did not terminate when our knees got tired. Some of our

younger men may need to read writings of such men as Drs. J. G. Morrison or A. W. Tozer in order to get a concept of what genuine prevailing prayer is, the kind that opened the way for miracles of grace through which the church of the yesterdays was born. Such a prayer revival might follow some of these steps:

A personalized target objective for whom to pray. Such a prayer would not be couched in the common vehicle of "Lord, send us a revival," but rather would settle upon a given objective of human need. Such a prayer would be for a single lost soul or perhaps a family. It seems to me that Jesus is trying to tell us in Luke 11:5-8 that it is not enough merely to state a petition. Successful, achieving prayer carries with it a sense of agonized determination. The saintly John Knox in agony of soul prayed, "Give me Scotland or I die!" This reflects the urgency Jesus spoke of when He gave the second great commandment. We must love our neighbor with the same intensity of love that we would bestow upon ourselves. That kind of praying leads inevitably to the next phase of effective prayer: fasting.

When desperation of soul becomes so intense that we lose our appetite for food, fasting (denying legitimate physical demands) becomes a practice that we incorporate into our lives naturally. You will remember that occasion in which the disciples stood baffled by their impotence in the presence of a tremendous physical need. Christ mastered it with the word of His command. When pressed for the secret of His success in that situation, He indicated there are some life situations that can only be mastered by fasting (Matt. 17:21; Mark 9:29; cf. Acts 13:2-3). This discipline is never regarded as pleasant (probably the reason why it has largely been discarded). You will find it far more to your taste to invite that couple or that friend to your home for an evening of pleasant chitchat and a game of Rook than to spend a comparable amount of time in agonized prayer during a mealtime. But really now, isn't self-denial a part of our original commitment to the cross of Christ?

A devout Anglican (Episcopal)

friend of mine related how he and his wife had gone on a fishing trip during the Lenten season of "meatless" days. They took with them another couple, not of the same denominational persuasion. The Anglican lady was a gourmet cook, and after a meal of trout that she prepared in an especially delectable manner, the guest on the trip pushed back his chair and observed: "When you Anglicans deny yourselves, you sure do go deluxe!" Honestly now, haven't we all been seeking easier methods of Kingdom building than those that brought about the fiery baptism of the churches we now serve?

If we faithfully follow these first two steps to effective prayer, I suspect that the Lord will lead us into methods of soul winning. Not all of your prayer objectives are ready to come to church with you. At this point there is a definite place for real friendship evangelism. You will find ways to be with those people, either in their home or yours, and I would be surprised if at some point in your fellowship the Holy Spirit did not direct your conversation into areas of personal witnessing! Personal evangelism of this kind and mass evangelism emanating from the church pulpit are two parts of the same thing.

Love finds ways to break impossible barriers. Real love motivates an Andrew to come running to his brother Peter with the excited word that "we have found the Messiah" (John 1:41, NKJV). That same kind of holy enthusiasm is seen in the apostles after Pentecost when they were told to either stop this silly blathering about a resurrected Christ or to face criminal charges, to which they responded, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard!" (Acts 4:20).

That brings us back to the question of how to get people out to the revival. If by example, Pastor, you can lead your people into friendship evangelism, you will not need the aid of gimmicks. The evangelist need not be one particularly noted for his entertainment nor for his emotional altar calls. The Holy Spirit will melt stony hearts with the fervency of the fire of a soul-burdened church. Revival will come! How do I know? God has promised it.

GUILT AND GODLY SORROW

by Les Parrott III

Guilt. It is the peg on which our sinful nature hangs. It is also the emotional rope we can use to hang ourselves.

Most ministers understand that it is possible to *be* guilty without feeling it, and to *feel* guilty with no valid reason.

Perhaps ministers have learned from experience the difference between *feeling* guilty and *being* guilty. Ministers labor under an enormous work load, with an inner voice constantly nagging, "You should be doing more." Always busy, they never seem to get caught up. They feel guilty if they are home when the church lights are on, and they feel guilty when they are at church instead of at home. Since ministers' work is never done, their minds are fertile fields for guilt feelings.

Although the pastor may know the difference between the *condition* and the *emotion* of guilt, the distinction leaves unanswered questions:

- Does God induce guilt, or is it man-made?
- Is guilt a legitimate motivational tool?
- Should Christians ever feel guilty?
- Is feeling guilty the same as divine conviction?
- Are guilt feelings helpful or harmful?

Apart from an adequate understanding of sin, it is impossible to answer these questions about guilt feelings. Sin pushes people into a state of guilt, generating depression and hostility. Sin is more than a condition. It is an active agent that arouses feelings of guilt. An inner voice accuses us of failing to be what we ought to be.

It is impossible to understand guilt feelings without knowing how the inner voice speaks. Conscience develops by internalizing our parents' or significant others' values and priorities, along with the methods they used to correct us. Children accept their parents'

values for three reasons: (1) to avoid punishment, (2) to gain rewards, and (3) to maintain their parents' love. This process of internalizing the values and the reward/punishment system from parents can be positive if Mother and Dad used unconditional love in disciplining their children. However, most parents correct with punishment (spanking), rejection (withdrawing their love), and/or shame (putting down), creating guilt feelings in a child.

As adults, we experience guilt as punishment, rejection, and/or shame. Since we internalize both our parents' values and their methods of correction, we punish or reject ourselves when we break our own standards. If we fall short of our goal, we shame ourselves. We can try so hard to be what we ought to be that we lose touch with what we are.

Guilt is probably the most destructive of all emotions. It is self-hate. It hurls accusations with such vehemence that it can destroy an individual. Judas is a biblical example of this extreme self-punishment.

Others experience the accusations of the conscience as generalized self-rejection. They feel worthless; worth less than they were before, or less worthy than others. If this person has any emotional strength, he will attempt to hide, rationalize, or repress guilt feelings. Adam is a classic example.

Just as a child rebels against a parent who puts him down, some adults rebel against a shaming conscience. This rebellion is not always an active disregard of values. It more frequently takes a passive form, in which the guilt-laden person loses motivation for Christian



service or simply goes through the motions of religious ritual with no spiritual vitality.

The church offers what sounds like a good alternative to self-imposed punishment, rejection, and shame. Preachers proclaim with sincerity, "Confess and change" the behavior that has made you feel guilty. However, in many cases the underlying motive of this "Confess and change" response is not to live a holy life but to reduce uncomfortable guilt feelings.

When we are motivated out of guilt feelings, we strive to live better so that we won't feel guilty. When we repent out of genuine sorrow because we love God, however, we allow the Holy Spirit to empower us. When we confess and change our behavior by self-effort, we are attempting to conform to a God whom we perceive as a coercive parent, rather than a gracious God whose love is unconditional.

Guilt feelings can be the motivating factor in Christian action. But the person typically motivated by these feelings is burdened by the heavy baggage of repression. Conscience, like the Old Testament Law, cannot be appeased by self-effort. Guilt feelings inhibit spiritual and emotional growth. Emotionally, they can cause neuroses. Spiritually, they can lead to legalism and pharisaism.

At their best, guilt feelings are an early warning system telling us something is wrong. In that sense, they can be useful. But ultimately, feelings of guilt don't motivate people to genuine sorrow and repentance.

Spiritual leaders have a problem. How can biblical teachings on guilt (sin) be reconciled with a guilt motive that is more harmful than helpful? How can pastors and teachers help people acknowledge their sins without tormenting themselves with a punishing, rejecting, and shaming conscience? Without this challenge, the church is in danger of communicating an oppressive rather than a liberating gospel.

The alternative to guilt feelings is the God-given, love-based motivation of sorrow.

Merely adjusting the Christian vocabulary, replacing "guilt" with "sorrow," is not the answer. Semantics is not the issue. Guilt and constructive sorrow are opposing processes. They cannot be experienced simultaneously. One inhibits the other. Guilt is punitive while sorrow is loving.

"We feel guilty when we are angry and frustrated with ourselves. Sorrow, however, does not batter self-esteem. Self-respect and deep concern are the handmaidens of change.

When we experience guilt feel-

ings, we change because we don't like to feel guilty. We focus on self. The person motivated by guilt continually asks, "How am I doing?" In constructive sorrow we change because we are concerned for God and for others. The person who experiences sorrow is asking, "How are they doing?"

Guilt is condemnation. Sorrow is a concern that grows into gratitude.

Transforming that inner voice is not easy. For many, feelings of guilt run through the mind like ruts in unimproved terrain. Though guilt is painful, it provides a kind of security. Some slaves prefer the security of bondage over the uncertainties of freedom.

The person who feels sorrow sees the whole landscape. Not just the ruts of sin, but the beauty of God's grace. And it is grace, not guilt, that converts.

We must be honest. Sin will trigger a sense of guilt in most Christians. It serves as a spiritual alarm system when we fall short of the Christian ideal. This signal system is not, however, the emotion of guilt. It is a warning that something may be wrong. Whether the alarm is true or false, this initial sense of guilt can lead to either the debilitating emotion of guilt or to the enhancing emotion of godly sorrow.

CLAUQUE

(Continued from p. 1)

ship of Jesus our Lord. A claqué of people who worship Jesus for their own profit arise in every generation. You could name a few, could you not? Even ministers can want church growth, conversions, members by profession of faith, greater offerings, and bigger Sunday Schools for all the wrong reasons—for his own vested interests. One definition of a hypocrite is: a person who does all the right things for all the wrong reasons.

A claqueur can be indifferent to the play or even despise it and go on clapping as he is paid to do. This fact reminds me of people like Constantine, who held his faith in Christ in one hand and in the other held the sword with which he murdered his wife, son, and other relatives. Then there is Sir John Bowring. He is famous for two things: (1) being the British governor at Hong Kong who forced the opium trade on China, and (2) for writing the hymn that goes, "In the cross of Christ I glory, / Towering o'er the wrecks of time." Remember John Newton, a claqueur who wrote in his diary that

some of his sweetest hours of devotional communion with God came as he meditated in his stateroom on board his slave ship. He even read the church liturgy twice every Sunday to his ship staff on his slave voyages. Newton, as you know, saw the light and forsook such claquish behavior.

Of course such claquelike behavior did not end with the preceding historical examples. There are those today who worship with a forked tongue. But you can be certain that Jesus knows who worships Him in spirit and in truth.

How does one conclude a "brush pile"? Perhaps I should cite Fosdick one more time: "Things that cannot stand sunlight are not healthful."⁴ Surely we have learned that one week of having nothing to hide is worth a year of covert operations.

NOTES

1. Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Hope of the World* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1933), 132.
2. Cited *ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, 133.

TOWARD AN EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP

by Jerry Pence

Pastor, The Wesleyan Church, Concordia, Kans.

Do you remember the ancient evasion technique for a teacher's question: "I know the answer, but I just can't say it"? Having something stuck on the tip of your tongue is an uncomfortable experience.

Articulating an evangelical understanding and theological approach to worship can produce that kind of discomfort. Squirring under the interrogator's lamp, we insist that we know who we are and what worship is; we just have a hard time putting it into words.

And that can lead us to ask a subsequent question out of frustration: "Why do I need to be able to tell someone else what I mean by 'worship' anyway? Isn't worship something that just comes naturally when people have a numinous encounter, get caught up in an inspiring experience, or undergo religious conversion?" For some, worship is something to be done, not examined. It is too mystical and subjective for explanation. Besides, intellectual probing might rob it of its wonder and power.

Recognizing these evasions as the defenseless self-defenses that they are, however, we are left with the original question. In an increasingly secularized generation that minimizes the validity and value of spiritual things, we cannot afford to avoid giving a clear response. Secularization is a pervasive worldview that rejects the dichotomy of secular over against sacred.

Thus worship designed in a way that suggests a correlation between two worlds, ours and God's, has a hard time in making sense to those in our society for whom the "real" world is exactly the one they can see, touch, and use. Talk of "another" world, above and beyond our world, sounds like meaningless gibberish

or a string of nonsense syllables. The two persistent criteria by which reality is tested are: is it verifiable? is it usable? Applied to the exercise of worship in our traditional modes of singing, speaking, and "communing with the eternal," these criteria would put us on the spot.¹

Our integrity is at stake if we do not adequately explain our view of reality to others. Bruce Leafblad, associate professor of church music and worship at Bethel College and Seminary, challenges us to face the issue squarely and to stop merely going through the motions with his charge that

we who are identified with evangelical Christianity are hard put to demonstrate any serious concern for worship in this century. As scholars we have failed to study worship, or give attention to the theology of worship. Principles of biblical worship are not sought as the foundation of local church practice. Most of our evangelical seminaries have not even offered full courses in worship.²

If indeed we know the answer, we must find the words to say it.

TWO DEFINITIONS

Before attempting to point out some of the theological considerations essential to an evangelical view of worship, it will be necessary to define at least two terms: *worship* and *evangelical*.

It is often noted in books on the subject that the English word *worship* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *we-orthscipe*, which later became *worthship*, and finally *worship*. Worship means "to attribute worth" and in-

volves the declaration and affirmation of someone or something's supreme value. Ralph Martin defines worship as "the dramatic celebration of God in his supreme worth in such a manner that his 'worthiness' becomes the norm and inspiration of human living."³

Worship, in its broadest sense, is man's response to God's revelation. It is a divine/human encounter in which God, taking the initiative, brings men and women into personal contact with himself, prompting their responses of praise and service, and enabling them to live with hope in a fallen world.

Worship is never the product of human engineering "and cannot be equated with man's other discoveries of, and reactions to, his rich and many-levelled environment."⁴ It is always a matter of revelation followed by response, a dialogue pattern of communication frequently portrayed in the Bible. God speaks; we answer. God acts; we accept and give. God gives; we receive. God calls; we commit ourselves to His will. God reveals himself "to and in His creation 'by diverse portions and in diverse manners' conditioned by the limitations of the humble creature He has made."⁵ And it is this self-disclosure that inspires human devotion, which is expressed in many ways and degrees, from the most crude to the most sublime.

Emphasizing the divine initiative is a necessary corrective to the subjectivist notion that worship is a purely human activity, man's own approach to God in Cain-like presumptuousness. Willimon and Wilson, in *Preaching and Worship in the Small Church*, caution us that

in recent years there has been a tendency to look upon Sunday worship as therapy, motivation for social action, an aid to fellowship, a stimulus for individual meditation, or an artistic performance. All these things may occur in worship, but when they are the *purpose* of worship, then what we are engaged in is not Christian worship. In worship, we meet and are met by God, as well as by the people of God. All worship worthy of the name must be an occasion for such meeting.⁶

Christian worship is an activity that belongs uniquely to the church. Other social institutions emphasize education, fellowship, social service, and moral training, but no other group gathers for the primary objective of worshipping God as He has revealed himself in Jesus Christ.

Yet within Christendom there are many traditions of worship—Catholic, Reformed, Anglican, free, and Eastern churches, among others—and within these traditions are found many strands that accent various aspects of the expression of faith in worship. One of these varieties is known as *evangelicalism*.

Evangelical is a term with a debated meaning, a fact that theologian Donald Bloesch addresses:

It is commonly said that evangelicalism connotes a particular kind of experience rather than a distinctive doctrinal stance. My contention is that to be evangelical means to hold to a definite doctrine as well as to participate in a special kind of experience. The experience of the forgiveness of sins through the atoning sacrifice of Christ and the assurance of salvation through the gift of the Spirit will always be paramount in evangelical religion. But doctrine is no less essential, since experience, even genuine experience, that



is not rightly understood can promote heresy rather than orthodoxy.⁷

Strictly speaking, the term evangelical crosses all sectarian lines. However, it is commonly used to refer to the religion moored in the Protestant Reformation, and the subsequent spiritual movements known as Pietism, Puritanism, and revivalism.

Accordingly, evangelical has a dual significance. Its primary concern is theological, focusing on "the message of the New Testament church regarding salvation through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To be evangelical means that we are justified only by grace through faith in Him who suffered and died for our sins."⁸

The seven-point statement of faith of the National Association of Evangelicals summarizes the doctrinal emphases of the "true evangelical" for us. These points affirm (1) the inspiration, infallibility, and authority of the Bible; (2) the Trinity; (3) the deity, virgin birth, sinlessness, miracles, vicarious atonement, bodily resurrection, ascension, and personal return of Christ; (4) the necessity of regeneration for salvation; (5) the present, indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of enablement for godly living; (6) the resurrection and judgment of men; and (7) the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.⁹

In addition to its theological significance, evangelical also refers to the spirit in which these theological understandings are proclaimed, "the spirit of zeal and earnestness."¹⁰ Enthusiasm, joyous witness to the faith, and missionary zeal in God's service are hallmarks of evangelical Christianity.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EVANGELICAL WORSHIP

Historically, systematic theologians have busily and capably enunciated the faith by which the church lives. But specific theologies of worship are hard to find. Dr. Ralph Martin declares that "in fact, there is far more

variety and flexibility in regard to the meaning and practice of the corporate worship of God than in relation to what Christians believe about God, the world, or the person of Christ—even in these days of doctrinal latitudinarianism.”¹¹

What, then, are some of the major themes one would expect to find reflected in an evangelical theology and praxis of worship?

1. Evangelical worship must be characterized by a sense of the numinous.

As noted earlier, the relevance of worship is being increasingly called into question by the secular-minded, who reject out of hand the supernatural and divine. Yet we must affirm that “to be at all meaningful in any Judeo-Christian context, worship must address God the creator who is at once above us and yet graciously near, ‘the beyond who is in the midst.’”¹² In Rudolf Otto’s phrase, God is *mysterium tremendum ac fascinans*, a mystery both terrifying and appealing.¹³

Evangelical worship must encourage us to reverence the transcendence, holiness, sovereignty, apartness, majesty, and eternity of God. “Worship is not a social get-together but a state of being grasped by the holy God. We worship not for the sake of mutual edification but to give glory and honor to God.”¹⁴

The failure of much evangelical worship to be characterized by this awesome sense of the numinous is one of its glaring faults. While concerned about getting multitudes past the pearly gates and into the sweet by-and-by, we have forgotten that the passwords into His presence are “Repent,” “Bow down,” “Keep silence,” not “Honk if you love Jesus” or “Smile, God loves you.” To humanize worship by minimizing the holy terror of approaching God is to impoverish it. Yes, the veil has been rent in twain, but the place behind it is still the holy of holies.

Faith is what Evelyn Underhill calls the living heart of evangelical worship; it is humility in the Divine Presence. “It involves both *fides* and *fiducia*; the awed recognition of God in His utter distinctness, and the childlike trust in His mercy and grace.”¹⁵ Worship is devoid of biblical faith when it treats God with a “buddy-buddy” familiarity, which, while intended to make people feel comfortable in His mysterious and demanding presence, in fact makes worship common and ordinary, a form of emotional exercise that has little effect on life the rest of the week.

2. Evangelical worship must have a Christocentric focus.

God is worthy of our worship simply because He is God—transcendent, sovereign, holy, the Almighty, the King of the universe, the Lord of all. But we also worship God because of His gracious actions toward us.

The saving acts of God are central to our personal and corporate worship. We are completely dependent upon Him as our Creator. Although we have estranged ourselves from Him by sin, He has entered the world and acted in history to save us. In doing so, He calls us to become His people and enters into a covenant relationship with us, promising His faithful love to those who keep faith and obey Him. With confident hope we anticipate the consummation of His work at the end of the age.

Following the pattern of worship as response to divine revelation, the saving acts of God in the Exodus and at Sinai formed the central core of Jewish worship. But it is the Christ-event that gives meaning to Christian worship. Robert Webber identifies worship as “the action that brings the Christ-event into the community gathered in the name of Jesus.”¹⁶ Through worship the saving acts of God in Christ are recapitulated for each succeeding generation, the people of God are reinforced for their mission in the world, and the eschaton is rehearsed and anticipated.

Evangelical worship is Christocentric in that “we worship the Father, in and through the work of the Son, by the Holy Spirit in praise and thanksgiving for the work of redemption.”¹⁷ Christ is both the reason for and the Mediator of our worship, communicating the Father’s love and blessings to us, and communicating our adoration and devotion to the Father.

Evangelical worship proclaims through Word and rite the saving action of God in Christ. We acknowledge the role of Christ in Creation, recognize the cosmic dimension of the Fall, affirm that God became flesh in the Incarnation, rejoice that sin and death were destroyed by Christ’s death, point to the Resurrection as the beginning of the new creation, and look forward to the Consummation when Christ’s second coming will complete His work of destroying evil’s power and establishing the new heavens and the new earth. Through worship, “the church proclaims, recites, recounts, recreates the deeds of Christ through which its redemption was accomplished.”¹⁸

3. The freedom and direct action of the Spirit are essential elements in an evangelical understanding of worship.

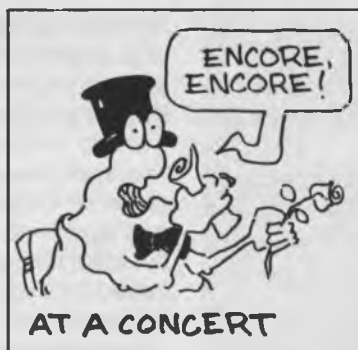
The pneumatological emphasis in Christian worship is easily lost, whether because of suffocating formalism, an intellectualizing of worship that overdoes noetic elements (as seen, for example, in “bring your notebook” expository preaching styles that replace worship with Bible workshops), or reductionist tendencies that limit God and His actions to predictable clichés and formulas.

Evangelicals must remember, however, that worship is not initiated by men. It is our response to the prevenient God, whose Spirit enables and empowers us for worship. Robert Webber points out that “a New Testament theology of the Holy Spirit seems to suggest an actual interaction between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man—a kind of meeting that takes place between the two.”¹⁹ It is only in the power of the Spirit that Christian worship occurs. It is the Spirit who reveals Christ to us through the Word and sacraments.

Worship does not just happen. It is the result of the past and present work of the Holy Spirit. Our biblical and historical worship tools are products of the Spirit’s inspiration. The spiritual conversion that makes worshipers out of sinners is His handiwork. It is the *Paraklētos* of God who arouses in us a desire to worship worthily, so that we want to offer our best to God. Christians are told to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), to pray in the Spirit (Rom. 8:26-27), and to worship in the Spirit (Phil. 3:3; 1 Cor. 14:16; 1 John 3:24).

Evangelicals are convinced that no public worship plans must be set in concrete. “Do not quench the

Pontius' Puddle



Spirit" (1 Thess. 5:19, NKJV) is a caution always needed in the church. The freedom and activity of the Spirit are needed to provide space for spontaneity and contemporary relevance in worship. As Ralph Martin puts it, "There is always a need to be alive to what the Spirit is saying to the churches in our times and to fashion our prayer, confessions, hymns, and proclamation to speak relevantly to our contemporaries without betraying the ancient message of God's truth."²⁰

Having said all this, however, we must not deny the value of incorporating set, historical forms in evangelical services. Evangelicals have a largely unclaimed inheritance, a treasury of liturgical thought, expression, and emphasis, that belongs to us as members of the Church universal and heirs of the Protestant Reformation. Set forms can help us preserve the rich heritage of historical Christian faith. Set forms enable us to benefit from the wisdom of the ages. Planned, set forms protect congregations from the subjective tastes and whimsical fancies of the clergy. The freedom of the Spirit is not threatened by prearranged orders of service. Liturgies need not have a dampening effect on the spontaneity and contemporary relevance of evangelical worship.

The freedom of the Spirit in worship, it must be noted especially for those with a revivalist heritage, does not mean we have license to vent emotional introspections or disrupt the planned order of worship at will. The freedom of the Spirit, instead, is a liberation from the control of sin, unhealthy emotions, and other barriers to faith, so that we may rise into God's presence to worship Him in spirit and in truth. The freedom of the Spirit is the ability to hear, respond to, obey, and serve God—things we are incapable of in and of ourselves, as the evangelical doctrine of *sola gratia* declares.

The direct action of the Spirit involves this activity of enabling the personal and corporate worship of believers. It also includes the enablement of believers to use charismatic gifts, which derive from the Holy Spirit, in the edification of the Body of Christ. Although wary of the excesses of "charismania," evangelicals are one in affirming the place of spiritual gifts in the body life and worship of the church.

4. The priesthood of the individual believer is a major premise of evangelical worship.

Closely related to the evangelical interest in the freedom and direct action of the Spirit is the declaration of the priesthood of all believers. H. Orton Wiley outlines the historical background of this affirmation:

It is one of the tragedies of church history, that the balanced form of worship as found in the apostolic

church, was so soon lost. Separated from one another, the corporate or sacramental form of worship, tended toward ritualism—a cultus, with cathedral, altar and priest; while the prophetic, or free individual worship, improperly governed, frequently resulted in the wildest forms of fanaticism. Thus from the simple, but twofold character of primitive worship with its balanced elements of the corporate and the free, a dualism arose, which through the centuries has developed into the two general types of Christianity which we now know as the catholic and the evangelical. The simplicity of worship as found in the apostolic church, had in it, both the sacramental phase with its emphasis upon unity, and the prophetic, with its freedom, its enthusiasm, its personal spontaneity, and its intense ethical demands.²¹

The priesthood of believers is a biblical doctrine that involves every member of the Body of Christ in ministry. Each person is responsible to act as his own priest by taking advantage of our immediate access to God through Christ. But each believer is also responsible to act as a priest to others, sharing in Christ's ministry of reconciling the world to God.

One hazard of this doctrinal emphasis is the abuse of it by allowing the focus on individuality to eclipse the importance of the corporate aspect of worship. "The emphasis upon each Christian 'doing his own thing'—centering his attention upon his own experience and limiting his spiritual responsibility to giving his own witness—has certainly dimmed the appreciation for true corporate worship in many instances."²² Corporate worship is "doing God's thing" together.

The chief danger, however, is that the doctrine will be neglected by those who have sought to preserve it. The evidence of neglect of the priesthood of all believers is seen most obviously in the lack of lay involvement and leadership in most evangelical worship. Willimon warns that

oftentimes Free Church Protestants, who speak the most about "the priesthood of all believers," are the most guilty of promoting clergy-dominated worship in which the minister does all the preaching, praying, speaking, acting, and leading, and the people do all the passive sitting and listening. We can do more on Sunday morning to lift up the ministry of *all* Christians in our worship, not just the ministry of the ordained Christians.²³

Clericalized worship is not evangelical worship in the purest sense. "The conduct of worship by an effective

Nazarene

Update

UPDATE EDITOR, MARK D. MARVIN, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

PRESERVING
OUR HERITAGE

Four years before his death, John Wesley wrote in the *Arminian Magazine*: "I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should exist only as a dead sect, having a form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out."

Again he wrote: "Preach the doctrine, inculcate experience, urge practice, enforce discipline. If you preach doctrine only, the people will become antinomians; if you preach experience only, they will become pharisees; and if they preach all these and do not enforce discipline, Methodism will be like a highly cultivated garden without a fence, exposed to the ravages of the wild boar of the forest."

For those of us who cherish our holiness heritage these words of warning and direction are worth prayerful pondering.

1. "*Preach the Doctrine*"—This is the doctrine of holiness in its biblical fullness, with special emphasis upon our distinctive Wesleyan urging that through a second and deeper working of God's grace we may be purified from the stony heart of self-idolatry and enabled to love God supremely and our neighbor as our own souls. One generation of silence will prove the death knell of this precious teaching. Timothy Smith warns, "We maintain only that which we constantly affirm." Our very success in evangelism and church

planting will prove our undoing unless we continue to preach the message of Christian holiness.

2. "*Inculcate Experience*"—Our people must be brought into the experience of perfect love. But how to preach this truth? "Always drawing rather than driving," Wesley says. "The experience is better caught than taught." We who proclaim this truth must be contagious witnesses ourselves! We must do our utmost to create a spiritual atmosphere where others will seek and find the fullness of God's love in a stark self-crucifixion with Christ.

3. "*Urge Practice*"—This we do by preaching and applying the Sermon on the Mount, line upon line, precept upon precept, and by faithfully teaching the ethical instructions in the epistles of Paul and John. The crisis of self-crucifixion with Christ and the infilling of God's love must deepen into an ever-widening commitment of "moment by moment" obedience to Christ and an ever-deepening appropriation of His grace. "Press the claims of Christ," says Mildred Wynkoop, "His love, His reality in the practical life. Press this, with all it means to everyone, sinner and saint alike." Holiness is a life without limits!

4. "*Enforce Discipline*"—"There was one thing about my old, blue-stocking Presbyterian father," George Buttrick once said, "his religion wasn't flabby!" The discipline of holiness is the discipline of self-denial, urged upon others by a man of God who himself is disciplined in the Spirit. When such discipline is real, the General and Special Rules of the *Manual* are tame. Just the same, we are responsible to enforce the discipline of the church by taking care that those who join us understand and accept the life-style of holiness as outlined in our rules—and by exercising care to see that those elected to office are in harmony with these standards of holy living. General Superintendent Hardy C. Powers used to urge that the rules of the church constitute a hedge about the garden of Christian graces that identify the holy life. To not keep the hedge intact is to admit the little foxes that spoil the vines, or the wild boar of the forest!

"The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage." Let us preserve the precious heritage of Christian holiness—for our children and our grandchildren. If we do, it will be at the cost of eternal vigilance. I do not fear that the people called Nazarenes will ever cease to exist either in America or around the world. But I am afraid lest they exist only as a dead sect having a form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless we hold fast the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which we first set out.

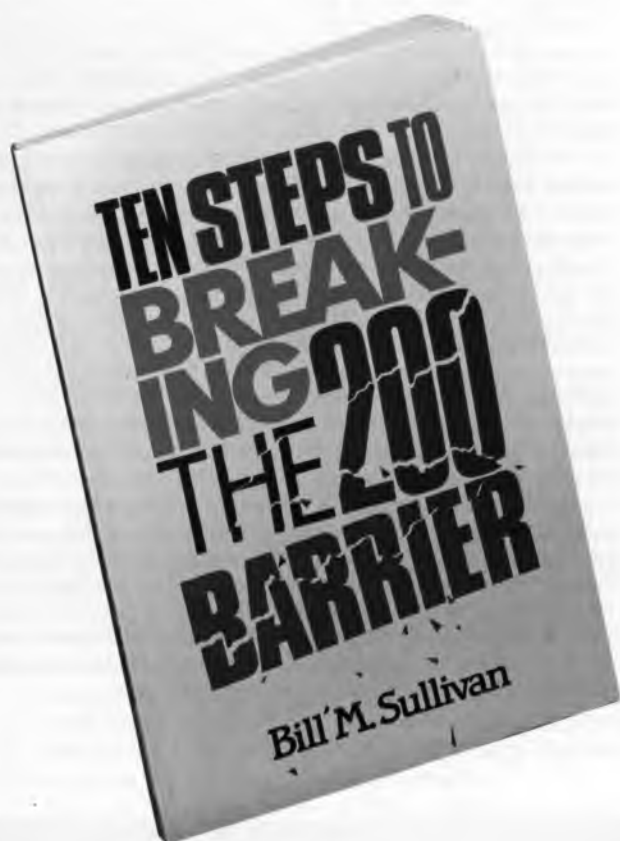


by General Superintendent
William M. Greathouse

THE 200 BARRIER

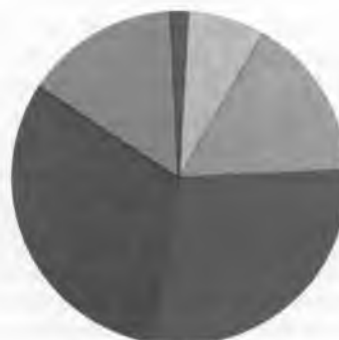
In 1977, 557 Churches of the Nazarene reported an average morning worship attendance from 100 to 149. Many pastors and laymen consider this a "good size" for future growth: an associate can often be hired at this size; there are many workers for nurture and outreach; financial support usually has a broad base. Yet after 10 years, only 104 of these churches had grown to 150 or more in average worship attendance—over 80% of the churches had failed to grow to that level.

Growth failed to materialize among slightly larger churches, also. Of 293 Churches of the Nazarene reporting between 150 and 199 in worship attendance in 1977, only 68 reached 200 or more by 1987. Over 75% had failed to cross the "200 Barrier."



557 CHURCHES

Averaging 100-149 in 1977



293 CHURCHES

Averaging 150-199 in 1977

1987
ATTENDANCE

0-49

50-99

100-149

150-199

200-249

250+

Many studies reveal the difficulty of growing a church past an average worship attendance of 200. Until recently, few studies dealt with practical solutions to the problem. Now, Dr. Bill M. Sullivan, Church Growth Division director, addresses the problem directly in *Ten Steps to Breaking the 200 Barrier*. Dr. Sullivan walks through the stages you can take to get through that "invisible barrier," giving practical suggestions and encouragement to help your church stay on the growing edge. If your church has reached this critical growth point, this book is a must for you.

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Where do we go from here?



Camenque

Out of genuine concern for the pastor's dilemma at retirement, when he has no real estate investment built up for a retirement home, a question is being sounded by local churches throughout the denomination:

"How can we provide our pastor with an adequate salary now and also an adequate retirement nest egg without selling the parsonage?"

There is a simple answer:

Under the Nazarene Supplemental Retirement Program, a local church may provide a RETIRE-

MENT HOUSING FUND for their pastor by contributing into the Tax-Sheltered Annuity (403b) Plan. Under this plan:

- The local church can contribute and TAX SHELTER a monthly amount on the pastor's behalf.
- SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST is paid on contributions with NO deduction for administrative costs.
- NO TAX is due until funds are withdrawn, and then Nazarene ministers may request an amount of the withdrawal as tax-free "housing allowance" to the extent allowed by law.
- Numerous withdrawal options allow for maximum flexibility in retirement planning.

Many Nazarene pastors have taken advantage of the Nazarene Supplemental Retirement Program on their own. Now church boards can use the RETIREMENT HOUSING FUND to take maximum advantage of this special program designed especially for Nazarene ministers and church employees.

For more information, contact:

Board of Pensions and Benefits USA
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131
(816-333-7000)

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"The success of our evangelistic efforts in the many world areas depends largely on our effective local ministry. These choice leaders, preachers, and teachers are used of God to build His kingdom in their own areas. They deserve and depend upon a constant source of power provided by a praying church around the world."

NWMS Handbook and Constitution

"The ministry of our brothers and sisters in Christ in the many countries where the Church of the Nazarene is working is incalculable. We need to become better acquainted with, and

more aware of, the tremendous contribution to the church made by those who are citizens of other lands. The churches in so-called mission fields are maturing, and local leaders are assuming great responsibilities. This is as it should be and must be if the church is to become internationalized.

"This places much responsibility on everyone to pray for the local leaders and Bible school personnel."

—Dr. Evelyn Withoff
July/August/September 1977
Council Tidings

EVANGELIST'S DIRECTORY

EVANGELISM MINISTRIES, CHURCH OF THE
NAZARENE INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

(Monthly slates published in the first issue of the "Herald of Holiness" each month)

A

ABNEY, JOHN K., JR. (R) 1202 Lincova Bay Dr. Nashville, TN 37214
 •ABRAMS, KATHY. (R) Rte. 1, Rose Hill, IA 52586
 ADAMS, MICHAEL D. (C) 1220 Altman, Merritt Island, FL 32952
 ▽AGNER, J. C. Rte. 1, Box 2570, Lee, FL 32059
 ALEXANDER, JERROLD. (R) 1647 Main St., Elwood, IN 46036
 •ALLEN, JAMES. (R) 2803 Jonathan, Texarkana, TX 75503
 ▽ALLEN, JIMMIE A. 205 N. Murray, No. 244, Colorado Springs, CO 80916
 APPLE, DALE. (R) 1128 S.W. 32nd, Oklahoma City, OK 73109
 •ARCHER, RONALD E. (R) 4304 N. Peniel, Bethany, OK 73008
 AREY, DONALD, EVANGELISM MINISTRIES. (C) RFD 1, Anagance Ln., Wolfboro, NH 03894
 ARMSTRONG, CHARLES. (R) 2614 E. Yukon, Tampa, FL 33604
 ♦ARMSTRONG, LEON, LINDA, & LANCE. (C) No. 10 Foxcroft Dr., Blue Ridge, VA 24064
 ARMSTRONG, ROBERT W. (R) P.O. Box 187, Skowhegan, ME 04976
 ASBURY, MILDRED. (R) 404 Perrymont Ave., Lynchburg, VA 24502
 ATKINSONS, DEAN & PAT. (R) Atkinson Family Crusade, P.O. Box 517, New Castle, OK 73065-0517
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B

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 BALLARD, JOHN. (R) 3400 Sevier Ave., Knoxville, TN 37920
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 •BELL, JEAN. (C) P.O. Box 776, Bethany, OK 73008
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C

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 CARPENTER, ROBERT. (R) 4805 Airport Rd., Nampa, ID 83651
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 CLARK, RON. (R) 1522 Hwy. 261, Newburgh, IN 47630
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 ▽CULBERTSON, BERNIE. 100 N.E. 8th Pl., Hermiston, OR 97838
 CUNNINGHAM, GARY. (R) 617 S. 18th St., New Castle, IN 47362

D

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 DAILY, ROBERT. (R) 117 Country Club Dr., Hendersonville, TN 37075
 DALE, BENNIE. (R) 717 Proctor Pl., Midwest City, OK 73110
 •DALE, TOM. (C) 911 Florence, Nampa, ID 83651
 ▽DARNELL, H. E. P.O. Box 929, Vivian, IA 71082
 ▽DAVIS, HAROLD. 1955 Moran Rd., Choctaw, OK 73030
 DAVIS, HAROLD L. (R) 1119 Champion Dr., Cary, NC 27511
 DAW, LEONARD J. (R) 3288 Wyoming Ave., Xenia, OH 45385
 DAWSON, JAMES A. (R) Rte. 1, Box 189, Wapakoneta, OH 45895
 DAY, JOHN. (R) 4655 Tempe Ct., Indianapolis, IN 46241
 ▽DEBOLT, TED & DOROTHY. 1736 Dianne Ave., Evansville, IN 47714
 DELBRIDGE, M. EUGENE. (R) P.O. Box 68, Carson, WA 98610
 ♦DELL, JIMMY. (C) 4802 E. Mitchell Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85018
 DENNIS, CARL V. (R) 123 Hwy. 70, Mount Juliet, TN 37122
 ♦DENNISON, MARVIN E. (C) 1208 S.E. Green Rd., Tecumseh, KS 66542
 DEPASQUALE, JAMES. (R) P.O. Box 40160, Pasadena, CA 91104
 DEWEY, KENNETH. (R) P.O. Box 283, Antioch, TN 37013
 ♦DICKSON, RICHARD, LIVING WAY GOSPEL TEAM. (R) 821 Lonsdale Dr., Anderson, IN 46014
 ▽DISHON, MELVIN. 936 Shine Ln., Lot 184, Bowling Green, KY 42101
 ▽DIXON, GEORGE & CHARLOTTE. c/o Evangelism Ministries*
 DODDS, JOHN. (C) 272 Jack Oak Rd., St. Marys, OH 45885
 ♦DODDS, LARRY W. (R) Rte. 5, Box 385, Flint Valley Estates, Burlington, IA 52601
 DODGE, KENNETH L. (R) 1150 W. Winton Ave., Hayward, CA 94545
 •DOOLITTLE, KEVIN. (R) Rte. 1, Box 54, Newton, NJ 07860
 •DOWNING, ANN. (C) Box 767, Hendersonville, TN 37075
 DOWTY, PAUL. (R) Rte. 3, Box 741, Broken Bow, OK 74728
 DRESSLER, R. H. (R) Box 750177, Duncan, OK 73573
 DUNCAN, HERSHEL. (R) 350 Birch Dr., Charlestown, IN 47111
 •DUNMIRE, RALPH & JOANN. (C) 202 Garwood Dr., Nashville, TN 37210
 DUNN, DON. (C) P.O. Box 132, Bartlett, OH 45713
 •DURR, DON. (R) 1127 Oakwood Dr., Dunedin, FL 33528
 ♦DUTTON, BARRY & TAVIA. (C) P.O. Box 119, Clarksburg, MD 20871

E

•EBY, PAUL & MARTHA. (R) P.O. Box 100441, Nashville, TN 37210
 •EDWARDS, BOBBY. (R) 1080 Jameson Ct., New Castle, IN 47362
 EDWARDS, CHARLES. (C) 19924 Teresa Way, Cerritos, CA 90701
 •EIFERT, FRANKLIN. (R) 5902 N. Himes Ave., Tampa, FL 33614
 ELZY, LEE. (R) P.O. Box 93, Shawnee, OK 74801
 ♦ESSELBURN, BUD (THE KING'S MESSENGERS). (C) S.R. 60 N., Rte. 1, Warsaw, OH 43844
 EVERMAN, WAYNE. (R) 109 Cox St., Stanton, KY 40380

(C) Commissioned (R) Registered ♦Preacher & Song Evangelist •Song Evangelist ▽Retired Elders
 *Evangelism Ministries, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131

*An adequate budget for evangelism at the beginning of each church year is imperative for each congregation.
 A revival savings account is useful in building toward adequate support for the evangelist.*

F

- ◆**FADER, WES & MARY.** (C) Quail Ridge Dr., Rte. 3, Box 310, Salisbury, MD 21801
- FAULK, A. RAY.** (R) Rte. 1, Box 75, Crowley, LA 70526
- ◆**FELKNER, HENRY.** (R) 173 Hartz, Coppell, TX 75019
- FERGUSON, GEORGE.** (R) P.O. Box 435, Pulaski, TN 38478
- ◆**FIGHTMASTER, ANTHONY.** (R) 1100 W. Jeffery, No. 76, Kankakee, IL 60901
- FILES, GLORIA & DOROTHY ADAMS.** (C) 1102 N. Peniel Ave., Avon Park, FL 33825
- FISHER, CLAIR H.** (R) Rd 1, 103 Valley View Rd., Phoenixville, PA 19460
- ▽**FISHER, C. WILLIAM.** No. 1, Antigua Ct., Coronado, CA 92118
- FLETCHER, RAY.** (R) Box 6225, Elgin, OK 73538
- ▽**FLORENCE, ERNEST E.** P.O. Box 458, Hillsboro, OH 45133
- FLOYD, TOM.** (R) 5543 W. Michigan, Glendale, AZ 85308
- FORTNER, ROBERT E.** (C) Box 322, Carmi, IL 62821
- FOSTER, A. D.** (R) 1017 N. 20th St., St. Joseph, MO 64501
- FRANK, RICHARD A.** (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
- ◆**FRAZER, WILMA.** (R) 305 High St., Brilliant, OH 43913
- FREELAND, RON E.** (C) Rte. 1, Etzler Dr., Apt. 12, Salem, IN 47167
- FREEMAN, MARY ANN.** (R) P.O. Box 139, Gas City, IN 46933
- ◆**FREY, FAMILY DONALD.** (R) The Frey Family, 410 S. Clay, Sturgis, MI 49091
- ▽**FRODGE, HAROLD C.** Rte. 2, Geff, IL 62842

G

- GALVEZ, MARCO.** (R) 316 N. Lincoln, Barnesville, OH 43713
- GARDNER, JOHN M.** (C) 4102 Carlisle Rd., Lakeland, FL 33803
- GAUTHORP, WAYLAND.** (C) Rte. 1, Box 97AA, Crowley, LA 70526
- GERBIG, BERNICE.** (R) 315 N. 8th St., Boonville, IN 47601
- GIBSON, NORRIS** (Tobie & Company), (R) 5069 Warm Springs Rd., Columbus, GA 31909
- GOLAY, GEORGE.** (R) 279 Boice Rd. NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405
- GOODWIN, LESLIE.** (R) 12181 Rich, Loveland, OH 45140
- ◆**GORDON, BOB.** (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
- ◆**GORMANS, THE SINGING (CHARLES & ANN).** (R) 12104 Linkwood Ct., Louisville, KY 40229
- GOULD, LOREN W.** (C) 4479 Hialeah Dr., Virginia Beach, VA 23464
- ◆**GRABKE, RONALD & MARTHA.** (C) 225 Pleasantview Dr., Braintree, MA 02184
- ▽**GRAY, C. PAUL.** 4016 Riverside Dr., Bethany, OK 73008
- ◆**GREEN, JAMES & ROSEMARY.** (C) Box 385, Canton, IL 61520
- GRIFFIN, GEORGE.** (R) Longvue Dr., Wintersville, OH 43952
- GRIMES, ANDREW.** (R) 444 W. Main St., Chillicothe, OH 45601
- ◆**GRINDLEY, GERALD & JANICE.** (R) 414 W. Oliver, Owosso, MI 48867
- GROVES, C. WILLIAM.** (C) 3986 Cypress Ave., Grove City, OH 43123
- GUNTER, WILLIAM.** (R) 12609 29th Pl. W., Everett, WA 98204

H

- ◆**HAINES, GARY.** (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
- HALL, CARL N.** (C) P.O. Box 7086, Clearwater, FL 33518
- HALL, DAVID.** (R) 3220 N. Wildan, Springfield, MO 65803
- ◆**HANSON, BRIAN.** (C) 3596 Panama Dr., Westerville, OH 43081
- HARRISON, ROBERT.** (R) 7215 Acacia, Leander, TX 78641
- HARTMAN, LEWIS.** (R) 3643 Rockville Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46222
- HARTZLER, MARVIN.** (R) 3531 E. 21st St., Casper, WY 82609
- HAWKINS, RAY.** (R) 1615 Kickapoo, Pueblo, CO 81001
- HILL, BOYD D.** (C) Rte. 1, Box 596-A, Lanett, AL 36863
- ▽**HINKLE, FRED C.** Rte. 1, Box 102, Tishomingo, OK 73460
- ◆**HISE, RON.** (R) 2035 Hancock, Demotte, IN 46310
- HOECKLE, WESLEY W.** (R) 642 Vaky, Corpus Christi, TX 78404
- HOLDER, SYBIL.** (R) 249 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, NY 11225
- HOLSINGER, MARK.** (C) 9231 Aero Dr., Pico Rivera, CA 90660

- HOLT, JAMES.** (R) 6220 Old Mill Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46241
- HOOTS, BOB.** (C) 309 Adair St., Columbia, KY 42278
- ◆**HOPKINS, RODNEY.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 546A, Many, LA 71449
- ◆**HORNE, ROGER & BECKY.** (R) P.O. Box 17496, Nashville, TN 37217
- ▽**HOWARD, DICK.** 7901 N.W. 28th Terr., Bethany, OK 73008
- HOWARD, MICHAEL.** (R) Rte. 3, Box 6A, Robeline, LA 71469
- HUBBARD, JEFFIE.** (R) 3213 W. Ave. T, Temple, TX 76501
- HUBARTT, LEONARD.** (R) 8612 Timbermill Pl., Fort Wayne, IN 46804
- HUGHES, MRS. JOYCE.** (C) Rte. 7, Box 114, Clarksville, TN 37043
- HUNDLEY, JOHN D.** (C) P.O. Box 764, Nashville, GA 31639

I

- ▽**IDE, CHARLES.** 4925 Cypress Gardens Rd., No. 124, Winter Haven, FL 33884
- INGLAND, WILMA.** (R) 1170 Princeton Rd., Monroeville, PA 15146
- IRWIN, JAMES.** (R) 1090 Muldowney Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15207

J

- JACK, GLORIA JEAN.** (R) 701 Kenwood Dr., Russell, KY 41169
- ◆**JACKSON, PAUL & TRISH.** (C) Box 739, Meade, KS 67864
- JAMES, RANDALL.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 138, Middletown, IN 47356
- ◆**JANTZ, CALVIN & MARJORIE.** (C) 31 Holly Dr., Olathe, KS 66062
- JANTZ, ORLANDO.** (R) HCR 1, Box 185, Minneola, KS 67865
- JAYMES, RICHARD W.** (R) 617 W. Gambier, Mount Vernon, OH 43050
- ◆**JEFFRIES, JEFF & JAN.** (R) 3140 Tess Ave. N.E., No. 220, Salem, OR 97301
- JENNINGS, C. RAY.** (R) 2700 Jones St., Sioux City, IA 51104
- ◆**JEWELL, BONNIE.** (R) 1311 Carroll Dr., Kent, OH 44240
- JOHNSON, ALBERT.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 217, Kenbridge, VA 23944
- JOHNSON, BOB.** (R) P.O. Box 499, Woodland Park, CO 80863
- JOHNSON, DONALD.** (R) Box 196, Ogden, IL 61659
- ◆**JOHNSON, RON.** (C) 3208 Eighth St. E., Lewiston, ID 83501
- JONES, BERT.** (C) 1926 Lakeside Dr., Erie, PA 16511
- JONES, EARL.** (R) 8511 N.W. 7th St., Pembroke Pines, FL 33024
- ◆**JONES, TERRY.** (C) 2002 Judy Ln., Pasadena, TX 77502
- ◆**JOnte, JOHN.** (R) 3905 N.W. 56th Pl., Oklahoma City, OK 73112
- JORDAN, RONALD.** (R) 4962 Ridge Park Dr., Memphis, TN 38128
- ◆**JUSTICE, MEL & DONNA.** (C) 1618 Chapel St., Dayton, OH 45404

K

- KEENA, EARL.** (C) 2160 D St., Oroville, CA 95965
- ◆**KENYON, PAUL.** (R) 1577 W. Second St., Xenia, OH 45385
- ◆**KIDDER, KERMIT.** (R) 516 Flamingo Dr., Lakeland, FL 33803
- KING, DENNIS.** (R) 111 Hillcrest Dr., Newburgh, IN 47630
- ▽**KNIGHT, JOHN L.** 4000 N. Thompkins, Bethany, OK 73008
- KOHR, CHARLES A.** (C) Rte. 2, Box 360, Brookville, PA 15825
- ▽**KRAUTER, RAYMOND C.** 4305 Snow Mountain Rd., Yakima, WA 98908
- ◆**KRAUTER, DARREN.** (R) 6216 N. Sheldon, Apt. 1908, Tampa, FL 33615

L

- LAING, GERALD.** (C) 11436 East St., Vicksburg, MI 49097
- ◆**LASSELL, JANETTE.** (C) P.O. Box 350, Fort Scott, KS 66701
- LASSELL, RAY.** (C) P.O. Box 350, Fort Scott, KS 66701
- LAWSON, WAYNE.** (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
- LAXSON, KIP.** (R) 55 Hart St., Apt. 10, Nashville, TN 37210
- ◆**LAXSON, WALLY & GINGER.** (C) Rte. 3, Box 118, Athens, AL 35611
- ◆**LAYCOCK, ERIC L.** (R) 115 Crosthwaite Ave., North Hamilton, ON L8H 4V3 CAN
- ◆**LECKNONE, LARRY.** (C) 403 E. Main, Morenci, MI 49256
- LEE, RALPH.** (R) 243 Elm St., No. 109, Everett, WA 98203
- LEIGH, GILBERT.** (R) 5004 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60651
- ▽**LEONARD, J. C.** 1410 Armory, Charlton, IA 50049
- ◆**LEPTER, DOUGLAS & SAMUELLA.** (C) 821 Springdale Ave., Annapolis, MD 21403
- ▽**LESTER, FRED R.** 7404 Ed Rice, Mesa, AZ 85208
- LIDDELL, P. L.** (C) 3530 W. Allen Rd., Howell, MI 48843
- LISTON, CLARENCE.** (R) P.O. Box 23576, Tucson, AZ 85734
- LITTLE, HAROLD.** (R) 9907 White Oak, No. 114, Northridge, CA 91325
- LOHR, DONALD.** (C) P.O. Box 7056, Charleston, WV 25356
- ◆**LORENZEN, LINDA.** (R) Rte. 3, Box 231A, Blanchester, OH 45107
- LOUGHRIDGE, WILLIAM.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 38, Wister, OK 74966
- LOVE, ROBERT.** (R) 6425 Nanette, Colorado Springs, CO 80907
- ◆**LOVING, BECKY.** (R) 1101 S. Park Rd., Texarkana, TX 75503
- ▽**LUFF, CLAUD.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 166A, Oakland City, IN 47660
- LYBARGER, EVERETT.** (C) P.O. Box 1534, Conway, AR 72032

M

- MACK, WILLIAM M.** (R) 106 Youpon Dr., Hubert, NC 28539
- ◆**MADDOX, HOMER & MARTHA.** (R) 1917 Wilkens St., Indianapolis, IN 46221
- MANER, ROBERT E.** (C) P.O. Box 675, Fitzgerald, GA 31750
- MANLEY, STEPHEN.** (C) Box 522, Upland, IN 46989
- MANN, THURL & MARY KAY.** (R) 90 Sycamore Ln., Fort Myers, FL 33908
- ▽**MARLIN, BEN.** P.O. Box 5572, Deltona, FL 32728
- ▽**MARSH, MILTON.** (R) Box 234, Remington, IN 47977
- ▽**MARTIN, LEON.** Rte. 3, Box 242A, Bonham, TX 75418
- MATTER, DAN & ANN.** (R) 2617 Carew St., Fort Wayne, IN 46805
- ▽**MAX, HOMER.** Rte. 3, Box 217, Knoxville, PA 50138
- ▽**MAY, JOHN.** RD 1, Box 17-SG, Colliers, WV 26035
- MAYO, CLIFFORD.** (R) Star Rte. 1, Dumont, TX 79232
- ◆**MCABEE, JAMES.** (C) 103 Loretta Dr., Spartanburg, SC 29301
- ◆**MCALLIE, JAMES.** (R) Rte. 6, Box 254, Columbus, IN 47201
- MC COOL, EARL.** (C) 325 Sunshine Acres Dr., Eugene, OR 97401
- McCORKLE, ROB.** (R) 7606 W. 86th St., Overland Park, KS 66212
- ▽**McDOWELL, DORIS.** 540 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre, CA 91024
- McELFRESH, RONALD.** (C) 1964 Osage Cir., Olathe, KS 66062
- McELROY, HUGH.** (R) 1237 9th St., West Portsmouth, OH 45662
- McFARLAND, CARLYLE.** (R) R.R. 3, Box 120, Tipton, IN 46072
- ◆**McFERRIN, RICK & LANETTE.** (R) Rte. 8, Box 300, Lot 13, Muncie, IN 47302
- McGUFFEY, JAMES.** (R) 1580 Cape Charles Ct., Cicero, IN 46034
- McKELLIPS, DALLAS.** (C) P.O. Box 921, Bethany, OK 73008
- ◆**McKINNON, JUANITA.** (C) Box 126, Institute, WV 25112
- ◆**McMAHAN, W. T. & MARGARET.** (R) 4218 Lazard St., Chattanooga, TN 37412
- ◆**McNISH, PHYLLIS.** (R) 4527 N.W. Geronimo Terr., Topeka, KS 66618
- McWHIRTER, STUART.** (C) P.O. Box 458, Corydon, IN 47112
- ▽**MEADOWS, NAOMI.** 2626 Washington Ave., Lot 65, Vincennes, IN 47591
- MEEK, WESLEY.** (R) 5713 S. Shartel, Oklahoma City, OK 73109
- MEENACH, CHRIS.** (R) Rte. 2, Franklin Furnace, OH 45629
- ◆**MEHR, BETHANY.** (R) Box 37, South Lyon, MI 48178
- MELVIN, DOLORES.** (C) HC 60, Box 224, Greenup, KY 41144
- ◆**MEREDITH, DWIGHT & NORMA JEAN.** (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
- METCALF, HENRY.** (R) P.O. Box 27, HCR 61, Island Palm, VT 05846
- ▽**MEYER, VIRGIL & DOROTHY.** 3112 Willow Oak Dr., Fort Wayne, IN 46809
- ◆**MICKEY, BOB.** (C) 504 N. Sixth, Lamar, CO 81052
- MILBURN, GARY.** (R) P.O. Box 475, Braddock Heights, MD 21714
- MILLER, RICHARD S.** (R) 2727 Sugar Tree Rd., Bethel, OH 45106
- ◆**MILLER, WALLY & CARROLL.** (C) 20110 Finnigan Hill Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97123
- MILLHUFF, CHUCK.** (C) Box 160, Olathe, KS 66062
- MILLS, CARLTON A.** (C) 24 Bow St., Danvers, MA 01923
- MITCHELL, CLINT H.** (R) 1516 E. Grayson, Sapulpa, OK 74066
- MITCHUM, CLARENCE.** (R) 5322 Newburgh Heights, Apt. D, Newburgh, IN 47630
- ▽**MIZ MAUDIE MINISTRIES.** 5117 Haleville, Memphis, TN 38116
- ◆**MOATS, MARILYN.** (R) 617 W. Oak St., Carmi, IL 62821
- MONCK, JIM.** (R) 975 Naomi Ave., Chico, CA 95926
- MONROE, JOHN.** (R) Rte. 1, Box 389, McCloud, OK 74851
- MOORE, NORMAN.** (C) P.O. Box 1510, Vista, CA 92083
- MOORE, RUDOLPH.** (C) P.O. Box 56, Fortville, IN 46040
- MORLEY, FRANK.** (C) 1322 Norwood, Anaheim, CA 92805
- MORRIS, CLYDE.** (C) 101 Bryant Lake Rd., Cross Lanes, WV 25313
- MORRIS, JAMES.** (R) 141 Dutch Rd., Charleston, WV 25302
- ◆**MOSGROVE, REED.** (R) 7536 17th Ln. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702
- ◆**MOSS, KEITH LYNN.** (R) 12750 Preston, R.R. 1, Britton, MI 49229
- MOSS, UDELL & DORIS.** (C) 1980 S. Florissant, Florissant, MO 63031
- ◆**MUNCIE, ROBERT & JANE.** (C) Rte. 1, Box 17, Cory, IN 47846
- ◆**MURPHY, MARK.** (R) 410 S. Clay St., Sturgis, MI 49091
- ◆**MYERS, HAROLD & MRS.** (C) 575 Ferris N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504
- MYERS, JACK M.** (R) P.O. Box 111134, Nashville, TN 37222
- MYERS, ROBERT.** (R) 1323 W. River Dr., Margate, FL 33063

N

- NAJARIAN, BERGE & DORIS.** (R) P.O. Box 100308, Nashville, TN 37210
- ▽**NASH, FORREST.** 725 W. Cedar, Olathe, KS 66061
- NASH, JACK W.** (R) 8840 Oakdale Ave., Northridge, CA 91324
- ◆**NAYLOR, EDWARD.** (R) 6 Rubydale Gardens, Weston, ON, Canada M9L 1B3
- ◆**NEFF, LARRY & PAT.** (C) 625 N. Water St., Owosso, MI 48867
- NEWBY, PAUL.** (R) 607 Orange Ave., Ocee, FL 32761
- NEWTON, DANIEL.** (R) P.O. Box 323, Fairland, IN 46126
- ◆**NOFFSINGER, JAMES & BOBBIE.** (R) 3310 S. 106th, Omaha, NE 68124

O

▽OLIVER, L. S. 5115 N. Carefree Cir., Colorado Springs, CO 80917
 ONEY, ROBERT, (R) Rte. 1, Box 310, Arcadia, IN 46030
 OVERTON, BILL & DOT. (C) Family Evangelists and Chalk Artist, c/o Evangelism Ministries*
 OWENS, DENNY G. (R) Box 956, Bethany, OK 73008
 ◆OYLER, CALVIN & VIRGINIA. (C) P.O. Box 727, Wellsville, KS 66092

P

PAGE, MARK. (C) P.O. Box 910, Circleville, OH 43113
 PALMER, JAMES E. (R) R.R. 6, Box 171, New Castle, IN 47362
 PALMER, NORMAN. (R) 200 W. Branigan Rd., Franklin, IN 46131
 ◆PARKER, JOHN. (R) 4004 N.W. 62nd Terr., Oklahoma City, OK 73112
 ◆PASSMORE EVANGELISTIC PARTY, THE A. A. (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
 PAUL, CHARLES. (C) Rte. 11, Box 238-C, Crossville, TN 38555
 PEAL, DONALD. (C) P.O. Box 518, Rowlett, TX 75088
 PEGO, JAMES. (R) P.O. Box 518, Noble, OK 73068
 ◆PENDLETON, JOHN. (C) 1116 S.W. 72nd, Oklahoma City, OK 73139
 PERDUE, NELSON. (C) 3732 E. Rte. 245, Cable, OH 43009
 ◆PFEIFER, DON, EVANGELISTIC TEAM. (C) P.O. Box 93, Washington Court House, OH 43160
 PFEIFER, MARK. (R) 910 Briar Ave., Washington Court House, OH 43160
 PHILPOT, LARRY. (R) 117 Kay Dr., Middletown, OH 45042
 ◆PICKERING, ROLAND. (R) Box 102, Altamonte Springs, FL 32715
 PITTENGER, TWYLA. (R) 413 N. Bowman St., Mansfield, OH 44903
 POSEY, WARREN. (C) 433 Monroe St., Fortville, IN 46040
 ◆POWELL, FRANK. (C) Rte. 10, Box 22, Caldwell, ID 83605
 ▽PRICE, JACK L. P.O. Box 395, Waxhaw, NC 28173
 ◆PRICE, JOHN. (C) Rte. 4, Box 326-1, Muldrow, OK 74948
 ▽PRICE, ROSS. 1540 Hiawatha Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80915
 ◆PRINTUP, JUANITA. (R) 540 Royalton Dr., New Haven, IN 46774
 PUTNAM, ROBERT. (R) 36 Boston Rd., North Billerica, MA 01862
 ◆PYLES, RICK. (R) 607 Moulton Pl., Portsmouth, OH 45662

Q

▽QUALLS, PAUL M. 5441 Lake Jessamine Dr., Orlando, FL 32809

R

▽READER, GEORGE H. D. P.O. Box 396, Chrisman, IL 61924
 REED, DOROTHY. (C) P.O. Box 814, Hannibal, MO 63401
 REID, WILLIAM D. (R) 1531 12th St., Tell City, IN 47586
 RICHARDS, JERRY. (R) 612 N. Grant, Chanute, KS 66720
 ◆RICHARDS, LARRY & PHYLLIS (COULTER). (C) 2310 Appleton Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46227
 ◆RICHARDSON, BARNEY T. (C) 2816 Red Fox Run, Warren, OH 44485
 RICHARDSON, KEN. (C) 1621 31st St., A, Moline, IL 61265
 RICKY, HOWARD. (C) 5011 Commercial, Madison, WI 53714
 ROBBINS, HOWARD. (R) Rte. 4, Box 364, Madison, IN 47250
 ROBERTSON, IAN. (R) 236 E. Walnut, No. H, Monrovia, CA 91016
 ROBISON, ROBERT. (R) Heaters, WV 26627
 ◆ROLL, ROBERT W. (R) 1923 W. Mansfield, Spokane, WA 99205
 ROSE, WAYNE. (R) 16007 W. 136th Terr., Olathe, KS 66062
 ROSSITER, LARRY. (R) 9867 Shellbark Ln., Cincinnati, OH 45231
 ROTH, RON. (C) 2645 E. Cozy, Springfield, MO 65804
 ◆ROYSE, C. E. (C) 2105 Taylor Ave., Racine, WI 53403
 RUNYON, DONALD. (R) 503 Defender Ave., Lake City, FL 32055

S

SCHWOB, WAYNE. (R) 1823 E. Jackson Blvd., Elkhart, IN 46516
 ◆SCRIVNER, VICKY. (R) 8610 W. 55th Terr., Merriam, KS 66203
 ▽SELFIDGE, CARL. Rte. 3, Box 662, Joplin, MO 64801
 ◆SEMRAN, C. & CINDY. (R) 7939 La Plaisance St., Monroe, MI 48161
 SEYMOUR, J. KEVIN. (R) 812 N. Clinton, Apt. 68, Olathe, KS 66061
 ◆SHADE, HAZEL. (R) 6804 Tabby Dr., Dayton, OH 45424

◆SHARP, ALBERT. (C) 7110 N.W. 46th St., Bethany, OK 73008
 ◆SHARP, CHARLES. (R) 11147 E. Indian Lake Dr., Vicksburg, MI 49097
 SHARP, ROBERT. (R) Rte. 2, Rock Falls, IL 61071
 ◆SHEPHERD, WILEY. (R) 1324 Gen. MacArthur Dr., Brentwood, TN 37027
 ◆SHIRLEY, DWIGHT. (C) 38092 Butcher Rd., Leetonia, OH 44431
 SHORT, EMORY. (R) P.O. Box 549, Parker, AZ 85344
 ◆SHOWALTER, KEITH. (R) 2620 Pennington Bend Rd., Nashville, TN 37214
 ◆SIMMONS, IRVIN. (R) 3216 N. Peniel, Bethany, OK 73008
 SMITH, BENNY. (R) 1056 S. Gelven, Springfield, MO 65804
 ▽SMITH, CHARLES HASTINGS. (C) Box 937, Bethany, OK 73008
 SMITH, DANIEL. (R) 619 N. Laspina, Tulare, CA 93274
 SMITH, DOYLE. (C) Rte. 2, Box 120, Wrightsville, GA 31096
 ◆SMITH, DUANE. (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
 ◆SMITH, JERRY & BETH. (R) 116 Westcott Cir., Port St. Joe, FL 32756
 ◆SMITH, LARRY. (C) 4301 Bryn Maur N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87107
 ▽SMITH, OTTIS E., JR., & MARGUERITE. 60 Grant St., Tidioute, PA 16351
 SOUTHERLAND, SAMUEL. (R) 5245 Timuquana Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32210
 SPARKS, S. JEFFREY. (R) 5615 Driftwood Dr., Lakeland, FL 33809
 SPEARS, DANNY. (R) Rte. 5, Box 400, Conway, AR 72032
 ◆SPEER, BROCK. (C) 5318 Anchorage Dr., Nashville, TN 37204
 SPINDEL, RAYMOND. (R) Rte. 3, Box 363, East Moline, IL 61244
 SPRAGUE, VERNON, EVANGELISTIC FAMILY. (R) 4125 Pendleton Rd., Leavittsburg, OH 44430
 SPURLOCK, WILLIAM. (R) 809 S. Waldron Ave., Avon Park, FL 33825
 STANFORTH, KEN. (C) 808 E. Main, Apt. B, Santa Paula, CA 93060
 ◆STANTON, TED & DONNA. (R) P.O. Box 722, Sarasota, FL 33578
 STARK, EDDIE. (C) 6906 N.W. 36th, Bethany, OK 73008
 STEELE, JAMES. (R) 1 S. Crosslane, Apt. 101, Boynton Beach, FL 33436
 STEVENSON, GEORGE. (C) 4021 Pebble Dr. S.E., Roanoke, VA 24014
 STEWART, ORVILLE. (R) 379 6th St. N.E., Linton, IN 47441
 ◆STONE, LOIS. (R) 10501 Southwest Hwy., Worth, IL 60482
 ◆STONE, PAUL. (R) Lakeland Manor, Shell Lake, WI 54871
 STREET, DAVID. (C) Rte. 1, Ramsey, IN 47166
 STRICKLAND, R. L. "DICK." (C) 1141 Woodhaven Ct., Springfield, OH 45503
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THANK GOD FOR REVIVALS!

In a revival in Fortville, Ind., not long ago, a young man who had been in the drug business was converted. God did a wonderful thing in Rick Mudd's life as his testimony below reveals.

Not only does the Lord love those who have grown up outside the church, but He also cares for those who have been reared in the church. Brad Walker is a pastor's son. But it takes the same grace of God for a preacher's kid as it does for anybody else, as his testimony makes clear.

It's wonderful to see people kneeling around an altar and then hear their testimonies and see them growing in the Lord. It makes revival worth it. Thank God for revivals!

EVANGELIST RUDOLPH MOORE



I'm thankful for the Lord. There hasn't been anything better in my life than Him. I was raised in a church that didn't teach that Jesus Christ could be our personal Savior. But, since I've been going to the Church of the Nazarene, I've really learned that's true, and hold that close to my heart.

When I was 16, I started hanging around with the wrong crowd. I didn't have anyone to turn to, anyone who loved me. So I turned to drugs and alcohol. I was an alcoholic by the time I was 19.

One night I took two hits of LSD. I was suicidal, and felt so lost that night that I didn't have any other hope but to just scream. I got my parents out of bed at 2:00 in the morning and told them to do something for me. They took me to a hospital Care Unit.

That's when I first heard about the Lord. They said that we could not give up our addiction or alcoholism without the help of a Higher Power. I got a Bible and began to read it. I told my parents I wanted to speak to a preacher about this. I knew God was dealing with my heart. So a preacher came. But he didn't tell me about Jesus, and when he left, I was still lost.

When I got out of the rehab center, it was hard staying straight. So I figured I'd join the Marines. After about two months, I had an LSD flashback. After two months of hard training and beginning to think I was going to be something, they told me to go home. I hadn't told them I had been at the rehab center. They have a policy that you have to wait for a year before you're out of there. Of course, they don't want to get some guy tripping out on LSD with a loaded rifle. So, I came back home.

My wife took me to a revival at the Church of the Nazarene. I'd never been to a revival before and I felt the Lord dealing with me there. I'd never felt anything like it. It was like the loneliness was chased out of my heart. For a couple weeks it was a spiritual war. The devil knew that he had had me and that I was leaving now. He saw my bags packed by the door and got mad. So he gave me a real hard fight about it. But I won. God helped me, and I'm just thankful to the Lord for that altar.

I know I'm still going to have problems. Once you're an alcoholic you can never get rid of it. But through the power of the Lord, I don't crave it any more. I know I'm going to make it.

RICK MUDD

First of all, I would like to say how much I really love the Lord and how much I didn't realize, until a recent revival, how much He does love us.

I was raised in a parsonage, but I never really gave much thought about being a Christian. It's not that I wasn't around preaching enough; I've been in some of the best revivals you could ever think about. I would get saved, and it would last for a couple weeks. For a long period of time I gave up on the Lord and the church and just played at being a Christian. I never did fool God. A lot of people could see I was playing. There were several people praying for me, and my parents always stood by me. I gave them a lot of trouble, but they always loved me. I thank them for that.

In a revival with Evangelist Jim Crabtree and Song Evangelists Larry and Phyllis Richards, I was saved and sanctified.

On the last night of the revival, the Holy Spirit broke upon the service. During the message, it was as if something just slapped me in the face. I went down to the altar and told the Lord that if He would help me out, I'd try again. One of the friends I ran around with came down right after I did and got saved. I don't think there were any teens left who weren't at the altar, praying and seeking God's help.

I found the reason I couldn't stay a Christian before was because I'd tried to run my own life. I would not let the Lord step in and try to help me. I've been in the church for a while, and I know what it is to be a Christian. But there's still a lot of things to learn. That's why we have the Bible; it's our map to heaven. We have started a Bible study for the teens on Thursday nights, and that really helps.

I would just like to thank the Lord for always sticking with me. I've rebelled and done things that weren't pleasing in God's sight. But He's always been there; and He's always there to help you.

I'm trying to live a Christian life now. I always want to have a testimony for the Lord in my heart, for what He's done for me.

I thank the Lord for evangelists and revivals, because there are a lot of people who get in through revivals. God bless you.

BRAD WALKER

NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO SCHEDULE OTHER REVIVALS IN YOUR CHURCH



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FRIENDSHIP DAY

Sunday, September 11

Friendship Day is a way church members can bring unchurched friends and relatives for a time of celebration and strengthening relationships. It is also an excellent way to focus the congregation's attention on the importance and joy of sharing

God's love with others.

Some churches accomplish this with little more effort than selecting a day, encouraging members to bring their friends, and making the day a pleasant experience for visitors. Some churches, however, may need

help motivating, equipping, and supporting their people to reach out to close acquaintances. For these churches, Evangelism Ministries recommends the following resources, available from NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE, P.O. Box 419527, Kansas City, MO 64141:

1. **FRIENDSHIP DAY: A Celebration of Friends**—This notebook clearly and simply outlines what preparation the church can take to reach out to their friends. Includes planning guidelines, publicity slicks, and guidelines for effective follow-up. Produced by Evangelism Ministries, Church of the Nazarene.

CGS-995 \$10.95

CGS-995C (contents only) \$7.95

2. **FRIEND DAY**—Evangelistic resource packet by Elmer Towns. Step-by-step plans for a complete evangelistic emphasis. Four weeks of suggested lessons, printed publicity materials, and four cassettes in a three-ring binder.

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3. **CELEBRATION OF FRIENDSHIP**—Everything you need to organize, promote, and conduct an exciting Friendship Day is provided in six easy-to-follow modules. Developed by Win Arn, Church Growth, Inc.

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FRIENDSHIP DAY:
*Bringing the world to Christ,
a friend at a time.*





THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE

Coming to you each quarter from Pastoral Ministries, Wilbur Brannon, Director

LEADERSHIP • INSPIRATION • FULFILLMENT • ENRICHMENT

JOY BY SURRENDER

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46, NIV). That is one of the most disturbing sentences in the Bible. The question of discipleship will not let me dismiss that challenge. We are to follow in Jesus' steps to a place of unconditional surrender (cf. 1 Peter 2:21-24). However, His steps lead us beyond that "place" and direct us to continually follow the Father's will.

At a national conference I overheard a casual but disappointing comment by a highly respected minister. Reacting to the devotion of a church leader this minister said, "I am just not that highly committed." My unspoken question was, "Would he say the same thing about Jesus' commitment?" Jesus sets the example, then says, "Follow Me!" Even the revered churchman would not claim to have attained that standard. Yet, is there any other standard by which our obedience is measured?

Memories flood my mind when thinking about the altar services of my youth. The scene is a group gathered around

a friend praying and counseling, then pausing in silence. Quietly a voice begins to sing, "All to Jesus I surrender / All to Him I freely give / I will ever love and trust Him / In His presence daily live. I surrender all . . . All to Thee, my Blessed Saviour / I surrender all." Suddenly but naturally, an arm is lifted as a sign of complete surrender. Tears flow from the seeker and a smile breaks across the radiant face. We all repeat the chorus again, affirming that consecration to Christ is to be unconditional.

Is that only for the moment? Hardly! Yet time and experience can take that crisis and accommodate it to the daily realities of life, reducing its significance. If we cheapen that experience, the divine relationship that follows loses its vitality.

The result that flows from such a relationship is the miracle of joy that energizes us for the work of ministry. Such joy is worth recovering at any cost. We vacillate not because of its mystery, but its simplicity—and cost. Considering the option, I surrender *all*! Then comes JOY! □



Wilbur W. Brannon
Pastoral Ministries director

FASHIONING LEADERSHIP AUTHORITY FOR MISSION ENGAGEMENT

Dr. Lyle Pointer, pastor of Boise First Church of the Nazarene, and Pastoral Ministries Director Rev. Wilbur W. Brannon conducted a symposium on "Leadership for Church Growth" on the Michigan District with District Superintendent C. Neil Strait. Fifteen pastors were selected to attend with two laypersons from each of their churches.

Pastors had to meet some basic qualifying requirements to be selected. They included:

1. Pastors who are willing learners, "coachable."
 2. Pastors who have shown some tendencies toward leadership and planning.
 3. Pastors who can with some degree of integrity commit themselves to a 3- to 5-year plan with their churches.
 4. A variety of sizes of churches represented.
 5. Churches not in isolated situations with minimal potential for growth.
- Dr. Pointer and Rev. Brannon developed the materials used in the event for

field testing. The modules will eventually form a series of booklets that can be purchased as a unit or separately. They include: Pastor as Spiritual Communicator (prayer retreat guidelines), Pastor as Leader, Pastor as Planner, Pastor as Conflict Manager, and Pastor as Priority Manager.

The unique feature of this series is that the principles of spiritual leadership, planning, and management focus on church growth; i.e., the evangelistic priority of ministry. Our plans are to field test the materials on 3-5 other districts before final copy is available. □

NEW "HEARTBEAT"

Here are the VIPs who manage the CoNET "Heartline" at Christian Counseling Services in Nashville. They have done an outstanding job of responding to the calls from our parsonage families.

They feel it is important to communicate to the district superintendents who give such important support to their ministers and their families. So they developed a newsletter, the "HEARTBEAT," to give current information to district superintendents and their advisory boards.

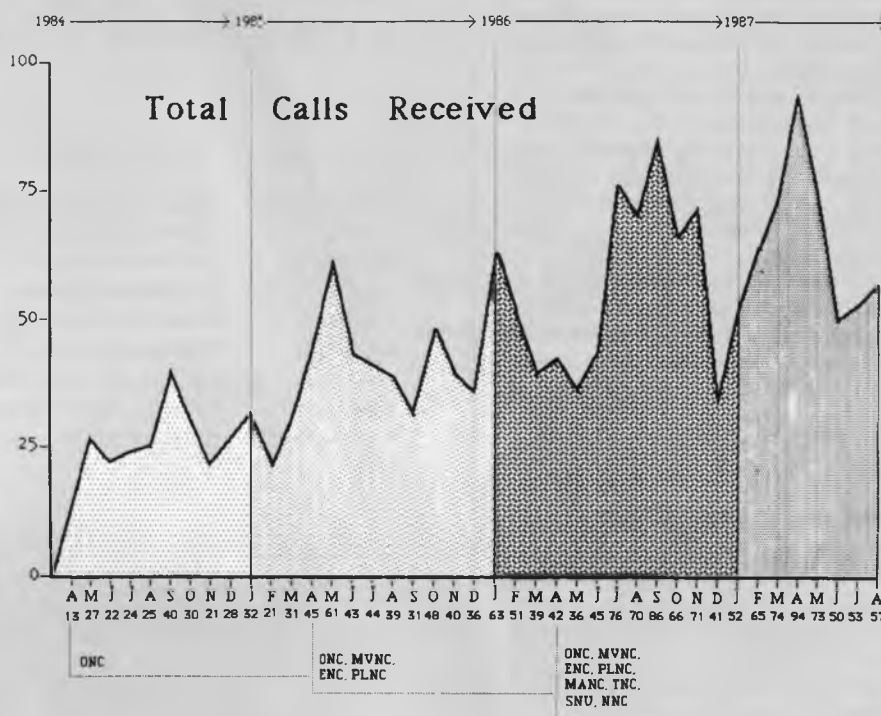
The graph at the right appeared in the first issue that was distributed just before the first of the year. The Heartline continues to be used extensively.

Never before has there been such a variety of critical issues involving pastoral care. Here is a resource to get some direction on your counseling cases. Just call the toll-free number 1-800-874-2021; 1-800-233-3607 (Tennessee residents); 0-615-255-5677, wait for dial tone, then dial 8081 (Alaska residents).

Every Nazarene minister has help available within the reach of his phone. This includes any member of his family as well. What a service! One pastor who had not called it admitted, "It sure is a good feeling to know it's there!" ☐



L. to R.: Don Harvey, Ph.D., Director of Clinical Services; Kent Hughes, M.S., CoNET Coordinator; Mike Malloy, ACSW, Executive Director; Ken Cope, M.A., Counselor; Trudy Summers, M.A., Counselor.



MINISTRY INTERSHIP UPDATE

Ministry Internship has been initiated in 26 districts, with more inviting Pastoral Ministries to give the orientation workshop this year. Evaluation feedback sessions have been held with positive reactions.

The highest value that keeps coming through is the supportive relationship that is developed. Mentors are enriched and grow in the process of giving encouragement to the interns. Some new ministers' ministries have even been saved because of the insights and skills that have been developed through regular meetings during the year.

The materials have been rewritten. They are designed with specific guidelines for mentors to use with an intern. If interested in obtaining these materials, you may write Pastoral Ministries for more information.

COURSE OF STUDY UPDATE

Psychology by Frank Cox, Course 136a, 236a, 336a, 436a has gone out of print. Contact Pastoral Ministries for its replacement.

The Ministry of Pastoral Counseling by James Hamilton, Course 145 has gone out of print. It is being replaced by *Christian Counseling* by Gary Collins.



CONSULTATIONS ON MINISTERIAL PREPARATION— A GOOD IDEA!

Mount Vernon Nazarene College was the setting for the Second Consultation on Ministerial Preparation. Dr. David Cubie, head of the religion department, set the agenda. The program was introduced by Dr. William Prince, president of MVNC.

District superintendents, members of the Ministerial Studies Boards and Ministerial Credentials Boards, religion faculty members, and the Pastoral Ministries director were involved. Dr. Cubie facilitated dialogue sessions between Pastoral Ministries Director Rev. Wilbur W. Brannon and student religious leaders, religion faculty, area pastors, and district personnel.

Such consultations offer a forum for discussions not available anywhere else. Southern Nazarene University was the site of the first one, September 28-29, 1987. The response to these events has been gratifying.

Discussed were such issues as: how to enrich the process of preparing ministers for ordination, the framing of questions by district boards, projecting positive images of the ministry, increasing the ministerial work force, attractive modeling of ministers, ordained deacons *vis-a-vis* lay ministers, internship, college programs, and visions for the future.

According to Wilbur W. Brannon, Pastoral Ministries director:

Nurturing the "call" to ministry, including pastoral leadership and preaching, is vital to reproducing ourselves that God is calling for workers in fields ready for harvest. The problem is not a speechless God. He is calling. The problem is ears that do not hear!

As pastors, we need to be alert to identify leadership types with spiritual gifts. God wants them to advance His church. Let us be good listeners to what the Spirit is saying to the church!

After we had already conducted our consultations I read of a "Consultation on Ministerial Guidance and Recruitment." Recruitment is not a term we easily use in a tradition that acknowledges the divine call to ministry. However, we have been more aggressive in other days in a reproductive ministry. My plea is that we recover the excitement and challenge others to follow our steps! What a privilege to be a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. ☐

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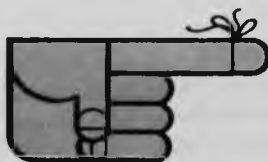


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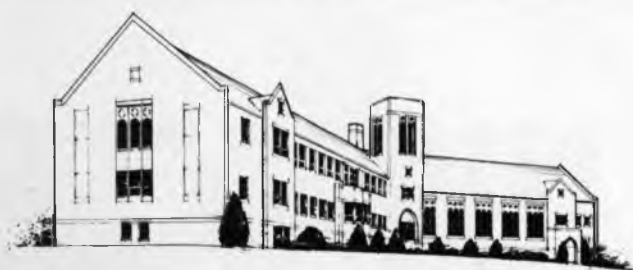
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A CHALLENGE

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This then places a tremendous responsibility on us Christians to reevaluate our belief in the LOSTNESS OF INDIVIDUALS and consequently our response to the GREAT COMMISSION. Yes, a person is lost unless he hears and accepts. That's where you and I are then challenged to do all we can to comply with Christ's Great Commission.

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Ray Hendrix
*Director, International
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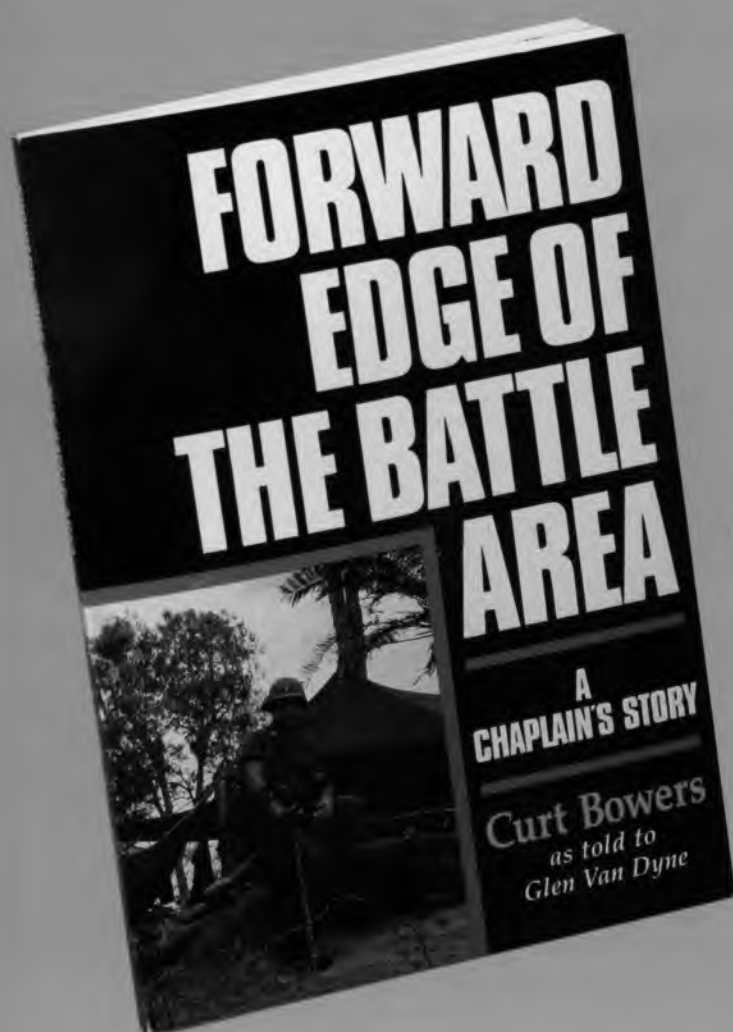
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does not call me to
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leader is not in itself the worship of the congregation."²⁴ Our objective must be lay participation that actualizes the full range of the Spirit's gifts given to the church and that offers the individual opportunities to lose his life in service to Christ.

5. Evangelical worship maintains the importance of both Word and sacrament, while emphasizing the former.

In its appeal to the divine authority of the Bible over church tradition and mystical experience, Protestantism in general has attached primacy to the preaching of the Word in the worship of the church. However, evangelical worship, as intended by the Reformers, is "a return to the primitive synthesis of preaching the Word of God and breaking the Bread of life."²⁵ Wiley describes the twofold pattern of early Christian worship as a eucharistic service followed by free worship.

(1) The first part of the service included the reading of the Scriptures and prayer, as well as the consecration and distribution of the elements. The sermon also formed a part of the service, as did the singing of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. The letters of the apostles were read, during the *agape*, or just before the communion service. (2) The second part, or so-called "free worship" held a very large place in the Christian service . . . After the Eucharist, inspired persons began to speak before the assembly, and to manifest the presence of the Spirit which inspired them. The exercise of the prophetic [preaching] gift seems to have been most in evidence.²⁶

While only prayer (spoken or sung) is absolutely essential for worship itself, preaching is regarded by evangelicals as indispensable for complete worship.²⁷ The prophetic strain dominates evangelicalism. "The Word is for Evangelical worship something as objective, holy, and given as the Blessed Sacrament is for Roman Catholic worship. Indeed, it is a sacrament; the sensible garment in which the suprasensible Presence is clothed."²⁸ For this reason, the Lord's Supper and baptism are seldom celebrated apart from the proclaimed Word in evangelical churches. In Augustinian language, Bloesch says,

The sacraments are the visible Word or the visible form of the Word. Yet this very manner of speaking points to the fact that there can be no sacrament apart from the proclaimed and read word of Scripture. The sacrament is a supplement to the Word but not a substitute for it. While the sacraments are supremely helpful in the application of the fruits of our salvation, the Word alone is indispensable for salvation.²⁹

A serious error evangelicals must avoid in regard to the ministry of the Word is the preempting of worship by deeming the personality and gifts of the preacher more important than the praise and adoration of God. P. T. Forsyth advises: "Our idolatry of the popular preacher needs to be balanced by more stress on the Sacraments. There the common gift comes out, the administrator fades away."³⁰ We must always remember that preaching, while primary, is not the whole of worship.

The need to maintain balance between Word and sacrament has been (and perhaps always will be) one of the most persistent challenges to the church's worship. In the free churches, the struggle has been with excessive individualism and careless indifference to the rich heritage of Christian traditions in worship.

The sovereign Spirit of the Lord always faithfully seeks to bring balance back into worshiping congregations, though.

6. Evangelical worship stresses the call to personal consecration.

Evangelicals believe in the total depravity of man, the substitutionary Atonement, salvation by grace through faith alone, and scriptural holiness. These biblical doctrines are the basis for evangelical affirmations of the responsibility and capacity of each soul to respond to God, the priesthood of all believers, and the universal call to sanctity.

In evangelical worship we can expect to find a deep conviction of sin and a call to the serious pursuit of holiness of life, a summons to enter into costly discipleship, a passion for sincerity, a high standard of self-discipline, a strong sense of direct and personal relationship to God, an unlimited love and pity for sinners issuing in a profound sense of mission, a devotion to sacrificial service, and a tenacious devotion to Christ.

Evelyn Underhill says evangelical Christianity is insistent that "the 'offering of a pure heart' is an essential part of the worship of God, and perfection the ordained end of that which conversion began."³¹ We must escape the pitfall of excessive moral preoccupation that can obscure the adoration of God. "Self-fulfillment—even in the moral sphere—is at best only a preparation for that self-loss which is the consummation of all worship."³² Nonetheless, the sanctification of life is the creative aim of all Christian worship. The objective is

that total transfiguration of the created order in which the incarnation of the Logos finds its goal. Christian worship . . . is to be judged by the degree to which it tends to Holiness; since this is the response to the pressure of the Holy which is asked of the Church and

of the soul. The Christian is required to use the whole of his existence as sacramental material; offer it and consecrate it at every point, so that it may contribute to the Glory of God.³³

7. Evangelical worship stresses the spiritual mission of the church.

The term *mission* is used to describe the Father's sending of His Son into the world, Christ's sending of His apostles into the world, and the Father and the Son's sending of the Spirit to empower the church for its ministry in the world. Mission "includes all that is involved in the salvation activities of the Trinity and the Church in the extension of the kingdom of God on earth (Verkuyil)." ³⁴

Accentuating the spiritual mission of the church is not meant to minimize the importance of social holiness. On the contrary, worship should heighten the social consciousness of evangelical Christians. Prayer, evangelism, discipling of converts, and establishment of worshiping congregations are essential elements of the church's spiritual mission. But so is the task of seeking social justice for all, a work that is best achieved "by a universal commitment to witness by all believers through the use of their spiritual gifts in response to the need for and the call to ministry."³⁵

In the words of Willimon and Wilson, "The principal business of the church is to *be*, rather than simply to *do*!

... When we worship, we are busy serving God.

That is one reason we often refer to the Sunday gathering as a service of worship. Worship is the work of Christians. Of course, that work is done both inside church buildings and outside the church. The word "liturgy" means literally, "the work of the people." Whenever the people of God do work that is dedicated to God and responds to the glory of God, that is their liturgy—their worship. Whether it be the liturgy we perform on Sunday or the liturgy we perform Monday through Saturday, it is all of the same piece, all part of our vocation to "glorify God and enjoy Him forever!" ... We serve God by praying to God, singing to God, speaking God's truth in love, feeding the hungry, fighting on God's side, loving the poor, and standing with the oppressed—but it is all worship.³⁶

BALANCE IN WORSHIP

Balance is the key to understanding evangelical worship. Our intention must be to hold to the catholic faith with reformed and revived fervor.

Evangelical worship at its best seeks to balance the theocentric and the creaturely, the transcendent and the homely, the mysterious and the rational, the objective and the subjective, the historical and the eschatological, ritual and the freedom of the Spirit. We are concerned about balance between the Word and the sacraments, the corporate and the personal aspects of worship, splendor and simple sincerity, clerical leadership and lay participation, order and spontaneity.

We are well warned by Robert Webber that the cancer at the heart of many churches today is "the failure to understand and practice public worship."³⁷ Worship is often the weakest area of evangelical Christianity. We are excellent at evangelism, teaching, and fellowship. We are becoming better at applying the gospel to social needs and providing pastoral care for the gamut of hu-

man emotional, spiritual, and personal needs. But worship is begging for our attention.

We urgently need to repent of all shallow, uninformed, careless attitudes toward worship. We have suffered in the wastelands of religious entertainment, emotionalism, historical amnesia, and creeping secularism long enough.

God's people are hungry for real worship. People are weary of the warmed-over, weak-willed emotional fervor that seems to be the goal of many evangelical services. The basic theological content of our worship needs to be enriched; the laity need a greater involvement; Scripture needs to be given more than lip service and used for more than sermon texts; the fresh winds of the Spirit need to be allowed to breathe vitality and joy into our comings together.

"The heart of worship renewal is a recovery of the power of the Holy Spirit who enables the congregation to offer praise and thanksgiving to God."³⁸ With the Spirit's aid, we can remain one in Christ with those in our historic past who have given us a rich heritage of worship forms, and at the same time He can lead us into the discovery of new ways of worship that will be deeply meaningful to people in our day.

The question is, "How and why do evangelicals worship?" If, indeed, we know the answer, now is the time to find the words to proclaim it.

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ARE YOU AN ORDAINED MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL?

by Morris Chalfant

Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Norwood, Ohio

Charles H. Spurgeon once said to his son, "I should not like you, if God meant you to be a missionary, to die a millionaire. I should not like, were you fitted to be a missionary, that you should shrivel down to be a king. What are all kings, all your nobles, all your diadems, when you put them together, compared with the dignity of winning souls for Christ?"

James A. Garfield, the only Christian preacher to become president of the United States, said that he had to step down from the pulpit to become president. So it is, and so it should be with everyone who stands in the pulpit. You have to step down from the pulpit to sell insurance. You have to step down from the pulpit to teach school. You have to step down from the pulpit to run for political office.

We cannot rightly quarrel with the methods of other professionals, because there are good reasons why they develop the way they do. Nevertheless, we may judge them. They have made a practical and expedient decision in terms of personal desires and abilities. Ours is infinitely larger. Ours is a divine call to a holy task. The work we do is holy, and the place from which we preach is a holy place, as holy as the spot where Moses stood when God called him. There is a great difference between our call and the vocation of doctor, lawyer, engineer; between our task and their professions.

The ministry is not a profession, it is a calling. We mean by "calling" that a person has received an inner impression that he must preach! A person's desire for intellectual development may lead one into the professions, but a person's desire for spiritual and moral supremacy along with a divine call will lead into the ministry.

A young person going into the ministry should be certain of one thing: a high call from God. Times will come

when the consciousness of that call is all he will have to hold him steady. Other persons will make fortunes, but the minister's paycheck will not increase! Others will abandon tasks they tire of and find work they like better. But the minister will have to remain with the flock. At such a time only the great call of the Lord will give one courage to go on. It will lend a sense of destiny and lift up one's head when the going gets really rough.

Secular careers may be self-motivated, but God's call on a life is Spirit-mandated. Paul did not choose to become an apostle. He declares that by divine authority he was "made a minister" (Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23; cf. 2 Cor. 3:6). Paul also prefaces many of his Epistles with statements such as "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." Paul's career was not self-motivated but Spirit-mandated. The permanency of his call was so evident that he boldly proclaimed, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Cor. 9:16).

The true call of God can be expressed in the fact that necessity is laid upon the preacher. Such a choice is not one among many alternatives. There is just one, and it is clear.

Amos was a poor herdsman brooding deeply amid the pastures of Tekoa, but he says, "The Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy" (Amos 7:15). But turning to Isaiah the prophet, we see a different thing. Isaiah was the friend of kings. He was cultured; he was at home in the precincts of the courts, and there clearly he heard the call of God in the year that King Uzziah died, "I saw . . . the Lord." It was at this empty throne of Uzziah that Isaiah discovered the presence of God. The king that he idolized was taken by death, but Isaiah answered, "Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:1, 8).

Calls are not the same. Every genuine call seems to have its own uniqueness. One person gets a divine call that is as soft and gentle as a glance. "I will guide thee with mine eye," says the Book to such a person (Ps. 32:8). Or it could be that a strong constraint will seize an individual, and so strong will be this constraint that he will know the Lord is calling.

Paul Rees said: "Prophets are offered no immunity from misfortune. Sooner or later most of them seem to get hurt. A call to the ministry is more than a call to service; it is a call to high courage."

Yet all honest prophets should realize that they have the same promise that Moses had when he was being sent to challenge the Egyptian dynasty: "Certainly I will be with thee" (Exod. 3:12). They have the pledge of Him who marched those first Christian preachers against pagan kings, saying, "Be sure of this—that I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20, TLB). No one needs more the awareness of the Divine Presence than the prophet of the Lord.

The call of the Lord is permanent. As Dr. Hudson Amending, the former president of Wheaton College, wrote in his inspiring book titled *Leadership*, "God calls us to a vocation, but he does not necessarily limit this to a particular location." God may provide geographical calls such as the Macedonian call Paul received in Acts 16. However, this direction from the Spirit was not Paul's primary call. Paul's ministry was not limited to Macedonia; he went throughout the Roman world. Yet in the twilight of life, he was able to triumphantly state that he was "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." And what was that vision? He was to minister to the Gentiles (Acts 26:13-20). The geography of his labors greatly varied, but the call of God regarding ministry was constant.

The ministry is the one profession you should never enter unless you are called, the one lifework you can never be content with unless you give more than you receive, and the only job in which your fellowman is your

master, Christ your Senior Partner, the Spirit (and your conscience) often your only Guide, and God your constant Strength and Stay.

The gospel ministry is humbling yet ennobling, tiring yet invigorating, discouraging yet more often encouraging, depressing yet exalting, filled with both distressing and glorious experiences. You will never be the same again after you prepare for and enter the ministry, and you will never want to be the same.


What a thrilling confession and announcement Paul made when he said, "I am ordained a preacher" of the gospel (1 Tim. 2:7).

Think of Bernard Shaw's *St. Joan*, scene 3. Her army is encamped on the banks of the river Loire, ready to attack the British at Orleans. The British hold the French in great fear. She is persuaded that she is destined of God to lead France to victory. She retires to the rear to talk to Denoi, the French chief in command. Joan says, "Our men will defeat the British. I will lead them."

General Denoi says, "Not a man will follow you. You are not a soldier, you are a woman."

Joan replies, "I will not look back to see whether anyone is following. I am not a daredevil. I am a servant of God. This sword is sacred. I found it at the altar of St. Catherine's Church. God put it there for me, and your men will follow. This will I do, and neither you nor the British shall stop me."

Every person who is called to preach the gospel must have something of that spirit of St. Joan. We must have a banner. We must have a calling. We must feel within that we are divinely called, divinely sent, and divinely ordained. And then with calm confidence we can say with the apostle Paul, "I am ordained a minister of the gospel."

Be sure of your personal religious experience. Be sure of your message. Be sure of your divine call. Put on the whole armor of God, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. 

CONFERENCE ON AIDS

"AIDS: The Challenge for Compassion," a conference sponsored by Compassionate Ministries, Church of the Nazarene, will be held July 1-3, 1988, at Camp Taconic (New York District, Church of the Nazarene campgrounds), Red Hook, N.Y.

This conference is open primarily to professionals who are confronted with the ever-increasing number of AIDS victims seeking assistance. Designed as an educational session for pastors, health

care professionals, psychologists, sociologists, and social workers, the conference's purpose is to mobilize the church to respond compassionately to the AIDS crisis.

Featured speakers include Dr. Richard Schubert, president of the American Red Cross. Anyone interested in registration information should contact Compassionate Ministries, Church of the Nazarene, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

THE MINISTER'S MOST PRESSING NEED

by J. Grant Swank, Jr.
Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Walpole, Mass.

The most pressing need of today's minister is not money nor grander church structures nor a more popular standing in the culture. It is his own loneliness.

There is a cut that is ripping at the very heart of the clergy. And that cut is deep. It hurts. More than that, the hurt reaches the pastor's own family—the spouse and children. This compounds the loneliness and the helplessness.

To make matters worse, all of this agony is going unexpressed. There is a fear of being vulnerable, of making oneself known. After all, to whom? For what? When? How?

Clergymen today are groaning within. And, of course, such will inevitably influence the pulpit and finally the pew. To the world's already distressed spirit will be added that of the man or woman behind the sacred desk. When they should be at their best, they are being torn apart.

Recently I wrote an article on this theme in a leading national magazine for clergy and laity. The response from the piece was basically from fellow pastors who reacted by sharing their hidden aches. This widespread feedback was not expected. In addition to the letters there were telephone calls from around the nation. Still those calls keep coming. I received another one the other night from a fellow in Iowa who phoned near midnight and talked for an hour. He said he would call again. I have never met this man face-to-face, yet obviously he needs someone to talk to. And the closest voice he can find is here in a village of New England!

There is a desperate need for a network of caring communication within the clergy for the clergy. How this will finally be built is not fathomed as yet; perhaps its detail is known presently only to God. However, such must be in the making if the clergy sense of worth is to survive.

One man who called was on the edge of tears. He complained of a depression that would not go away. He then spilled out specifics that added up to the fact that his whole family was going through such trauma.

Just this evening a young minister phoned from out of state to say that he is about to quit the pastorate. The grind has become so severe that he confessed even being suspicious of his wife's motives as a pastor's wife. Yet when it was pointed out to him that his spouse had never shown anything but loyalty to the ministry, he saw how his mind was beginning to play tricks on him.

There was once a time when the pastor of the town was considered an authority figure. That time has gone by us. He used to have a highly regarded position within the community—a voice for morality, righteousness, and refinement. Such is no longer the case.

The reality of the situation strips the man of the cloth of his former esteem. Today he must grapple for a hearing and is often ridiculed, not only by the irreligious but also by some segments of the community who regard themselves religious, though not in the biblical sense.

In addition, the pluralism of our society has taken its toll within the church. There once was a uniformity of thought and conduct within traditional "Bible-believing churches." However, such is not prevalent anymore. "To each his own" has become the unspoken credo of many parishioners; and God protect the pastor who dares to confront the multiplicity of approach.

Consequently, much fear harbors within the heart of the conscientious pastor. He does not know when he is going to come under attack, either in a random way or by organized effort within his congregation. And the more sensitive the minister's personality, the more crushing are these attacks, partic-

ularly when leveled unfairly. Such pain is intensified when the pastor's spouse seeks to protect the partner, for the confrontation with "the people" then involves both leaders within the parsonage.

The problem becomes more complicated when we realize that it is not only the ministers in the local pastorates but the ecclesiastical hierarchy as well who are feeling this loneliness. The majority of individuals in positions of administration have ministry backgrounds. Yet they too feel isolated. They are frequently suspicioned by the clergy in the field with the skepticism running from them as well.

Politics within the structure do not help, naturally. The possibility of undercutting, "ratting," "doing in," being subtly turned against or snuffed out are all a part of the fabric. Consequently, when clergy do get together, it is often not with an honest openness. The stark simplicity of gathering in sincerity is missing. Those at the top are held at bay as those at the bottom are playing various manipulative games to get to the top. And the ones in between who pride themselves on being free of political conniving wonder where to hang their hats.

Another factor supporting the loneliness is the electronic church with its sense of power and popularity. Those on television are frequently praised for their successes and mentioned with admiration by the parishioners in the local church. This is not meant necessarily to cut in on the local pastor's worth; yet it can have that thrust.

The local minister can begin to ask himself if he is really "making it." Does he have that much to offer anymore? Why are his pews still somewhat empty while the electronic religious celebrities boast of thousands of dollars (millions?) and just as many steady supporters? What criteria is then to be used for really doing one's job for God in the full-time

work of the church?

All of this has come so quickly against the strings of the pastor's heart. And those strings are just about to shred. Yet he tells himself that he cannot give way, for he is to be the epitome of positive thinking, the example of possibility thinking, the model of how-to-do-it Christianity, the executive image of how to get it all together for Jesus. Nevertheless, reality dictates that the inner contradictions are immense, playing against the strings, threatening that last thread.

Does he talk it out? Does he make an appointment with his churchly superior? Does he go away for a weekend retreat? Does he submit to therapy? Does he need simply another spiritual experience? Does he enroll in a doctoral program and submerge himself in aca-

demie escape? Does he—do what?

First, there is the challenge of finding someone he can trust. Integrity of relationships takes divine direction as well as the passing of time to prove. Secondly, there is the need to discover how to express one's inner self when for so long the craft has been to cover over that inner self so as not to permit even its tiniest part to show. Thirdly, there is the need to recover from exhaustion. Such fatigue has gripped so many clergymen and clergywomen today that they wonder if they can recoup to again find psychic strength.

Yet it is possible. Life does go on. Tomorrow will no doubt show its face. And God is still alive and blesses His servants.

Perhaps the answer to all of this dilemma is to be found in its own com-

plexity. It just may be that there is no simplified solution. As much as we yearn for one more packaged deal, another quickie approach, one more cut-along-the-dotted-line book to read (complete with diagrams), the truth of the matter is that it will not meet this pain.

Because those of us in the pastorate are in such varied circumstances, we no doubt will discover that the God of these circumstances will tailor His peace to the unique variables in each of our situations. Therefore, trusting the master mind of the Creator is a good place to start when seeking help for our loneliness.

Also, simply realizing the plague that has come upon us will help immensely. Instead of thinking that we alone are caught in this web, it will be healthy for us to understand that such a sickness is

MISERABLE MINISTERIAL MUSINGS

by Geoffery S. Gunter

Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Longview, Tex.

Why did he get . . .

 elected general superintendent?

 appointed district superintendent?

 called to that church?

 nominated for that district board?

There are certainly more qualified people out there (for instance, you and I).

I had always thought Solomon was a Calvinist from the way he sinned, but maybe he was a holiness preacher who studied the politics of the church. Read his musings:

 There is an evil I have seen under the sun, like an error which goes forth from the ruler—folly is set in many exalted places while rich men sit in humble places. I have seen slaves riding on horses and princes walking like slaves on the land (*Eccles. 10:5-7, NASB*).

The ministry is beset with many pitfalls, one of which is trying to fig-

ure out the political scene. Why does one guy, who has made no obvious significant contribution, get moved up the ladder while others who perform well are not offered equal opportunities? After all, I could handle a much larger church. Couldn't you? If only some insightful district superintendent would recognize *my* genius, as well as my piety and humility! The Lord really could use me in a place like that.

I don't know about you, but I could certainly do a better job than my district superintendent. He's a little behind the times, he spends too much time in the office, and he's too much of a puppet to headquarters! If I were district superintendent . . .

What do you do?

I am reminded of Mother Teresa's words to a priest who was complaining about a superior. His orders were interfering with the priest's ministry to the poor. She said in effect, "Your job is not to serve the

poor, it is to love God."

It has been my privilege to observe and work with people, both ministerial and lay, who have learned that lesson. They are beautiful spirits who have ceased fretting over the unchangeable fact that no matter how we organize it and improve it, the system will have faults. Their love for God is so real that their very presence is healing.

The amazing thing is that those people exist at every political level. They are the princes and princesses of the Kingdom. It doesn't matter what ecclesiastical level I may or may not attain, "if I . . . have not love, it profits me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:3, NKJV).

What if you and I did attain the level we "deserve"? At least two reactions could result: Somewhere in churchland someone would muse, "Folly is set in many exalted places." Or Satan may say, "Welcome home, my child."

fairly common to the job. That should bring a sigh deep within.

God may lead one pastor to another pastor in another denomination. The two will lock hearts and run with the torch. They will discover that they cannot undercut one another; they cannot block one another, for their systems are separate.

Still another minister God may lead to discover a pen pal from out of state—within or without the denomination, it will not matter. Both will find themselves led to the other through common concerns. I have already found such a communicative friend in Canada.

Another clergyperson will find comradeship in a retired elder, the two of them drawn together for strengthening and sharing.

Rarely does a clergyman/layman

comradeship offer satisfaction for the pastor. Ideally this should be a possibility; but practically it does not happen often. Clergypersons have a unique language and particular thought patterns that simply are not discerned by many laymen. I wish this were not true, but I have found that clergypersons basically tie to one another, or they do not tie in at all. There are exceptions, but they are exceptions, unfortunately.

I think it safe also to say that clergy with few exceptions do not find much understanding among their own lay relatives. Relatives have their own hidden biases concerning the clergyperson in their midst and therefore, without their realizing it, will not connect well.

For still other clergy, God may direct a younger person toward an older person and vice versa. They will discover there

is no generation gap when such divine welding takes place.

Others will find their help from group fellowships, organized or casual. If God is in it, either case will be strengthening. At times the local clergy group will be such a fellowship; more times than not, however, the real sharing will take place within groupings that have no preconceived structure.

Through it all, then, God will work to aid His own men and women who have been called to the pastorate. Slowly but surely, as they confront the problem of loneliness and bring it to God, He will answer in individualized ways of release.

I believe also that as time progresses, we will share more and more our discoveries of this special, divine grace so as to revel more deeply in the fatherly care of the Lord.



WHY NOT A PASTORAL SABBATICAL?

by Michael Hutchens

Specialized Missionary, Samoa Nazarene Bible College

For some time I have had the idea of a pastoral sabbatical. Such a sabbatical could be three months, six months, or a year long. Whatever its duration, it would be a time of getting away from the direct pastoral responsibilities of the local church and concentrating on a ministry of a different nature or on some special project or study. Thus a sabbatical would not be a vacation but a time of rest, travel, or research.

The pastor, just as much as teachers in our educational institutions, could profit from a sabbatical, looking at other facets of ministry, taking time to gain new insights, and broadening his perspective. He may even study the pastoral ministry itself in a university or seminary to update his pastoral base. He might travel to Bible lands or important places in church history, such as England or Germany. Ideas for the sabbatical are numerous. I have pastored for 26 consecutive years. Now in Western Samoa as a specialized missionary, I am teaching at Samoa Nazarene Bible College for a year (my sabbatical?).

At times I have felt that I have

been bogged down in pastoral responsibilities. At least I was not functioning at maximum efficiency, even though I was spending much time on important church needs. How beneficial it would be to rekindle my enthusiasm (at least I am willing to admit this!), to clarify my perspective, or advance another level intellectually. Two months into my assignment in Western Samoa, I am discovering the wisdom of my thoughts along these lines. A sabbatical would not be a loss but a gain in the long run for the pastor, the congregation, and the denomination.

The very practical matter of financing the sabbatical is a prime concern. Perhaps the local church would finance it. The pastor may be entitled to a week's salary on his sabbatical for every year he has been in the active ministry or at a particular local church. He may have to begin saving for this objective. He may have to borrow funds. We borrow for other things; why not for a sabbatical?

What would a church do about a pastor while its own pastor was

away? The length of the sabbatical would be a factor to consider. Some would feel uneasy about my suggestion that he could leave the church in the hands of competent staff ministers, a retired elder, or an evangelist. (I realize continuity is necessary, especially if a pastor operates with long-range goals in mind.) He could plan a sabbatical between pastorates. If he has the right educational requirements, he might be a visiting professor at a college or university. Perhaps he will have the opportunity to minister in a specialized setting, as I have.

All of this would require careful planning and coordination. No pastor would want to leave his church unless he knew it would be cared for with utmost concern and competence. He would also want to make sure he was fully in God's will in this matter.

The goal of a pastoral sabbatical is not leaving the pastorate but enhancing God-called ministry and making it more productive. If this is not the primary goal, I take back all I said and say, "No pastor needs a sabbatical!"



WHAT MR. WESLEY PREACHED ABOUT

by William C. Burbury

*Executive Vice President and Dean,
Bethany Bible College, Sussex, N.B.*

John Wesley preached about everything worthwhile, leaving no stones unturned in projecting needed truths to the members of his congregation. He was a bishop, author, poet, logician, and in the broad sense, a theologian. But Wesley was primarily a preacher of the gospel. He did not endeavor to systematize his theology, at least on paper, but as needs arose, he formulated truth from the Scriptures to meet the needs.

His preaching reveals genius; he was apt to think through each doctrine and file it in its proper place in his great understanding. He said of himself, "I have been uniform in doctrine and discipline for above these 50 years."¹ In other words, he had a plan or system for what he taught. While he did not systematize his teachings on paper, his *52 Standard Sermons* became part of every Methodist preacher's equipment, along with the Bible and the Methodist hymnbook. In fact, these three books often furnished the only theological training those early preachers had.

Wesley was often accused of preaching new doctrines. The only thing new about them, however, was the fresh emphasis he gave in revitalizing truths the church had allowed to become stagnant. The main interest of the Oxford don was to awaken the church out of her lethargy and indifference until she became an institution able to offer something to sinful men—not, as his critics said, to begin a new movement. Wesley himself said he would live and die a member of the "established church," which he did.

Wesley loved to preach. Bishop says, "His preaching ministry must have been more extensive in its reach than any other man's, with the possible exception of George Whitefield. He preached constantly, almost every day, and often several times a day for nearly fifty years. In 1765 he informed John Newton that he preached about eight hundred sermons a year. During the half century he traveled 250,000 miles and preached more than 40,000 sermons, an average of over fifteen a week."² This should serve as a mild rebuke to those who groan under a load of three or four sermons to preach in seven days.

It is established that Mr. Wesley was a renowned preacher. What did he preach about? According to Doughty, Wesley's sermon subjects "fall conveniently into three broad classes": the fundamental doctrines, the speculative theology, and miscellaneous subjects.³

First, and vitally important among the doctrines taught by Wesley, is that of salvation or justification by

faith. One reason why this particular doctrine was so emphasized is the fact that he himself had such a grand experience. May 24, 1738, at Aldersgate was by far one of the brightest days in Wesley's life. The "heart-warming" experience revolutionized his life and his career. His life would have made a tremendous contribution to England if he had never realized Aldersgate, because of his education, his ethics, his discipline, and his genius. However, "being justified by faith" (Rom. 5:1) opened up for him an area of service to the world that has hardly been equaled.

What was the nature of this new emphasis? In his sermon on June 11, 1738, at Oxford, just 18 days after that memorable heartwarming, Wesley preached his famous "Salvation by Faith" sermon. He dwells on negative truths for some time, endeavoring to show what faith is not. "It was not the faith of devils"⁴ or the "faith of heathens,"⁵ nor was it "faith that the disciples had while Christ was yet upon earth."⁶ But, he says, "It is a sure confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he is reconciled to the favor of God; and in consequence hereof a closing with Him, a cleaving to Him, as our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' or, in a word, our salvation."⁷ On the subject of justification, then, we understand the Wesleyan conception as "pardon, or the forgiveness of sins," and also it implies "the acquittal from punishment for past sins."⁸

This message ("by grace are ye saved through faith" [Eph. 2:8]) sounded the keynote of his lifelong ministry. "He knew no other doctrine save this one, and wherever we find Wesley in this post-Aldersgate term of service, this is the message he heralds."⁹ Cannon also states that Wesley's outstanding truth is justification, and that sanctification was the eventual outcome of growing in grace to a certain point where perfection is reached, though the final act is not by works, but by faith.¹⁰

The second fundamental doctrine of Wesley to be considered is Christian assurance, or the "witness of the Spirit." Dr. Miller, discussing Wesley's sermon "Circumcision of the Heart," states that two great doctrines come out of this sermon: "Christian perfection" and the "witness of the Spirit." He says, "The latter doctrine is John Wesley's original contribution to the body of Christian belief."¹¹ According to Wiley, however, this doctrine came from the Moravians.¹²

Wiley also states that some of the early fathers, Origen, Chrysostom, Athanasius, and Augustine, were

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teachers of this truth, and that this was ably proven by Mr. Wesley. He goes on to point out that the "witness of the Spirit" as a doctrine was held by many, or the "great majority of evangelical Christians, but it may be said in a peculiar sense, that Wesley was the modern reviver of this great truth,"¹³ which, as Wiley says, "is . . . that inward evidence of acceptance with God which the Holy Spirit reveals directly to the consciousness of the believer."¹⁴

William McDonald, in answering the question, "But is not the witness of the Spirit a new doctrine and peculiar to Methodism?" said, "It is preeminently a doctrine of the New Testament, but it was lost for long ages until the Wesleyan Reformation in the last century."¹⁵ He goes on to point out that it was taught from "Chrysostom to Calvin and from Bishop Abbot to C. Simeon, . . . substantially as we do."¹⁶ McDonald gives a list of what great divines in the past have had to say on the subject. According to these writers, Dr. Miller was in error in his assumption that Wesley had an original doctrine in the witness of the Spirit. Wesley was the revitalizer of many great truths, but none of them were new as far as doctrines themselves are concerned.

The third, and by far the greatest, fundamental doctrine taught by Wesley was Christian perfection. It was not something that he conjured up himself; there is nothing about the doctrine that did not exist before Wesley started preaching it. What he gave this great Bible truth, however, is "accent."¹⁷ On the subject of perfect love, Wesley wrote in 1769, "By Christian Perfection I mean — 1. Loving God with all our heart; 2. A heart and life all devoted to God; 3. Regaining the whole image of God [a theme that Wesley treated in a multitude of ways]; 4. Having all the mind that was in Christ; 5. Walking uniformly as Christ walked. If anyone means anything more or anything less by perfection, I have no concern with it."¹⁸ This great teaching was so practical, down to earth, and scriptural, that Mr. Wesley thought it to be most important for his followers.

In his *Plain Account*, Wesley deals with some questions from his preachers and followers on the matter of holiness. As we read the discussion, it is impressive that not only does the Oxford reformer strongly state the doctrine, but also he lives the life and expects it to be lived by those who profess the experience. In answer to the question, "What is reasonable proof?" or "How may we certainly know that one is saved from all sin?" he states what is important about one who professes holiness: Has the man, before he gets the experience, an

exemplary character and behavior so that one could believe his word? If we may agree that such a person can be so trusted, then if he were to state a time and account of the manner of said experience, we should believe him. However, Wesley did not stop there. He looked for the holy life. This is made clear by his insistence that we have little room to doubt either the truth or depth of the work "if it appeared that all his subsequent words and actions were holy and unblamable."¹⁹ Hence, the life of holiness and Christian perfection.

Other subjects of great concern to Wesley, called speculative theology by Doughty, were sin, repentance, the Holy Trinity, the person and work of Christ, the nature of the Atonement, the second advent of Christ, the final Judgment, heaven, and hell. For the most part, Wesley assumed the truth of these doctrines and their acceptance by his hearers. By far the most interesting readings in Wesley are his sermons on miscellaneous subjects. In these sermons he deals with the needs he happens to find among the people where he travels. These themes include authority, health, happiness, dress, sleep, smuggling, temperance, making a will, pleasing all men, "a single eye," family religion, marriage, and hundreds of others. Wesley without question revived vision and initiative among the members of the national church. His influence transformed the tone and tenor of his day.



NOTES

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4. J. Wesley, *Sermons* 1:2.14.
5. *Ibid.* 1:1.13.
6. *Ibid.* 1:3.14.
7. *Ibid.* 1:5.15.
8. *Ibid.* 5:5.
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17. S. Chadwick, *The Call to Christian Perfection* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1943), 5.
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COMPUTER-ASSISTED MINISTRIES

Serving God in the Age of High Technology

by Randy Sly

Pastor, Westview Community Church (Wesleyan), Manhattan, Kans.

Disk drives; operating systems; RAM; ROM; Bytes. These words are becoming almost as commonplace around the church as stewardship, ministry, evangelism, and discipleship. The technological revolution is impacting the church as never before, and the results are surprising.

Some of us are still looking at computers cautiously. These funny-looking "TV sets with keyboards" and the language spoken by those who use them seemed foreign until recently. Now, work systems are becoming streamlined and more efficient by the use of high technology. Computers are becoming as common in church offices as the IBM Selectric, producing reports, letters, membership lists, and dozens of other specialized applications. Church treasurers used to hassle weekly over the income and disbursements of church funds. Now they simply "write" the check in the computer, posting the amount, payee, and account number; the computer takes care of all the other bookkeeping and financial reporting automatically.

Westview Community Church was not a pioneer in the implementation of computers in ministry. Many churches discovered the usefulness of this tool earlier and perhaps are using it better. Yet we are excited about the ways the computer has already revolutionized our ministry and provided us with new and creative avenues of ministry expression.

Worship

Worship is an interactive event where pastor and people communicate their praise and adoration to their Lord. In recent years the church has seen increased interest in using praise choruses and other informal events as parts of worship. The hymnal has been joined

in its role as a worship tool by praise books and even the slide or overhead projector.

At Westview, the overhead projector has become a necessary part of our worship experience. We use it to project words to choruses (caution: please be careful about copyright infringement), choral readings, and sermon outlines. Special announcements are projected at the beginning of the worship service, reducing the number of verbal announcements.

In the past, production of overheads had been accomplished by writing on a clear sheet of acetate with a felt marker. The computer has given us unlimited opportunities to produce high-quality overheads quickly and efficiently. Such software programs as The Print Shop by Broderbund and others allow us to turn the computer screen into an electronic canvas with all the tools neces-



Randy Sly



Photo by Randy Sly

sary to put together high-quality art. This artwork is printed and then transferred to an overhead transparency by copy machine. In addition to eye-catching type styles, these software packages contain a variety of prepared drawings that can be added to emphasize the message you want to communicate.

Newsletters and Bulletins

More tears have been shed over bulletins and newsletters than most other tasks of the church. Each week we toil over what to put in the silly things or what to leave out, thinking, No one reads them anyway. We desired to print a newsletter that not only contained good reading material but also peaked the reader's interest graphically.

While computerizing this department of your church cannot guarantee interesting articles, it can speed up the time you take putting the newsletter or bulletin together. You can choose from a variety of type styles and even have a little fun playing around with some different layouts. Our church started out typing our stories on the word processor and then doing a pasteup of the resulting printed copy. This worked well, but we found there were some good (and even inexpensive) programs that would help us put together a nice-looking printed piece. Newsroom by Springboard is one of the newest and most economical programs on the market. It is simple to operate and takes you step by step through everything you need to do to put out a standard newsletter. You can design banners for the top, add graphics, and print the newsletter in standard two-column format.

Programs vary a great deal; some are very sophisticated and allow you to simulate computerized type-

setting and layout. You can change type styles, format for justified margins left and right, center your headlines, and design special layouts. Your imagination is the only limit to what you can produce, and without the excessive costs incurred by going to a professional printer. All this and done in half the time!

There are many types of printers used for reproducing what you have put into the computer. Dot matrix (each character is produced by a series of dots) printers are the most common graphics tool for computers. They have a somewhat different look than letter-quality printers that use typewriter elements, but they are especially good for producing a variety of typefaces and artwork. The new laser printing system generates a printed copy that looks almost like camera-ready copy from a typesetter.

New Horizons

With all of the obvious ways that computers can benefit the local church, there are some unique applications that Westview has found beneficial.

1. Bulletin Board System

Telecommunications (the use of computer in communicating by phone) has become a major aspect of contemporary computer application. Through a "modem" (which stands for "modulator-demodulator") connected to your home computer, you can now talk with people all over the U.S. Hobbyists in many communities have even banded themselves together on Bulletin Board Systems or BBSs. These are local, small-scale, electronic networks that allow you to communicate with others around town through your computer. You can meet new people, leave messages for them, participate in dis-

cussions, receive free programs for your computer, and any number of other functions through a BBS.

Two of the computer hobbyists at Westview decided that it would be interesting to establish a Christian BBS. One of them had an extra computer (an older model), and with some planning, a little tinkering, and installing an extra phone line, the "SONflower BBS" went on-line. (Remember, Kansas is the sunflower state!)

Twenty-four hours a day this BBS is available to hobbyists all over the city to talk to one another about a variety of subjects. Since the BBS is sponsored by the church, we have added some special features. Announcements about upcoming activities at the church are displayed, and periodically we introduce some specific topics for discussion: the church, our relationship with Jesus Christ, the use of technology in ministry, and so on. What an exciting way to make some inroads with a unique segment of the community!

2. Visitors' Center

Recently, a family in the church donated an Apple computer for use in our ministry. We have found a special application for this unit that takes care of a major need we have.

Westview is located near the campus of Kansas State University and in close proximity to Fort Riley Army Post. We always have a lot of visitors. Many of them indicate a desire to know more about the church than just the basics given to most visitors. We are currently developing a special computer program that will turn this computer into a "visitors' center." "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Westview Church" will give the visitors an opportunity to choose from a number of topics: history of the church, doctrine, ministries available, small-group opportunities, upcoming events, and so on. When the program begins, a "menu" will appear, offering each of these subjects as a possible choice. By pushing the appropriate key, the visitors will be able to read information on whatever subject they choose. By pushing another key, they will have this information printed out to take home with them. Each section of information can be updated at any time, so all material will be current. In addition, when they enter their names at the beginning of the program, we will have a record of the visitors and what specific interests they have in our church.

3. Computer-Assisted Instruction

The area of Christian education invites bold new ways of implementing computerized instruction. Young people who are taking computer courses in school can take advantage of the church's computer to design special programs, games, and so on, to help others learn Bible truths. Where in the past Bible Baseball was popular, computer games involving scriptures may become more and more common.

4. Interest Groups

Interest is high in our church concerning high technology. Being a university city, we have a large number of business and professional people who spend a lot of their time with computers. Many of the college students who attend our church are computer science/information systems majors or in computer-related fields at KSU. We are endeavoring to harness this energy into special-interest groups. These groups are not officially

organized, but those who are interested in computing have begun meeting together to discuss how we can better use this tool in church ministry.

The Pastor's Study


The computer has revolutionized my study. All sermons are written on a word processor. When I have completed writing my sermon and later on want to change some of the items, move around information, or even delete or add large sections, the task is easy; and when all the correcting is finished, a new copy is produced on the printer.

Cataloging sermons and sermon illustrations has always been a problem. Trying to find a way to keep track of all messages, quotes, stories, and book references can frustrate even the most organized minister (of which I am not). The computer has opened a whole new opportunity for sorting and filing. By creating sermon and illustration data bases, all important information can be entered randomly by topic, and the computer will put it in the right place. Not only that, but I can ask the computer to give me the information in a number of different ways. For instance, the data base could contain a topic, scripture reference, book reference, and the information itself. I can look for illustrations using any of these indicators.

The Bible is even available now on computer disk. If one is studying a portion of Scripture, he can bring it up on the computer and then ask the computer to search for any other scriptures that use similar words, phrases, and so on. It is like an instant concordance. While it is true we can do many of these operations without a computer, the implementation of such a computer Bible allows us an unlimited study tool capable of searching for bits of Scripture and words many concordances don't address.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Computer applications for the church are endless: research and study organization, electronic date books, financial/stewardship forecasting, project planning, architectural and interior design, and so on. There may even come a day when churches, districts, and even whole denominations will be coordinated by computer telecommunications. I can see the day when all churches in a district or even denomination could be hooked together by computer for instantaneous transmission and processing of information. The impact of the technological revolution is just now making its greatest impact on the church. Work that used to take large segments of time now can be accomplished much quicker, more accurately, and with greater ease. This increased efficiency allows the pastor and people to spend a greater amount of their time where it counts: with men, women, and children, doing the work of ministry in lives. This is the bottom line.

My commitment to the implementation of high technology in the local church comes from a distinct burden to get the greatest amount of people possible mobilized in ministries to persons. If and where computers can help accomplish this, we must utilize them to the max. If they prohibit or derail ministries, they must be brought under control. We have a challenge: coupling computers and compassion to increase the available energy for Spirit-led ministry. The technological revolution is here. 

DEVOTIONS

(Continued from page 15)

fare. They all look after their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. . . . He [Epaphroditus] nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete your service to me (Phil. 2:20-21, 30, RSV).

The Christian life is extraordinary because Jesus is Lord of our ordinary life. It is also extraordinary because He is present in our caring for one another. Look at the two examples. Paul says that people care about their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But Timothy was different; he cared about *them*. It seems that his anxious care for them was the same as caring about the things of Christ. Epaphroditus brought a care package from the Philippians to Paul, got sick, and nearly died. Paul said that "he nearly died for the work of Christ," but his service was to Paul.

We have always known the words of Jesus, "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40). It seems that Paul really believed them. I hope we can! Do we understand that anxious care for our people is looking after the interests of Jesus? Can we know that taking groceries, setting up for the potluck, visiting the sick and shut-in, helping someone find a job, making a caring phone call—can we know that all these things and a hundred more are in fact the work of Christ?

Of course! But most of us have our "being with Jesus" feelings while we are praying, or Bible reading, or being worshipful in church. What an extraordinary thing, that the Lord is being our Lord while we are doing ordinary, helpful things for one another—maybe even on a day off or on vacation!

For Monday, August 1, 1988

WE REALLY DO NEED EACH OTHER

But Timothy's worth you know, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. . . . Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need (Phil. 2:22, 25, RSV).

We may have discovered a secret of Paul's remarkable ability to minister with vitality and joy over the long haul. He preached and discussed in the synagogues on the Sabbaths and on the Lord's Days—and was able to survive his Mondays! We won't mention his persecutions and sufferings, nor his total

ignorance of his need for vacation with pay.

Well, how did he do it? He was not a loner. Timothy was like a son to him in the gospel. Epaphroditus was coworker, cosoldier, and in a time of real need, his minister. I believe he never could have made it by himself. And he never tried. He didn't always get along well with his partners (Barnabas, for example), but he never tried to go it alone. All through his letters he made plain how much his partners, men and women, meant to him and to the gospel.

Who pastors the pastor? Blessed are those whose spouses fill that role in part—but then who pastors the spouse? Do you have partners in the gospel? Is there someone you can share with and pray with, in or out of your denomination? Are you carrying too much of the burden alone? Is that part of the reason for our loss of joy and energy? Is that why too many of us want out? I think so. I ask you today to reflect on the way others ministered with Paul and to him, and let the Holy Spirit lead you to find partners in ministry.

For Monday, August 8, 1988

NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is not irksome to me, and is safe for you. Look out for the dogs, look out for the evil-workers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the true circumcision, who worship God in spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:1-3, RSV).

This may be a good Monday to recognize again that the relationship between pastor and people is not always loving, harmonious affirmation; sometimes it is loving, dissonant rebuke! We can read the commentaries for the explanations, but we don't need them to sense the sudden, radical change of mood and material in these verses. Paul's language is harsh and strident, but it is directed straight to those who are not subject to the Spirit in their worship of God, who glory in something other than in Christ Jesus, and who evidently think that what they do—or don't do—gives them status with God.

I realize that we can't claim to be preaching God's truth just because we call a spade a spade, but I wish we had more courage to declare what we really believe about those among us who operate their ministries by the ways of the world and for the benefit of carnal

desires! I wish we didn't have to be so nice, that we did not always have to be so vague and innocuous that no one's motives are ever seriously called into question!

The trouble is, we must first submit our own ways and means to the Holy Spirit for His cleansing. Our own logs must be removed before we can discern the splinters in others. I pray that this day may be a day of self-examination and confession before the Lord. In such a spirit we can declare both the affirming and the judging truth of God.

For Monday, August 15, 1988

WORSHIP IN THE SPIRIT

For we are the true circumcision, who worship God in spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3, RSV).

Circumcision was the sign of belonging to the covenant people of God. As covenant people, then, whatever outward forms may or may not be used, we worship God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23, 24). I pray that today will be such a day.

If real worship is in the Spirit, we can worship God right where we are on this Monday. When we worship, we are reminded that our complete dependence is upon God, and in Him we find the renewal of mind and heart and body we need, whether yesterday was good, bad, or indifferent.

It is not easy for preachers to worship on the Lord's Day. There are so many things to take care of, to see about, most of which come just at the time we need to begin the worship service. This Monday is a God-given day for time to relax; offer to Him our troubled, distracted minds; quiet our bodies before Him; and surrender our whole selves to the Holy Spirit as He leads us to worship God.

The whole direction of worship is away from ourselves, away from our guilts and failures, away from our successes, away from our feelings of confidence or inadequacy—away from all of these, to God. We are His covenant people; He is our God. Do we do anything more significant than lead our people into His presence in spiritual worship? Can anything we do today be more significant than our own turning from ourselves to worship?

For Monday, August 22, 1988

GLORY IN CHRIST JESUS

For we are the true circumcision, who worship God in spirit, and glory in Christ

Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3, RSV).

A serious and hard question is, "What is the source of our glory?" For Paul's opponents in Philippi, the keeping of religious laws and ceremonies was the source of personal well-being in relation to God, and a source of pride in relation to others. It is easy enough to criticize them. Their sinful self-dependence is laid out for all to see.

But what of ourselves? What is our glory, that is, what is it that gives us our sense of worth and well-being before God and before others? Where do we find our meaning and fulfillment in ministry? The Holy Spirit would use Paul's words to turn our hearts again to Christ Jesus.

"Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, says the Lord'"

(Jer. 9:23-24, RSV). *Yes, Lord, search my heart. Bring me back to You for my meaning and worth. "Break down every idol, cast out every foe," and be the glory of my life.*

For Monday, August 29, 1988

A MATTER OF CONFIDENCE

For we are the true circumcision, who worship God in spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3, RSV).

"Flesh" means our human self, all that we are and do or achieve apart from the grace of God. When Paul says that we put no confidence in the flesh, we all say, "Amen! Of course not!" The trouble is, we minister in a religious culture that worships with lighting and sound systems; that applauds special music, good or bad; and rewards success plainly measured by growth. Our feelings on Monday are directly related to the successes or failures of Sunday. And yet, we are the true covenant people who

worship in the Spirit and put no confidence in the flesh. Are we?

We know that "no confidence in the flesh" doesn't mean no effort or planning or work to see that things are done right and done well. Our problem comes when we think that if we have done it right and done it well, it is in fact done! We forget that only God can "do" it. So our answer to the question has to be yes and no. The degree to which we can say yes is the degree to which we surrender all the things we do, our plans and arrangements and programs and performances, to the Holy Spirit in the knowledge that without Him it all adds up to zero. The degree to which we must say no is the degree to which we must open our hearts in repentance to the illuminating, judging, and cleansing presence of the Holy Spirit.

Well, thank God, our realization that we cannot fulfill our ministry in ourselves is at the same time our recognition that God can and does work through our human efforts to accomplish His purposes in our lives and those of His people under our care. That is good news on Monday!



HEALTH CARE

(Continued from p. 52)

it should be aerobic! Walking, running, jogging, swimming, rowing, calisthenics, and cycling are all excellent types of aerobic exercise. It's important to develop patterns of activity now that will carry over into the retirement years. If you're still not convinced, consider this.

The Bible challenges us to be physically fit. "For God has bought you with a great price. So use every part of your body to give glory back to God, because he owns it" (1 Cor. 6:20, TLB).

ATTITUDE

Research is showing a powerful link between the mind and health. Not only are you what you eat, but you are what you think as well. Scripture is clear on this matter also: "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones" (Prov. 17:22, NIV).

This new area of scientific study, psychoneuroimmunology, is proving the power of positive thinking as well as demonstrating the harmful effects of a negative attitude. In fact, studies have shown that the body's immune system, responsible for fighting off infections and disease, is strengthened by a positive attitude. Negative attitudes weaken the immune system, which may contribute to numerous diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, ulcers, headaches, back pain, and cancer.

The attitude you take toward retirement is vitally important and depends on you! If you look forward to retirement with optimism, purpose, and goals, your health will reflect this, and you will be much more likely to find those years all that you dreamed they could be!

PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE

In spite of the best efforts to lead a healthy life-style, illnesses—often serious ones—still occur. Since all disease cannot be prevented, it is therefore important to detect serious illness as early as possible, when the best chances for treatment and cure exist. This is why a relationship with a trusted family doctor or internist is important. Not only will your doctor be available when early symptoms arise, but more importantly, your doctor can provide preventive health maintenance exams on a regular basis. Depending on your health status and risk factors, this evaluation may consist of a physical exam, prostate exam, PAP smear, blood tests, X rays, sigmoidoscopy, EKG, and treadmill, among other things.

Good health and well-being are especially important as one looks toward the retirement years. Our health is a gift from God, and we should be careful stewards of what He has given to us. The preretirement years can be a valuable time of refocusing as we reexamine our priorities, our life-styles, and our health behaviors. With a clear plan for preserving our health, we can positively look forward to our retirement years and, along with Paul, "confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God has had in mind for us to be" (Rom. 5:2, TLB).

—Provided by Pensions and Benefits Services—USA, Church of the Nazarene

The Pastor as Shepherd

This article was written several years ago by the late Earle W. Vennum. He served in the Church of the Nazarene as evangelist, pastor, and district superintendent. This article was submitted to the *Preacher's Magazine* by General Superintendent William M. Greathouse. Rev. Vennum was the evangelist in the home mission revival campaign in which Dr. Greathouse was converted.

The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). These are the words of our Master, who set the pattern for all the undershepherds. It is therefore permissible to substitute the word "pastor" for "shepherd" and say, "The good *pastor* giveth his life for the sheep."

The Church offers no finer opportunity for life investment than the pastorate. A successful pastorate *demands* the investment of one's life. One may be a hireling or just a preacher and make little investment, but "the good *pastor* giveth his life for the sheep."

Although pastoring demands the investment of a life, the returns on the investment are the greatest found anywhere in God's vineyard. In leading the sheep up the mountain, we find higher heights for ourselves. In their growth we find a new development. When we go with them through the valley of the shadow, we come forth with a more tender heart, a larger capacity for understanding and compassion. And when we ascend the mountain to carry our people before God, we come back with a new shine on our own faces. No institution on earth provides a greater opportunity for enlargement of heart and mind, the deepening of spirituality, and the enrichment of the soul. The returns to the pastor are so glorious and blessed that he feels sorry that he has but one life to invest.

Perhaps some evangelists feel that they have settled all of the pastor's problems in one special service at the altar, but the truth is that they have merely changed the problem's form. Before, his problem was to get a life *to* God; now the problem is to protect and nurture and encourage and develop that life *in* God. The good doctor who delivers a baby into this world may have helped to solve the birth crisis, but when he places that baby in its mother's arms, he has given her at least 20 years of watch care, of praying in the night hours, and of facing all the crises that must be met to nurture that life to adulthood.

So the pastor's work is greater than that of the evangelist. His report would read somewhat like the shepherd who felt the responsibility for the strict accounting of his services when he said, "This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; *I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it*, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes" (Gen. 31:38-40, *italics added*).

But lest we magnify our labors over our rewards, I would also call your attention to a later report from this same shepherd who had placed his shoulder beneath all the responsibility of the welfare of his flock. Reporting to the Great Shepherd, he says, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands" (Gen. 32:10). He had entered God's service after he had made his contract that morning at Bethel with only his staff in his hand. Jacob and his staff represented his share of the capital investment. But now, after 20 years, he has become two bands, a great multitude. I am sure that regardless of heartaches, tears, and labors, we will feel rewarded 1,000 times over if we cross our Jordan with a company of precious souls whom God has given us.

I believe that the first essential of a good pastor is a **love** for the sheep. This love must be greater than all other considerations, whether they be place, pay, or comforts. It is impossible for any man to speak to his people 30 minutes twice each week and not soon reveal his motives. If his motive is love, the congregation will quickly understand it. But if it is for numbers and records, a name for himself, or a larger salary, they will know this just as quickly. One cannot truly love his flock unless he loves each one individually (warts and all), just as God loves the whole world individually. The power of that love is that He deals with each individual with a tender regard for his personality. I am where I am today and you are where you are, because the great God of heaven took time to deal with us lovingly and individually. We must love each soul with respect to its personality before it can be said we love souls.

When we really love our sheep, many of our problems are solved. That restlessness that keeps one looking for greener pastures never vexes the pastor who loves his people. The task of digging out sermons becomes the thrill of finding better fodder for his sheep. The salary doesn't pinch nearly so much and the hard bed in that uncomfortable parsonage is even softer when we love our people.

But the greatest results from real pastoral love are to be found among the sheep. It is surprising how much corrective medicine sheep will take when they know we have their interest close to our hearts. On the other hand, it is remarkable how little they will take if they sense no love in our motives.

The next essential that I would mention in a good pastor is **patience**. Jacob voiced every pastor's problem when he told his brother Esau to go on ahead. "If men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die"

(Gen. 33:13). What a test it sometimes is, to go slowly and softly, when you envision so much that needs to be done, and the goal is so alluring. But it is better to never reach the goal *than to get there without the sheep*. There will always be sick sheep, as well as a few unruly sheep. There are some that are naturally slow, and then there are the lambs—what patience will be required if we get all the flock home! David, the shepherd-king, spoke a great word about the Chief Shepherd when he said, “Thy gentleness hath made me great” (Ps. 18:35). It took many processes to bring a lad from the obscurity of the sheepcote to the throne of Israel, but it was the patience and tenderness of God that got him there.

I heard of a farmer who was accustomed to go off for several days at a time on a drunken binge. One of his neighbors saw him throw 40 bushels of corn into his hog pen and then remark, “Now, if you are prudent, that ought to do you.” I am afraid that in some places, the program has been thrown at the people about like that. If the people do not take it and use it as they should, the pastor begins to blame them and finally to skin and blister them. I may have some of the best ideas in the world, yet it may be possible that some of the best people in the world don’t see what I see. Patience will ever keep before us that there is a time, a place, and a way to do things. That which won’t work today can be set on the back burner to await a better season. I can swallow half a dozen pills at one time with difficulty. But I nearly choked one of my little nephews trying to make him swallow *one*. I finally found that some people can swallow pills much easier if you grind them and give them in water.

I once heard a preacher say in pressing his invitation (or maybe I should say in his threats to get people to the altar) that if any person walked out of the door unsaved, they would have to walk over the crucified body of Christ and would trample His blood under their unholy feet. His message was the ultimate light, and there wasn’t an unsaved person there who had not been brought face-to-face with a final decision with God. The truth is, human personality is so complicated that there is no *mortal* word that can produce ultimate conviction for everyone, even if it should be your very best sermon. We will just have to pray for the sheep when we can’t move them; and maybe after a while some little fellow from the backwoods who didn’t get through the eighth grade will come along and preach a message that has

neither introduction, body, nor conclusion, and not the slightest relation to homiletics, yet suddenly the folks that we couldn’t move will run to the altar and pray through.

It is easy to *skin* sheep, because it takes no particular ability; but it takes a lot of study and prayer and living close to the heart of the Great Shepherd to **feed** the sheep. Sheep are difficult to drive, but they can be led. Though it may be easier to scold than inspire, I would rather spend more time on my face in prayer until I could imbibe the tenderness of the Master and then carry something in all my attitude that would help my sheep *want* to be better.

The good pastor will **give his life** for the sheep. If this is true, then the pastor thinks more of the sheep than he does of himself. If he can’t handle his sheep and has to leave, he will not gather together the ones that love him and so cause a rift between them and the rest of the flock, leaving a situation hard to heal that works against the success of the next shepherd. Of course, if he loves himself more than he loves the sheep, he would prefer to advertise his hurt.

Finally, I would have us notice the shepherd’s position in relation to the flock. He is to **lead**. If he wants his sheep to sacrifice, he must lead the way in self-denial. If he wants his people to ascend to the holy place of prayer, he must first climb the heights of intercession himself. If he would have his people witness for Christ in personal evangelism, he must take the lead. Paul said, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). Such is the leadership that brings the sheep into green pastures, and green pastures develop the sheep. The true criterion of the good pastor may not always be found in the number of additions to the church, but it will always be found in the development of those who sit under his ministry. *What is more glorious than to be revered in the hearts of our people*. We dedicate their babies, unite their youth in wedlock and pray the blessings of heaven upon their union, hold night watches at the bedside of the dying while we weep with the bereaved and comfort them with the comfort where-with God has comforted us. And better still, we develop babes in Christ into full manhood and ripen manhood into the golden fruit of sainthood under our God-ordained ministries. What a sacred office! What a high privilege! Is it any wonder that a good pastor will give his life for the sheep?

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Preaching for Decision

by Robert E. Coleman

The ultimate test of preaching is how men respond to the message. The decision is what counts. A sermon must move human will to action to accomplish its purpose (Rom. 10:13). The truth of the message is saved from mere rationalism or emotionalism by giving it proper expression. To stir people religiously without helping them make changes leaves them worse off than they were before. They will either become confused or indifferent. Consequently, the preacher must do everything possible to make the issue plain, and then call the congregation to account.

Preaching that is dilatory about this fact has no evangelistic relevance. The gospel does not permit us the luxury of indecision. The Son of God died for our sins. Whether we like it or not, we must answer for what we do with Christ. We cannot be neutral. To ignore the responsibility is blasphemy. It is the preacher's business to make people face this fact, and to cause them to seek the Lord while He may be found.

For this reason, the appeal for commitment is the most decisive point of the message. The preacher, therefore, should give as much or more consideration to the invitation as to any other part of the sermon. Like the rest of the discourse, it should be bathed in prayer. While meditating upon it, he can decide what will be expected and how to ask for it. Clarity is essential. A preacher who ends up in confusion has lost the effect of his message. Sometimes the whole sermon might be woven around the invitation, but always it should be constructed to make the invitation compelling. This is the crowning achievement of the message.

Though every sermon should demand a verdict, the method of asking for it will vary. Sometimes the preacher may feel led to give an appeal that calls for no immediate public response. For example, he might ask the people present to join in a closing prayer of dedication while they bow in their pews. Or they might be told to go home and pray about what God would have them do. Perhaps they could be asked to write the preacher a card or letter telling

of the decision they made in private, or they might be invited to visit the pastor in his office to talk it over in person. Invitations of this kind are probably more appreciated when speaking to Christians on subjects related to growing in grace. They should be used sparingly when addressing hardened sinners. Such appeals can, in that instance, cause indefiniteness and encourage postponement of a decision.

Invitations calling for a public response are more common in revival settings. One method is to invite people to record their decision by signing a written statement of faith on a specially prepared card. Sometimes the preacher might ask for a show of hands or call people to stand to indicate some resolution. Convicted persons may be asked to remain after a service for counsel. Some prefer to direct them to an inquiry room where they may receive further instruction. An oft-repeated practice among evangelists is to invite persons to come forward for prayer.

Any one or a combination of these methods can be employed to make the invitations more impressive. The idea behind them all is to get the concerned person to seek the Lord in a definite way. The emphasis upon a public confession of need is intended primarily to help the seeker bear witness to the inward resolution. When this is done sincerely, it not only strikes a mortal blow to pride, but also inspires determination to see it through.

What is known today as "the altar call" is Methodism's own unique contribution to these invitational methods. As a distinctive technique, it originated during the Second Great Awakening in America, when distressed persons were invited to come to the Communion rail for prayer. Since the altar had long been used to administer the Lord's Supper, it seemed an ideal place for sinners also to make their supplications known to the Lord. In time it became an indispensable part of most Methodist preaching services and through them has now become an accepted pattern in other evangelical groups.

But any method of extending an invitation is only a means to an end. It

should never be allowed to get in the way of the Spirit's sovereignty. Sometimes a preacher may be led to open the invitation in a way and at a time totally unexpected. When he relies upon the Spirit to direct in all that is done, he can be assured that the message will accomplish its intended purpose. God will not let His Word return unto himself void.

Among early Methodists, if there was no visible response to the invitation, some evidence of conversions or sanctifications, the preacher actually felt that the sermon had failed in its purpose. Thus, while many of them had much to learn about sermon organization and delivery, they all seemed to excel in the exhortation for souls to come to God. Here they became desperate in discharging their office. Typical of their concern is an exhortation by Francis Asbury, concluding a sermon on the words of I Cor. 7:29, "The time is short."

How many . . . find that the time is short; Alas! too short for them. O sinner, the time is short! Seeker, the time is short! Strive—agonize to enter in. Backslider, surely to thee the time is short! Believer, O, remember the time is short! (*Journal*, 3:387).

The time was short indeed. He had no assurance that he would ever pass that way again. Thus, to be realistic, he had to plead as if everything depended upon what that one sermon accomplished.

Perhaps that desperate sense of urgency is what is wanting most in our preaching today. This, coupled with a long drought of barren altars, has led many to expect nothing to happen from their preaching. Preaching is considered an art in itself, apart from any consideration of results. But let those who cherish this view dispel any idea that they are in the Wesleyan tradition. From the beginning Methodists were taught to preach for a verdict and to expect results from every sermon. If Wesley found a preacher who reported no one either saved, sanctified, or at least angered as a result of the message, a rebuke could be expected. Here we might well test our own preaching, remembering that it is ultimately the decision that counts.



THE ANTIDOTE FOR TRIVIAL PURSUIT: PREACHING

by James E. Means

Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry, Denver Seminary

Is there anything wrong with current preaching? Yes, say the congregations of many of today's churches. Many people are afflicted with boredom in the pew, resulting from a poor quality of preaching. The torrential verbal outpourings week after week simply don't make much difference in the hearers' lives. After listening to an eloquent but empty sermon, one churchgoer suggested to a friend, "That man can say nothing as well as I've heard it said."

Mediocrity in the pulpit wastes hundreds of thousands of man-hours per week and is spiritually harmful to the spiritual millions. How can preaching be made more meaningful and productive? The following suggestions may help.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING IS THEMATIC

Good preaching is focused upon great scriptural truths. Each worthwhile sermon identifies, exposes, underscores, and presses upon the listener God's profound revelations. Bad preaching is pedantic; it is marked by fractured thinking and trivial concerns. Excellence in preaching demands that the congregation's attention be focused upon the biblical truths of sin, grace, heaven, hell, God, and other such truths.

John Bunyan's philosophy of preaching encompassed his "desire that others might see, as he saw, what sin and death and hell and the curse of God mean, and also that they might discover as he had discovered, what grace and mercy and forgiveness and the love of God can do for men." Too much modern preaching occupies itself with a text's minor details instead of with such themes.

Expository preaching is often thought of as an exacting explanation of a lengthy scriptural passage. Typically, much time is given to emphasize obscure minutiae, and the sermon ends with a tacked-on, often strained, application. Many suffering saints sit through such tedious presentations without ever recognizing rel-

evance to their own spiritual lives. The preacher has merely played Trivial Pursuit with texts. Unfortunately, this is often thought of as "deep stuff." Neither oratorical excellence nor scholarly brilliance ever make up for irrelevancy.

Someone said: "The Bible is a searchlight. It is not intended so much to be looked at as to be thrown upon a shadowed spot." To discourse on hidden, inconsequential details is ineffective and unworthy of the listener's attention. The preacher's business is to seize important, timeless, biblical truth and bring it to bear upon human lives.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING IS INSPIRATIONAL

Deeply ingrained into most preachers' thinking is the assumption that if the listener learns certain theological facts, they will be better people, more Christlike and less subject to Satan's schemes. Consequently, the typical preacher often thinks of himself as a medium between the scholarly textbooks and the ignorant parishioner.

It is a fallacy to think that people need more information about theological niceties or textual particulars. The problem in human lives is seldom lack of knowledge; rarely does the awareness of more facts make much difference.

People are not ignorant. Most people already know far more than they practice. Explaining subjects or texts is not the main business of preaching. The preacher who is content with dispensing information does little that is worthwhile. Education has been tried and found wanting.

Every good sermon helps the listener to understand the Bible better. However, the real business of preaching is not to inform but to bring about change in human lives. For that to happen, the sermon must inspire, motivate, persuade, and move.

Excellence in preaching touches the springs of human motives to prompt transformation. A good sermon

animates, quickens, elevates, and impels. It does not settle for mere academic presentation of facts. A good sermon is much more than a lecture or an oral essay; it is truth made alive in the preacher, empowered by the Spirit, and therefore it transforms.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING IS ENCOURAGING

A disproportionate share of modern preaching falls into the category of tongue-lashing. Beginning with the identification of something wrong with people, the church, or society, the preacher then uses Scripture to rake the people over the coals. Oddly, certain masochistic people enjoy this.

There is an appropriate place for rebuke in preaching. It can, however, be a mere vent for the preacher's anger, or it can cheer saints to higher levels of Christian achievement. Paul wrote, "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2:11-12, NIV). Much more preaching that encompasses such a philosophy needs to be done.

Good preaching does not whip, it encourages. The preacher who feels smugly satisfied that he "let them have it" has not served well. Preaching must warm the coldhearted, comfort the downhearted, and soften the hard-hearted. Good preaching cheers on; it does not denounce and censure.

If people leave the church feeling more discouraged than when they came in, preaching has failed. It has been said that 6 out of 10 people in church on Sunday are hurting. They come to find forgiveness, not more guilt. They must find grace, not condemnation. They desperately need a message of salvation, healing, and encouragement.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING IS PASSIONATE

Our fear of emotionalism has contributed to a cold formalism in preaching. Hardly anything is as objectionable in preaching as dispassionate objectivity.

Charles Spurgeon wrote, "Even fanaticism is to be preferred to indifference. I had sooner risk the dangers of a tornado of religious excitement than see the air grow stagnant with a dead formality. A lukewarm sermon sickens every healthy mind. It is dreadful work to listen to a sermon, and feel all the while as if you were sitting out in a snowstorm or dwelling in a house of ice, clear but cold, orderly but killing."

John Stott echoes this truth: "We should not fear genuine emotion. If we can preach Christ crucified and remain altogether unmoved, we must have a hard heart indeed. More to be feared than emotion is cold professionalism, the dry, detached utterance of a lecture which has neither heart nor soul in it. Do man's peril and Christ's salvation mean so little to us that we feel no warmth rise within us, as we think about them?"

Listeners hunger for evidence that the preacher believes his own message. They want to know that this truth makes a difference. A cold, indifferent delivery hardly conveys that message.

Conviction is impossible without fervor. Our great need is not for better scholarship but for spiritual fire. When listening to some sermons, many have thought: Oh, for one good, soul-satisfying emotion. Sermons that

bore congregations often do so because the preacher sounds bored.

EFFECTIVE PREACHING IS TRUTHFUL

After listening to an eloquent presentation, one unmoved listener responded: "That's a bunch of sentimental slop." Much of our religion, hymnody, and preaching is sentimentally magnificent but theologically weak. Though passion is necessary in preaching, it can never become a substitute for truth.

Sometimes preachers preach what they do not believe but wish they did. There are things that sound great in sermons and make profound impressions but simply are not true. It is tragically possible to be attractive, even elegant, while playing fast and loose with biblical truth. Rhetoric that masks rightness or wrongness is contemptible.

We are often tempted to compromise truth for expediency. Yielding to this enticement causes preachers to take texts out of context, twist interpretations to fit personal prejudices, and cite authorities to buttress fallacies. No dividends achieved by such tactics justify the dilution or contamination of truth. Most listeners are not fooled by oratory. If they are deceived, they eventually become disillusioned.

There is no way to escape the necessity of integrity in the handling of Scripture. "This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words" (1 Cor. 2:13, NIV). Without this fidelity to eternal truth, preaching is an exercise in futility.

A FINAL WORD

A word must be said about an even more subtle temptation than those mentioned, the temptation to think that the *sermon* is all-important. It is not. The *preacher*, not the sermon, is crucial. Many preachers spend hours preparing the sermon, but no time preparing themselves.

A moment's serious reflection demonstrates the truth of this. Some of history's most famous preachers would not pass any homiletics courses, but who would argue with their effectiveness in preaching? Similarly, some of today's great pulpiteers may be homiletical flops, but they are superb communicators. They are effective because they are anointed with the Spirit of God, they are burning with love for Christ, they know the Word and human nature, and they practice what they preach. When they speak, people listen and are moved.

It is a tragedy if preacher training schools emphasize the careful crafting of the sermon, theological correctness, and a host of other cognitive or mechanical skills, but fail to give at least equal emphasis to godliness and the spiritual disciplines crucial to effective ministry. Admittedly, it is difficult to light a fire in the soul, but nothing substitutes for it.

If people leave our churches saying, "That was a great sermon; praise the preacher," we have failed. Rather, the sermon must provoke the response, "We have a mighty Savior and a great salvation; praise God." That does not necessitate homiletical genius, just a preacher aflame with the truth of God's grace. Preachers don't fail because of what they *do* in preaching; they fail in what they *are* as disciples. The greatest need is not better preaching, but better preachers.

THE PRERETIREMENT YEARS: A TIME FOR HEALTH CARE PLANNING

by Gary B. Morsch, M.D., M.P.H.
Olathe, Kans.

Most retirement planning centers on financial resources, as it should. As important as this is, however, it is imperative that one also has a plan for the preservation of health. It is essential that this planning begin in the pre-retirement years.

One of this decade's greatest trends has been the "wellness movement." More than ever before, people are interested in becoming—and staying—well.

One of the common misconceptions I encounter in those nearing retirement is the attitude that "it's too late to do anything about my health." Fortunately, this is not true. It's never too late! Achieving one's highest level of wellness is possible no matter what one's current level of health. Wellness is not the attainment of perfect health. Rather, it is the process of maximizing health potential. Whether you enjoy perfect health or live with chronic disease, you can achieve a higher level of wellness that will make retirement the best years of life. Choosing a healthier life-style will prepare you for a retirement that is productive, joyful, and meaningful. Let's look at some of the components of a "wellness life-style."

NUTRITION

The statement that "you are what you eat" has never been truer. Scientific research is proving the profound effect nutrition has on health and well-being.

Poor nutritional habits are linked to a variety of diseases, including heart disease and heart attacks; high blood pressure; strokes; diabetes; diverticulosis; ulcers; and cancers of the colon, breast, prostate, and uterus. All of these illnesses can be reduced, often prevented, by diet alone.

Following a proper diet does not have to be a complex

task. A few simple guidelines will provide the basic foundation of a healthy diet. Although thousands of diets are available, almost all of them can be condensed into one basic premise: Eat less animal products and more plant foods.

Animal products include meats, dairy products, and eggs. Plant foods include fruits, vegetables, and grains. Since cholesterol is found only in animal products, a diet low in animal products will reduce cholesterol. On the other hand, fiber is found only in plants. Thus, a

high fiber diet is simply a diet high in plant foods. In addition, a proper diet should limit salt, sugars, and caffeine.

Our motivation for eating properly goes beyond health, however. Scripture teaches that we are to be faithful stewards of our health, even in the area of nutrition: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31, NIV).

EXERCISE

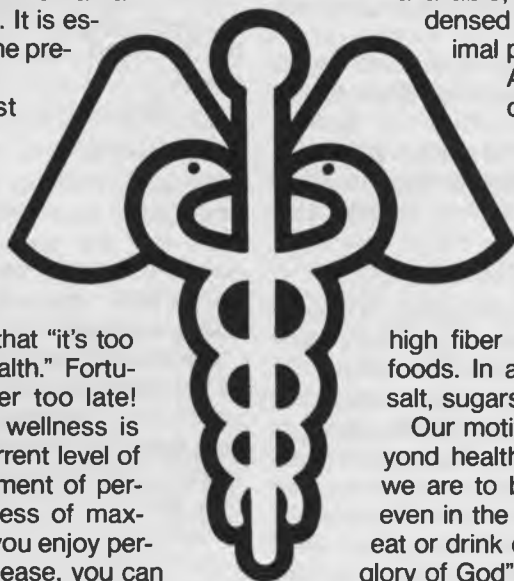
My father once asked, "What is the most important thing I should be doing to stay healthy?"

Without hesitation I replied, "Exercise!" Almost daily, new research confirms this: There are few things as important to good health as exercise.

Of all the life-style behaviors we can adopt, this is one of the most important. Exercise has a multitude of positive effects on the body and can reduce or prevent many diseases—including high blood pressure, heart disease, depression, stress, obesity, diabetes, and even certain cancers.

How much exercise is good for you? You don't have to be an Olympic champion to benefit from exercise. As little as 30 minutes of aerobic exercise three times per week can keep you fit! The type of exercise is essential;

(Continued on p. 46)





SIX WAYS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR MARRIAGE

by Anna Marie Lockard

*pastor's wife, Grace Church of the Nazarene
Port Elizabeth, Republic of South Africa*

A sweeter couple I have not yet seen." That was the remark made by Evangelist George Whitefield regarding Jonathan and Sarah Edwards. While visiting the Edwardses' home in Massachusetts, Whitefield was so moved by the mutual love and respect that Jonathan and Sarah had for one another that he went home and renewed his prayers for a wife.

Jonathan Edwards was an 18th-century theologian and one of the greatest philosophers America has ever produced. He and his wife are known to have an outstanding clergy marriage as well. That home produced love, harmony, and esteem. From a survey taken some years ago of its more than 1,400 descendants, it had produced many preachers and missionaries, as well as college professors, governors, and a vice president of the United States.

What were the ingredients that made it a successful clergy marriage? Much credit for their marital happiness goes to Sarah Edwards. It has been said that Sarah set the tone of peace, harmony, and serenity in the home.

It is still true today. The minister's wife whose relationship with the Lord is fresh and intimate is able to do much to strengthen and maintain a solid marital yoke that will honor God and win the praise of her husband.

There needs to be mutual love and respect in any relationship. It takes two to make a good marriage successful, and both must spend time at making it work. At the same time, in many instances, it is the minister's wife who is the key to a smoothly flowing, happy marriage. Her encouragement, support, and gratitude is vitally important in nurturing their God-ordained union.

How is she best able to accomplish this? Here are a few suggestions.



Do a Lot of Encouraging. Maintain an attitude of encouragement. Verbal expressions of confidence will go far to knit the cords of marriage closer together. Although your pastor-husband may appear as a tower of strength to you, remember that he, too, is vulnerable to discouragement. He yearns for your praise and approval. Recently my husband was faced with a family crisis situation. A husband had been unfaithful and wanted to end a marriage of 22 years. The distraught wife saw suicide as her only alternative. During the three-month critical period, Chuck handled the situation with wisdom and courage. I was quick to tell him so.



Express Gratitude Often. Expressions of gratitude can serve as a unifying bond. Don't hesitate to say, "Thanks for taking me out to dinner tonight." "Thank you for helping me with the dishes." Don't take him for granted. Tell him, "I'm glad you are my husband." Let him hear from you the words, "You look handsome this morning."



Give Love Gifts. Tangible expressions of love can boost a husband's sagging spirit. I often fill a candy jar with my husband's favorite peanuts and place it on his desk along with a note. I enjoy asking him what special food he is hungry for, and then I plan an outstanding dinner, just for him.



Offer Support. You can fortify your marriage by offering your constant support. At times I try to let my husband know that I agree with his decisions. I want to give

him reason to believe that above all else, I am his number one supporter.



Be a Stress Buffer. By helping to eliminate unnecessary stress in your husband, you will be helpful in reinforcing your relationship. Three months ago the Lord clearly showed this to me. I had been complaining to Chuck about the lack of personal finances and the high cost of living. Soon I began to realize that this was placing unnecessary stress on him. I asked the Lord to forgive my complaining spirit. I try not to annoy him with mundane tasks that I can really handle myself. It is best not to harangue about the broken toaster at a time when he is facing a serious dilemma in the church. With God's grace you can become a stress buffer. That may mean giving your mate more personal space, time to be alone or to enjoy restorative recreation on his own.



Be a Good Listener. Cultivate good listening skills. Be attentive during his conversations. Act interested; *be* interested. Regardless of the situation to which my husband is called, I want him to know that I will be a good listener for him when he returns—if he wants to share. Recently my husband counseled a man who had been unfaithful to his wife. What reason did the man give? He said he needed a friend, someone to talk to, someone who would listen.

These six suggestions may be simple. You may think of other creative ways to nurture your relationship. You can be sure that your efforts will honor God and win the praise of your husband. By practicing these suggestions as Spirit-filled women, God can equip us to become stabilizing forces in strengthening our God-ordained clergy marriages.





In the "Preacher's Magazine"

50 Years Ago

CONCERN FOR THE LEARNED

"It has been a growing conviction with me for years that there are two classes of people whom the Church of the Nazarene has never made an honest effort to reach. These are our own unsaved young people who attended the public schools or the state university, and the great body of cultured, refined people in the community who are not religious.

"In the first place, our messages are all directed to the 'down and outers.' In the second place, our messages imply that we do not value the things which educated people value.

"I wonder whether or not there may be a connection between the fact that our unsaved young people in college and in the public schools seem to lack respect for our ministry, and yet show a proper respect for their school instructors. Can it be that there is too obvious a comparison between teachers who . . . present material in a scholarly way and some of our ministers whose sermons contain grammatical errors, inaccurate statements regarding science, a lack of knowledge of world affairs, and stories which test the credulity of the most simple? Is it too much to pray for a Church of the Nazarene so filled with a passion for souls . . . that we will willingly exert the effort to correct our grammar, to quote science accurately, to keep informed on world affairs, and to be more careful in relating stories? It is unlikely that any young person who is prejudiced against us as individuals will ever be reached by us with the gospel."

—John W. Ackley
January 1938

HOW LONG, O LORD?

Q: *My wife says I preach too long. I preach from 45 minutes to an hour. Is that too long?*

A: Women are usually right and especially when it is a preacher's wife talking to him about his preaching. I think that is all I should say.

—Charles Gibson
August 1938

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

"Congregational singing is a means of grace and inspiration, if properly carried on. But the competitive, ear-splitting exhibitions of one section pitted against another, or women against men, are anything but worshipful.

"And then the gymnastics and contortions and buffoonery of some song leaders seems to be entirely out of place in a service of divine worship. . . .

"Verbose exhortation to join in the singing, repeatedly announcing the number and the verse, undue flailing of arms and stamping of feet seem out of place in a morning service.

"I know that a worshipful, dignified, reverent atmosphere is fully as conducive to liberty and freedom in the Spirit as is a careless, boisterous, free-and-easy, happy-go-lucky method."

—January 1938

HILARIOUS GIVING

"Where is that spirit of hilarious giving today? Most of us begrudge even our tithe now, and groan audi-

bly when the extra needs are presented. Where is the liberality of Pentecost? . . .

"We need money. We go into the pulpit with our heads hanging and clothed miserably with prearranged defeat and an apologetic air. We say to the people, 'We are all poor. We are giving all we can, but really can't we deny ourselves some chewing gum for the cause of missions?' . . .

"There is plenty of money in our homes to supply the needs of 200 missionaries, rather than starve out 60 of them. There may not be enough to cover the elaborate and unchristian building programs some of us have fallen heir to but there is ample for commodious quarters in which to worship God and serve humanity."

—Mildred Bangs Wynkoop
March 1938

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM

"'Why don't you pray that God will annihilate Japan—by an earthquake or something?' Madame Chiang besought her noble Christian mother.

"She turned her face away for a time. Then looking gravely at me, she said, 'When you pray, or expect me to pray, don't insult God's intelligence by asking Him to do something which would be unworthy even of you, a mortal.'

"That made a deep impression on me, and today I can pray for the Japanese people, knowing that there must be many who, like Kagawa, suffer because of what their country is doing in China."

—World Outlook
May 1938

MINISTERS' WEAKNESSES

"I made bold to ask an observing, analytical and discriminating type of person what in his estimation were some of the glaring weaknesses of ministers. He promptly gave me six and said there were several more, but these were the most serious offenses against the principles of efficiency and success in the ministry. Read them and weep.

1. Inability to make contacts with businessmen, city officials, and others who might help the church. In other words, men who would not or could not 'mix.'

2. Men who were unable to appreciate the eternal fitness of things—human blunderbusses, muddlers, bunglers—men who figuratively speaking put their feet into their mouths every time they opened them.

3. Failure to cultivate habits of studiousness.

4. A lack of genuine and honest piety.

5. Weakness in planning a financial program for the church.

6. Inability to relate and adjust themselves to others—church officers, board members, fussing, critical and mean-souled sisters of both sexes."

—September 1938

AN INCREASING RESTLESSNESS

"There seems to be an increasing restlessness among the pastors of our churches. Perhaps this is due in large measure to the restlessness of the churches themselves. Our age is enamored of novelty. The new preacher is a success until his newness wears off. We are quite aware that some ministers outstay their usefulness, and that it would be a Godsend to some churches if other churches would relieve them of the burden they have to bear. We are convinced, however, that the curse of our age is not pastorates that are too long, but pastorates which are too short. One of our distinguished ministers, in an anniversary sermon, said, 'One of the imperative needs of today is a greater patience on the part of the people with their pastor and a greater fortitude on the part of the pastor in facing the difficulties which are found in every church.'

—February 1938

REVIVAL BY SIEGE

"In recent years it has been the custom of a few good evangelists to hold ten-day meetings. In the judgment of this writer, this is too short a time for either large or permanent results. For just about the time the meeting is well under way, the evangelist must close his engagement and push on for another field. The *siege* plan is better. Plan for a month or six-week campaign. Here are some of the advantages: (1) The length of time makes it possible to interest the whole church. (2) The protracted meeting will the nearer stir and reach the community. (3) As the revival increases, the crowds will increase; thus making it possible to move multitudes toward God. (4) The converts need the enthusiasm, and ample opportunity for personal work and testimony. (5) It gives the evangelist time to indoctrinate those who need it. (6) The pastor has time to gather large numbers in the church. (7) A great revival is much better for a community than a revival symptom, or just a little spurt."

—C. E. Cornell

September 1938

TOO LATE TO CHANGE

"One of the Dillinger gang was the son of a holiness preacher. He was saved many times when he was a lad, but would always allow the ridicule of chums to keep him from seeking holiness. Those who know him said that he manifested a desire to do what was right. However his up-and-down life soon became discouraging and he gave up for good. He fell in with bad company, and soon he found himself convicted of crime and in prison. When the Dillinger gang escaped, he was among them. He soon separated himself from the gang. As he was walking along a railroad, near his home, a farmer recognized him as one of the wanted men. In a few minutes the young man lay on the tracks with his brains blown out by the farmer's shotgun.

"Who knows but that he had separated himself from the gang with the intention of trying to do right? However this may be, the boy who wanted to do right, was slain in his

sins because of his failure to seek holiness."

—Edward Paul

November 1938

UNHOLY DISTRACTIONS

"My peace of mind was greatly disturbed recently when I attended one of our larger churches and had the misfortune to be seated directly in front of two young ladies who I later learned were daughters of two prominent families in the congregation. My perturbation arose from the fact that all through the service these two young ladies (about 18 or 19) indulged in a continual buzz of conversation. This was not a case of the first 15 minutes being the hardest; from that time on it really got on my nerves. I managed by sheer force of will to get a few snatches of the sermon but in the main the service, for me, was ruined.

"That experience and another, equally distressing, a few weeks later, are responsible for this plaint. The later episode was occasioned by a group of older girls—three of them this time—all of them assiduously masticating gum. Not only was the sight of this unpleasant but the sound was just as objectionable. Snap—crack—bang! How those girls did punish that gum. They were well dressed. If they were not members of the church, I am sure they belonged by right of family connections. They must have been either high school graduates or well along toward it.

"I found myself wondering how I would cope with that problem if I were the pastor of that church. I have heard preachers interrupt their messages to publicly scold and even threaten young people for whispering but my reaction to that method always has been unfavorable. I've always thought that if I could not improve on that, I would grit my teeth and endure the annoyance. Perhaps in such cases the pastor is too far removed from the seat of the disturbance to be affected by it. I do not know. But I do wish that these young ladies could be instructed in the rudiments of good behaviour and proper manners for church services."

—The Roving Correspondent

August 1937

WHATEVER BECAME OF SIN IN WESLEYAN TEACHING?

Leon O. Hynson

Evangelical School of Theology, Myerstown, Pa.

When Karl Menninger wrote his book *Whatever Became of Sin?* (1973), he sought to remind his generation of the recurrent problem of sin in human experience. "Sin is the only hopeful view," he wrote. "The present world miasma and depression are partly the result of our self-induced conviction that since sin has ceased to be, only the neurotics need to be treated and criminals punished" (Hawthorne Books, 1973, 188). Dr. Menninger asks a healthy question, posed by one whose expertise in mental health is unquestioned. Wesleyans have understood the shadow side of human nature, the presence of sin in every person's life, every human culture, and in every nation's politics. With E. Gordon Rupp we have taught the "pessimism of nature," the deviation from righteousness that "marks" every thought or deed, even noble ones.

From Wesleyan beginnings the theme of triumph over sin has been keynoted. Like Paul, we have said, "Sin abounded! Grace abounded more!" "Shall we continue in the practice of sin? Perish the thought!" (See Rom. 5:20; 6:1-2.) With Rupp, again, we have believed in the New Testament's affirmation of victory in Christ, the "optimism of grace."

Now it came to pass that we moved out from our earlier enclosures where we thought of ourselves as "the Lord's despised few." That was good! The Lord has other sheep, and lambs, too. In the process of becoming more a part of the mainstream of evangelical Protestantism, we encountered ideas that challenged our own view of biblical faith. And that is good! It is always useful for Christians to test their faith and to "hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21). As time passed, the impact of other modes of theology led to an altered view of sin and a muting of our accent on holy living. That is not good!

The altered view of sin tends to coalesce (lump together) the voluntary decision to disobey God's will and the human failure to do the right. Whether based on misjudgment, ignorance, poor strategy, or the bad results of good intentions, the consequences of our flawed efforts are often very damaging.

As a teacher of Christian ethics, I am concerned with the moral effects of the decisions others, or I, make. Suppose one of my students is writing a paper on business ethics, stressing honesty and avoidance of cheat-

ing. My student innocently suggests a business procedure involving two sets of financial records. He believes there is data that only stockholders should know, while general information is given to the public. He is not being dishonest, even though his actions may be illegal. (Honesty is here defined in terms of conscious intention.) Let us assume that his ethics are wrong, not because of the intention but due to the consequence—the law is violated, the public is misled. As his teacher, I accuse him of proposing immoral behavior, especially dishonesty and lack of integrity. Like my student, I am acting in ignorance, needing other information to make the right judgment.

Who has sinned in this hypothetical situation? If sin is defined by the category of wrong intention, neither party has sinned. Judged by the consequences of our actions—he has misled and I have judged wrongly—there is substantial trespass resulting. Some Reformed Christians believe that this is sin, while some Wesleyans wave off the trespass as insignificant since their intentions were right.

Wesleyans generally object to naming such consequential trespasses as sin. And with good reason, on the ground of the meaning of language. Since words do describe who and what we are—our psyche, our disposition, our styles of life—we are correct in avoiding language that is too broad. If in a fit of pique I describe humankind as altogether greedy, stupid, and banal, I have obviously asked more of these words than they in truth may bear. There is too much altruism, wisdom, and gentleness in the world to allow my statement to be correct. It is important that I differentiate between genocide, child pornography, and adultery on the one hand, and a mistake that leads to harmful consequences. But what is the distinguishing difference? Genocide and child pornography rest on the clearest violation of God's will and on intentional abuses of creation. On the other hand, it is critical to meaningful language to recognize that harm to a child as the result of a stupid judgment by a parent is different. Is it sinful to leave a dangerous chemical where a baby can reach it? It may be! Let us assume, however, that it is stupidity. Is stupidity sin? Probably not, although it is the result of sin.

However, we ought to distinguish between the will to sin and the temporal consequences of sin, that is, igno-

rance, mistakes.

Wesleyans in particular need to develop a responsible attitude toward bad consequences, however good the intent. The answer given by some of our evangelical friends, that is, to call every failure "sin," is not helpful theologically and is not the right use of language.

To fold every action with wrong consequences into one category, calling everything sin, is to affirm the triumph of sin. The best the believer may do then is to affirm Christ's victory over sin, but not his own. To say that we have victory in Christ but that we do not have personal victory is a theological contradiction. It is also damaging to personal faith. When everything is sin, a

toration. Nevertheless, there is a living sequel to that experience, a pattern of life where, as Wesley might express it, the believer lives in victory over sin. That note sounds less dominantly in our preaching than before. We do understand better than before both the depths of sin and our rationalizations, for example, "righteous indignation" as a euphemism for improper anger. We no longer pretend to be beyond sinning (some of us once came close to teaching sinless perfection).

Now our problem may be stated: "I'm saved and ready for heaven. Don't bother me with discipleship expectations or the call to holiness." With that attitude we accustom ourselves to spiritual weakness or sin as the norm

To fold every action with wrong consequences into one category, calling everything *sin*, is to affirm the triumph of sin.

Our focus has turned from *imparted* to *imputed* holiness.

believer may rightly ask: "What is the use?" The courage and will to live a holy life is undermined. The consequence is that we move toward a theology that affirms with Luther the simultaneous righteousness and sinfulness of the believer. Righteous in Christ! Sinful in ourselves! Is that faithful to the New Testament teaching? We believe that it is not.

Increasingly we hear petitions in the Wesleyan world: "Forgive us our sins!" These are legitimate! Jesus Christ loves and forgives sinners. He cannot forgive when men and women need no forgiveness. Pastors should lead their congregations in the grace of confession and res-

for living. The power of Christ living in us is diminished. Our focus turns to what He has done for us, stressing imputed but not imparted righteousness. An experiential vacuum exists, filled by our flaws rather than the Spirit's fullness.

Whatever became of sin? Generally, we fear it less and allow it more. Why? We do not see clearly enough the divine revulsion from sin, the horror of Calvary, the crucified God. We do not know that "against You only have we sinned and done this evil in Your sight, so that You are right when You speak" (Ps. 51:4, author's paraphrase).

ADOPTION

A teacher asked a child when his birthday was. The boy said it was January 1, 1977. The teacher then asked when his brother's birthday was. The boy said it was April 1, 1977—the same year! The teacher asked, "How can it be?"

The boy answered, "My dad said it's OK, because one of us was adopted."

The teacher looked at the boy and asked, "Which one?"

The boy answered, "I asked him that, and he gave me a hug and a kiss, and he said, 'I can't remember anymore.'"

How real is God's adoption? Can God love us as much as He loves Jesus Christ? Rom. 8:14-17 says He does!





TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

The Atonement of the Death of Christ: In Faith, Revelation, and History, by H. D. McDonald, Baker Book House, \$19.95 (PA080-106-1946)

On the front flap of the book cover, the publisher of this book informs us: "Decades have passed since publication of the last major history of the doctrine of the Atonement. *The Atonement of the Death of Christ* comes from one of the finest evangelical historical theologians writing today."

The first part of this large volume, 371 pages, deals with the Atonement in the faith of the Church, as it relates to the gospel, doctrine, the Resurrection, and experience.

Part two deals with what is said about the Atonement in the revelation of Scripture, covering primarily the New Testament.

Part three, the major portion of this book, is an exposition of the history of the doctrine of the Atonement. This historical view takes the reader from the immediate post-apostolic period of the church's existence to modern and contemporary times. It considers the writings of scores of theologians: "Eastern and Western, orthodox and heterodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant, liberal and evangelical, European and American."

McDonald's writing style is logical and refreshing. For example, "All that God must do for us that we might be reconciled to himself Christ has done. In his person God has given himself to us, and in his work God has given himself for us." Writing about the church, McDonald says, "While the church exists only by the gospel, it also exists for the gospel . . . The church is not itself the gospel . . . To exalt the church is to obscure the gospel."

This book cannot be read hurriedly. It requires thoughtful consideration. The pastor may find it difficult to fit into his busy schedule. But its study will enrich the pastor who

will take the time, and provide him with much material for sermons on the doctrine of the Atonement.

—Quentin C. Caswell

Stars of the First Magnitude: Holiness Miscellany, by Schmul Publishing Co., n.d., paperback, 175 pp. \$7.95 (PA088-019-1473)

This reprint of a book first issued over 100 years ago by the National Publishing Association for the Promotion of Holiness, the publishing arm of the National Holiness Association, is aptly described by its subtitle (in the original edition its only title), *Holiness Miscellany*. The book contains an assortment of writings on holiness doctrine and experience by seven well-known 19th-century Methodists and one Baptist.

The collection is headed by excerpts from Adam Clarke's *Christian Theology* and Richard Watson's *Theological Institutes*. These represent "classic" exposition of doctrine in the British Wesleyan tradition. These are followed by accounts of the personal experiences of several American Methodists, including George O. Peck, author of one of the first American works on holiness, *The Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection*; Alfred Cookman, one of the early organizers of holiness camp meetings and the National Holiness Association; John A. Wood, author of *Perfect Love* and several other books; Randolph S. Foster, bishop and educator; and Daniel Steele, author and professor at Boston University. There is also the personal testimony of Rev. E. M. Levy, a Baptist pastor raised as a Presbyterian and entirely sanctified under Methodist preaching. The whole volume is introduced by John Inskip, Methodist pastor and founding president of the National Holiness Association.

As the list of contributors would suggest, the form of the book is quite dated. These are 19th-century men addressing a 19th-century au-

dience in the style of their day. Even the typeface in which the book is printed is old (this appears to be a photo-processed printing of the original 1882 edition). That will put some readers off. However, the content is timeless; sounding through with clarity (in most cases) and power is the proclamation of the complete adequacy of God's grace to overcome sin. This is an inspiring and edifying word regardless of the age from which it issues!

—Harold E. Raser

Jeremiah, Vol. 2, and Lamentations, The Daily Study Bible Series, by Robert Davidson, Westminster Press, paper, \$7.95 (PA066-424-5811) 214 pp.

This book is one of the recent volumes in Westminster Press's Daily Study Bible Series on the Old Testament. This series is intended to present the same kind of format as William Barclay's well-known series on the New Testament, that is, short, informative, and inspirational thoughts for Bible study and devotional reading by the general public. Davidson does a commendable job of making Jeremiah fit into this format, which is not easy.

The introduction is brief, but it introduces the reader to some of the scholarly problems of Jeremiah—authorship, the disorganization of material, and the difference in length between the Greek and Hebrew texts. The historical background, which is an absolute necessity in understanding a prophetic book, is briefly touched on at the beginning and developed throughout the book. At times Davidson's view of the authorship and editing process of Jeremiah tends to get in the way of the message, but overall he does an adequate job of bringing Jeremiah and Lamentations to life.

Since this series of books is intended to do for the Old Testament what Barclay did for the New Testament, we should make some com-

ment on the comparison. This particular volume does not measure up to the richness of insight of Barclay's example. One should not expect little gems of truth and classical illustrations to come popping out of each section. This is partly due to the nature of Jeremiah, which is often repetitious and disorganized. The fact that we are reviewing the second volume of a two-volume work may also have something to do with it. Davidson does provide insights that could be developed into sermons and illustrations, but they are not overly abundant. His best contribution is providing a concise, scholarly understanding of the Books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, which enables one to get quickly into the message. A few illustrations that tend to date the book should probably have been left out, and we would disagree with several of his conclusions; but overall this is a well-written book that most pastors will find useful.

—Wendell Bowes

Anthropological Insights for Missionaries, by Paul G. Hiebert, Baker Book House, 315 pp. \$13.95 (PA080-104-2917)

"Today, the young churches planted by the early missionaries are speaking out, calling us to be more aware of human cultures and their differences, and reminding us that God is not a tribal God, but the God of the world; that the gospel is for everyone."

Thus does Paul Hiebert speak of the perspective of churches in the so-called Two-Thirds world in this new book.

Although specifically directed to missionaries, the flood of new ethnic populations to America in recent years makes much of this book viable for the urban-suburban pastor as well.

Culture, communication, contextualization, indigenization—it's all here. In fact, the chief weakness

of this volume is that it tries to cover too much ground in 315 pages. However, it does offer a basic background in a highly readable format. Hiebert's work can be read with great profit by an urban pastor or missionary who has had no formal study in the field of anthropology, and should serve as a very valuable tool for those who are beginning an ethnic ministry.

—Charles R. Gailey

Playing Marbles with Diamonds, and Other Messages for America, by Vance Havner, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, \$7.95 (PA080-104-2909)

Playing Marbles with Diamonds is the opening message in this famous evangelist's latest book of sermons.

The titles are indicative of the contents: "God Never Comes Next," "The Foolishness of God," "Coming to See Jesus," and "Why?"

The author writes with a subtle simplicity and invigorating humor. The material is superb for a pastor looking for preaching suggestions and pungent insights.

Havner evaluates American society with brilliance and challenges the Church to be what it was called to be—a committed fellowship. He states:

In a day when tragedy has become comedy, we play fast and loose with eternal issues. The pearl of great price is not cheap! . . . God forgive us if we handle God's treasures as though they were trifles and the coinage of the eternal as though it were play money. Now is no time to play marbles with diamonds.

Although Havner's words may sting, he points to the solution—genuine revival within the hearts, homes, churches, nation of born-again believers.

—Oscar F. Reed

An Enemy Disguised, by Robert L. Gram (Thomas Nelson, 1985), 189

pp. Hardback. \$10.95 (PA084-075-9428)

An Enemy Disguised is an excellent treatment of the ways the secular world deals with the fear of death, their fallacies and problems, and the Christian approach to death. Gram discusses in a chapter apiece, four modern myths—he calls them disguises—about death. He summarizes them as follows: "The Five-Stage Dying Process" (man goes through five sequential stages of dying, the last of which is termed 'acceptance'); 'The Near Death Experience' (one's life ends with a blissful, out-of-body experience); 'Mind over Death' (one need not die if he employs the power of positive thinking); and 'Medical Immortality' (death itself will be solved by research)." Each chapter includes scientific and practical problems relating to the myth. Both aspects are well documented, the former through research, and the latter through the author's 12 years of ministry and attendance at more than 35 seminars on death and dying, some of which he conducted.

The book also contains several discussions related to death and dying, which are meaningful in themselves: the Christian response to the challenges of Darwinism; our scientific culture (these are a part of the chapter on the formation of the myths); the growth of literature on the subject of death and dying; the need for balance between the Christian's concern about the afterlife and social issues of this life.

An Enemy Disguised will furnish interesting, worthwhile reading for both preachers and laymen. It should be especially valuable to the pastor for its excellent coverage of the important issue and bibliography. It should help him help both those in his fold and outside to realize that "quick panaceas to eternity" must give way to the Christian approach to death.

—Anna Belle Laughbaum

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS



PARABLE OF THE MONUMENT

Not long ago, the *Wall Street Journal* carried this two-sentence news story that is really a parable: "The elms in South Park, Pa., must be cut down because they are obstructing the monument to Joyce Kilmer. They have lifted their leafy arms so high that passersby can no longer read the inscription that begins, 'I think that I shall never see / A poem lovely as a tree.'"

Source

Sermon: by Dr. Eugene Brice, "When Religion Betrays Us."

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

We sometimes lose sight of what is most important and begin worshipping idols.

Supporting Scripture

Luke 6:9; Mark 14:3-9

—Submitted by Norma Miller

HAVE YOU SEEN CHRIST?

Karl Barth, the famous theologian, was on a streetcar one day in Basel, Switzerland, where he lectured. A tourist to the city climbed on and sat down next to Barth. The two men started chatting with each other. "Are you new to the city?" Barth inquired. "Yes," said the tourist. "Is there anything you would particularly like to see in this city?" asked Barth. "Yes," he said, "I'd love to meet the famous theologian Karl Barth. Do you know him?" Barth replied, "Well, as a matter of fact, I do. I give him a shave every morning." The tourist got off the streetcar quite delighted. He went back to his hotel saying to himself, "I met Karl Barth's barber today."

Source

Leadership, Fall 1987, p. 45. John Ross, Surrey, England.

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

We often don't recognize greatness, even when we encounter it directly.

Supporting Scripture

Luke 10:38-42; 9:18-20

—Submitted by Norma Miller

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

"I want this pearl. How much is it?"

"Well," the seller says, "it's very expensive."

"But how much?" we ask.

"A very large amount."

"Do you think I could buy it?"

"Oh, of course. Everyone can buy it."

"But didn't you say it was very expensive?"

"Yes."

"Well, how much is it?"

"Everything you have," says the seller.

We make up our minds. "All right, I'll buy it," we say.

"Well, what do you have?" he wants to know. "Let's write it down."

"Well, I have \$10,000 in the bank."

"Good. Ten thousand dollars. What else?"

"That's all. That's all I have."

"Nothing more?"

"Well, I have a few dollars here in my pocket."

"How much?"

We start digging. "Well, let's see—30, 40, 60, 80, 100, \$120."

"That's fine. What else do you have?"

"Nothing. That's all."

"Where do you live?" the seller probes.

"In my house. Yes, I have a house."

"The house too, then." He writes it down.

"You mean I have to live in my camper?"

"You have a camper? That too. What else?"

"I'll have to sleep in my car!"

"You have a car?"

"Two of them."

"Both cars become mine. What else?"

"You already have my money, my house, my camper, and my cars. What more do you want?"

"Are you alone in the world?"

"No, I have a wife and two children."

"Oh, yes. Your wife and children too. What else?"

"There's nothing left. I am left alone now."

Suddenly the seller exclaims, "Oh, I almost forgot! You're mine, too! Everything becomes mine—wife, children,

house, money, cars, and you, too."

Then he goes on. "Now then—I will allow you to use all these things for the time being. But don't forget that they are mine, just as you are. And whenever I need any of them, you must give them up, because I am now the owner."

Source

Charles Swindoll, *Improving Your Serve: The Art of Unselfish Living* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1981). Quoted from Juan Carlos Ortiz, *Disciple* (Wheaton, Ill.: Creation House, 1975).

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Having Christ is worth more than anything else in the world.

Supporting Scripture

Matthew 13:44-46; 16:24-26

—Submitted by Richard Knox

THE CURATE'S DREAM

"I dreamed that I was in a desert. It was neither day nor night. I saw neither sun, moon, nor stars. My heart was beating fast and high, for I was journeying toward an isolated convent where I had good ground for hoping I would find the original manuscript of the fourth gospel, the very handwriting of the Apostle John. . . .

"After I had walked on for a long time, I saw the level horizon before me by what I knew was the monastery. At length I came to the door, iron-clamped, deep set in a low thick wall. Every door to which I came stood open, but no guide came to meet me. At last I stood before a huge door. I passed into a stone cell. In the cell stood a table. On the table was a closed book.

"Oh how my heart beat! Never but in that moment had I known the feeling of utter preciousness in a thing possessed. What doubts and fears would this beloved volume lay to rest forever!

"I stood motionless and my soul seemed to wind itself among the pages, while my body stood like a pillar of salt, lost in amazement. At last, with sudden daring, I made a step toward the table. Bending with awe, I stretched out my hand to lay it on the book. But before my hand reached it, another hand ap-

peared upon it—an old, blue-veined, but powerful hand. I looked up.

"There stood the beloved disciple! His countenance was a mirror which shone back the face of the Master. Slowly he lifted the book and turned away. Then I saw behind him an altar where a fire of wood was burning, and a pang of dismay shot into my heart, for I knew what he was about to do. He laid the book on the burning wood, and regarded with a smile as it shrank and shrivelled and smouldered to ashes. Then he turned to me and said: 'The Word of God lives and abides forever, not in the volume of the book, but in the heart of the man that in love obeys him.' And I then awoke weeping, but with the lesson of my dream."

Have we learned such a lesson? We have all been called to be servants, to be preachers of the Word. But in all our efforts to be good students and proclaimers of the Word, let us not neglect to be vessels of that Word. He lives within. May we be people whose primary passion is to lovingly obey the true Author of life.

Source

George MacDonald, *The Curate's Awakening* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1879, revised 1986)

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

The Word of God is made alive by our obedience to Him.

Supporting Scriptures

John 14:15-17; Heb. 4:12-13

—Submitted by Diane Cunningham

MORE THAN THE LAW REQUIRES

A woman was married to a stern, exacting man—a "male chauvinist pig" . . . He laid out each day's duties he expected her to perform. She was to arise at a certain time, prepare his breakfast, and help him get off to work. As soon as he left the house she was to wash the dishes, clean up the kitchen, then sweep and dust the house. When he returned in the evening, he made it a point to check to see if she had carried out all his orders. Finally, to simplify his requirements he drew up 10 rules, which he placed on the kitchen wall in plain view.

In the course of time the wife's love was turned to bitterness. She felt herself reduced to abject slavery. She was frozen in fear, as her life became a barren round of duty.

Then her husband died. Some time later she met a fine man who knew the meaning of love and marriage. They became man and wife. This marriage was altogether different from the former. Her husband was generous, kind, and thoughtful. He did not have to command her to get up and prepare the breakfast.

She enjoyed awakening him each morning with the aroma of coffee and frying bacon, and when he left for work she washed the dishes and did her chores with genuine delight.

One day as she was rummaging through a drawer she came on the old 10 rules her former husband had drawn up. To her amazement she was observing them all!

Source

William M. Greathouse, *Romans*, in *Beacon Bible Expositions*, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1975, 119-20

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Love is the fulfillment of the Law.

Supporting Scriptures

Rom. 8:1-4; 13:10

—Submitted by Richard Knox

GOD'S DETAILS

Some friends of Michelangelo invited him to take a holiday cruise with them. He declined, explaining that he was too busy completing a marble statue.

When the holiday revelers returned, one of the ladies asked, "What have you done in our absence?"

"Oh," replied Michelangelo, "I have polished up the angle of the jaw, and smoothed the elbow a bit."

"But those are just trifles!" exclaimed the irritated woman.

"True enough, they are trifles," the artist replied. "But trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

Source

Louis O. Caldwell, *Good Morning, Lord*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Perfection is not achieved by chance. God is a careful sculptor of our lives.

Supporting Scriptures

James 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 1:13, 15

—Submitted by Diane Cunningham

MAUD MULLER

John Greenleaf Whittier, the 19th-century Quaker poet, told the story of a young judge of no mean status and a woman, a common farm laborer. For some time they admired each other, both envying aspects of the other's station in life. Each secretly loved the other. But he dared not marry below his station lest he disgrace his family, and she dared not dream of marrying above her own class. Instead, they both married persons from their own social spheres, ignoring their attractions for each other. Yet as each of them had families and conformed to their social norms, they lived their lives dreaming of what their lives could have been together if only they had dared be true to their feelings. It is here that Whittier penned his insightful couplet, "For of all sad words of

tongue or pen / The saddest are these: 'It might have been!'"

Source

John G. Whittier, "Maud Muller," *Anthology of American Literature*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, George McMichael, ed., Macmillan Co., New York

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

We must be true to our convictions; we must respond when we are convicted, lest we live our lives—or throughout eternity—in vain regret.

Supporting Scripture

Isa. 55:6-7; 2 Cor. 6:1-2

—Submitted by Jonathan Merki

HOW GOOD IS YOUR WORD?

In January 1987 the U.S. Army disposal unit at Fort Bliss, Tex., sold several crates at an auction to scrap dealer Pedro Salas in Juarez, Mexico. When Mr. Salas got back to his scrap yard, he found a live rocket inside one crate. Checking further, he found another rocket, and another. Finally, he had discovered 23 live, high-explosive missiles designed to be fired from helicopters, capable of spraying thousands of fragments on detonation.

How did such potentially dangerous munitions end up being sold inside "empty" crates? An investigation revealed that a young lieutenant had signed a statement that he had inspected the crates and that they were empty. Because of that false statement, the lieutenant's career may be over, the U.S. government was embarrassed, and worst of all, human lives were endangered.

Source

The *Kansas City Times*, April 1987

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

Our integrity (or lack of it) will find us out, either in this life or at judgment. We must be guided by truth.

Supporting Scriptures

Num. 32:23; Luke 12:3

—Submitted by Dan Ames

THE HONESTY OF CHILDREN

A child was asked to write a one-sentence description of "What is a family?" The result? "A family is loving, kind, gentle, and they fight."

Source

Children's church, Grandview, Mo., Church of the Nazarene

Truth/Concept/Doctrine Illustrated

The honest insights and the innocence of a child are to be a model for adults.

Supporting Scriptures

Ps. 8:2; Matt. 18:3

—Submitted by Jonathan Merki



SERMON OUTLINES



MEN WHO LISTENED TO GOD

A Sermon Series by Andrew W. L. Young

ANANIAS OF DAMASCUS

(Acts 9:1-19; 22:12-16)

Introduction

Ananias, a man who listened to God

I. Ananias Was a Faithful Church Member (9:10; 22:12-13).

- A. He was recognized within the Church for his faithfulness (9:10).
- B. He was recognized outside of the Church for his faithfulness (22:12-13).

II. Ananias Was God's Chosen Messenger (9:10-12).

- A. Saul was confronted by the heavenly Christ (9:1-9).
- B. Saul was to be contacted by Christ's earthly representative (9:10).

III. Ananias Was Corrected by the Lord (9:13-14).

- A. Ananias had heard reports of Saul. He was afraid.
- B. Ananias hadn't yet heard of Saul's meeting with Jesus.
- C. Jesus helped Ananias in the work he used.

IV. Ananias Was a Coworker with God (9:15-19; 22:12-16).

- A. He was called to the work.
- B. He was willing to go.
- C. He used a compassionate approach, "Brother Saul." Ananias had a sympathetic spirit.
- D. God placed Saul in Ananias's hands.

Conclusion

Ananias listened to God and became the spiritual father of one who caused many to listen to God.

PHILIP THE EVANGELIST

(Acts 6:1-7; 8:4-8, 12-13, 26-40; 21:8-9)

Introduction

Philip was a man who was prepared to serve God anywhere.

I. His Credentials (Acts 6:3)

Philip was a man whose life was governed by the Holy Spirit.

When God has a special work or mission, He does not appoint some-

one who is sitting idly by, waiting for something to happen; rather He chooses someone who is actively engaged in the task in hand.

- A. Philip was accepted by God.
- B. Philip was accepted by men.

II. His Readiness to Go with God

Philip was ready for anything. Philip was ready to serve anywhere.

- A. Philip served as an administrator (Acts 6).

He was one of the Seven.

The work was:

- 1. Responsible work
- 2. Demanding work
- 3. Limited life ministry. (We don't know how long the task of the Seven lasted, but it doesn't seem to have been too long.)

- B. Philip served as an evangelist (Acts 8).

Philip went into Samaria and later into the coastal cities.

- 1. Philip went where some couldn't or wouldn't go—into Samaria.
- 2. His ministry reaped the seed sown by others. (See John 4.)
- 3. His ministry complemented that of Peter and John. (The work of the gospel is larger than any one person.)

- C. Philip served as a personal worker (Acts 8).

The Ethiopian eunuch: A different area of ministry, but one Philip was ready and willing to exercise.

- D. Philip served as an example at home (Acts 21:9).

He had four daughters who were believers.

Conclusion

Philip listened to God and was ready to serve where God took him.

STEPHEN

(Acts 6:1—8:3)

I. Stephen Lived for Jesus.

- A. Stephen was a spiritual man (6:3, 5, 8).

- 1. He lived for Jesus.
- 2. He loved Jesus (see 6:15).

- 3. He listened to Jesus.

- B. Stephen was a practical man (v. 3). He applied his faith in a practical fashion.

- 1. He exercised tact.
- 2. He exercised compassion.
- 3. He encouraged.
- 4. He exercised a gift of discernment.

- 5. He exercised a gift of wisdom.

- C. Stephen was a praying man (7:59-60).

II. In Death, Stephen Looked on Jesus.

A life lived in the presence of God is not afraid of death, or life for that matter.

"Even in the face of death I will not be afraid; God is with me; His presence makes all the difference" (Ps. 23:4, personal paraphrase).

The sight of the risen, glorified Jesus:

- A. Changed the face of death. The one who looked on Jesus saw that Jesus was looking on him.

- B. It charged Stephen's compassionate spirit.

Stephen died with a prayer of blessing on his lips.

- 1. He prayed for his murderers.
- 2. They "prayed" upon him (7:54). The prayers he prayed in life came with added intensity in the moment of death.

III. In Dying, Stephen Went to Be with Jesus (v. 59).

- A. He died a Christian martyr.
- B. He was deeply mourned (8:2). The earth was a poorer place for his passing.

- C. He left a memorial (see 7:58—8:1). A crumpled figure surrounded by rocks. A memorial, though temporary, spoke to a man named Saul.

Stephen lived, though he died. Saul was dying while he yet lived.

Conclusion

Stephen listened to God; and living and dying, he honored God.

APOLLOS

(Acts 18:24-28; 1 Cor. 3:1-9)

Introduction

Apollos, a man God blessed and made a blessing.

I. Apollos Was Spiritually Hungry Enough to Want to Be Fed (Acts 18:24-26).

- A. His background (vv. 24-25)
 - 1. A Jew from Alexandria
 - 2. A disciple of John the Baptist
 - 3. Apollos was:
 - a. Looking for the Messiah
 - b. One who knew about Jesus but did not yet know Him as personal Savior
- B. His ministry (vv. 25-26)
 - 1. Powerful—He was “mighty in the scriptures.”
 - 2. Personal—What he knew personally he wanted to share.
 - 3. Patchy—He knew “only the baptism of John.”
 - a. The meaning of the Cross was unknown to him.
 - b. Resurrection was unknown to him.
 - c. Pentecostal outpouring was unknown to him.
 - d. Jesus was the historical but not yet the personal Jesus to Apollos.

II. Apollos Was Humble Enough to Listen to Others

- A. The greatness of Apollos is seen in his willingness to be instructed by those not as “mighty in the scriptures” as he.
- B. The man who will not listen to others is a truly poor man.
- C. The ministry of Aquila and Priscilla was to make a difference to Apollos.

III. Apollos Was Wise Enough to Pass On What He Had Experienced (vv. 27-28; 1 Cor. 3:1-9).

- A. Apollos helped many. The Christian life is not to be a “bottle of blessing” but rather a “channel” of blessing.
- B. Apollos was hurt by some. “I am of Apollos.”

Conclusion

God blessed Apollos and made him a blessing.

LET DOWN YOUR NETS AGAIN

Luke 5:1-11

Introduction: Everyone loves a good fishing story! And this one is a whopper!

Proposition: Fishermen should catch fish!

I. Uncommitted Fishermen

- A. The custom and method of shore fishing
 - 1. They had stayed near the shore.
 - 2. They had caught no fish.
- B. Tired, uncommitted, shallow fishermen (v. 5)
 - 1. “We’ve tried that before.”
 - 2. “We’ve worked hard and caught nothing.”
 - 3. “Let someone else do it.”
- C. Too much invested in shore property
 - 1. Too busy to leave the shore
 - 2. “You go out in the boat. We’ll stand on the shore and support you.”

II. Willing Fishermen

- A. They heeded the call of Jesus.
 - 1. “Because you say so” (v. 5, NIV).
 - 2. They obeyed and let down their nets again.
- B. Launch out into the deep.
 - 1. Put out to sea; thrust out.
 - 2. The Greek verb is plural: *All* of you let down your nets.
- C. Totally committed; going all out for God
 - 1. Sold out to Him; on fire for God
 - 2. Come clean and give all
- D. “All Out for Souls,” Dr. J. B. Chapman: “Souls! Souls who are lost! Souls for whom Christ died! Souls who are near and dear to us! Souls for whom we care and for whom we pray! Souls for whom no one cares and for whom no one prays! Souls! All out for souls! All out for souls! All out for souls!”

III. Successful Fishermen

- A. Multitude of fish
 - 1. The nets began to break. The boats began to sink.
 - 2. Astonishment at the catch of fish (v. 9)
- B. Peter seeks forgiveness (v. 8).
 - 1. “Lord, forgive us for not launching out into the deep.”

- 2. “Lord, forgive us for being too preoccupied with our investment in ‘shore property’ activities.”

- C. They were successful because they were obedient and launched out into the deep. They let down their nets again.

IV. Commissioned Fishermen

- A. Jesus commissions the disciples (v. 11).
 - 1. We are not commissioned to teach fishing, to talk about fishing, or to build fishermen’s clubs. We are commissioned to fish for men.
 - 2. In order to fulfill the commission we have been given, we must launch out into the deep and let down our nets again.
- B. The disciples left everything and followed Him.

Conclusion:

- 1. Fishermen should catch fish!
- 2. Have you launched out into the deep and let down your nets again? Are you astonished at the catch?

—Richard Knox

GLORIOUS FREEDOM

Text: John 8:31-36

I. Freedom SUPREME: John 8:36

II. Freedom from SINS (salvation): 1 Corinthians 7:22

III. Freedom from SIN (sanctification): Romans 6:18

IV. Freedom from STING of death: Romans 8:2

Illustration: “During severe persecution in Burundi, an African believer was confronted by a pistol in his face. This Christian said to his would-be killer, ‘Before you shoot, please let me express three things. First, I love you because Jesus Christ loves you. Second, I love my country. Third, let me sing you this song.’ Then radiantly that believer began singing: ‘Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night, / Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come. / Into Thy freedom, gladness, and light, / Jesus, I come to Thee.’” (John Huffman, Jr., *Wholly Living* [Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1981], 28.) The man was shot and went to heaven.

—J. Grant Swank, Jr. 



THE ARK ROCKER

RENAMING THE ROSE

Ain't medical science wonderful? Such an aid to our holiness theology! Here I was, worried sick for the better part of a month, thinking that old Cedric Whango, senior pastor at Humongous First, had lied through his teeth and into my ears. Then, as I poured out my woes to Sawbones, a medical friend of long acquaintance, I learned that the problem wasn't sin after all. It was simply a matter of a neural glitch.

Here's the story. I had heard Whango say publicly, on at least three occasions, that he dearly loved his assistant, Subaltern, that no one had ever done as good a job of assisting as Subaltern, that Subaltern was the best thing for him and for Humongous First Church since the invention of the Sunday School contest, and that he fervently hoped that Subaltern would stay at Humongous First forever. But then I learned that in those very same weeks that Whango was publicly saying these things about Subaltern, he was insisting to his inner circle that "Subaltern has to go, and the sooner the better." This was no idle gossip. I had the facts straight. You can see why I was upset when I happened up Sawbones.

"Remember Eisenhower?" said Sawbones. "Remember how he sometimes went logically incoherent and sometimes misused words, after his stroke?" Well, it took me a bit, but I finally did remember that, I thought.

"Aphasia," said Sawbones. "Ike's brain simply could not get good, clear signals through to his tongue. Aphasia. He could talk all right mechanically—maybe with a slight slur—but he couldn't say what he was thinking. And it worked the other way, too. He couldn't really think what he was saying. I mean, he didn't know he had a problem."

Well, I almost shouted aloud for joy! I had been forced by a merely commonsense reading of the evidence to conclude that Whango had told a whopper, on purpose. And it made me unhappy to think that a fellow pastor had done that. In fact, it had gotten me to thinking about a number of times lately that truth had apparently been sent into exile by several of my clerical peers. I had come to believe that the demons of Madison Avenue and "doublespeak" had infested us; there was sin in the camp. But now Sawbones had given me such great relief! This was all just a bit of an aphasia epidemic, a few folks suffering from misfiring synapses, that's all. In fact, so I'm told, we can expect that most of the time, they will mean precisely what they say. It's only occasionally that old aphasia will come and "set a spell" in brain and tongue.

I do suppose that this comes as good news to you, too. It lets several folks like Whango off the hook without so much as a zit on their reputations. You and I didn't want them there anyway. And it gives new dimension to the neat definition of

sin that Wesley bequeathed us: "Sin, properly so-called, is a willful transgression of a known law of God." Surely aphasia knocks the "willful" out! No "willful," no sin! Wonderful!

It all makes me feel guilty; I have probably been expecting altogether too much of the ethics of sanctified pastoral and administrative leadership. So let me confess just one more misjudgment so that you will know for sure what I am talking about (we must leave no ambiguities in a matter so sensitive) and so that I can go whistling into the night air with a clear conscience.

Wunderbar, hearing the disgust of his fellow pastors with certain remarks made by a person well placed in the fellowship of the Ethereal Rungs, confided that he had personally and publicly confronted that person with the folly of said remarks. He cited date and place. A bit of "intelligence" that just happened to fall my way revealed, however, that Wunderbar had done no such thing. He had, in fact, sat mum as a clam at precisely the time he reported having taken the floor in reproof. So, I jumped, as usual, to the commonsense conclusion: Wunderbar was lying in an attempt to look good to his brethren.

But, you see, it wasn't the case of fabricated moral courage that I had taken it to be. Why no! It was clearly ecclesiastical aphasia. Wunderbar had meant to tell his peers that he was chagrined at not having said at least something mildly critical on that occasion, but aphasia had got to him, and he said the opposite of what he really meant. It's such a tricky malady! I must remember that, no matter how difficult it is to do.

My subsequent studies of ecclesiastical aphasia have turned up something that I think is not characteristic of other forms of the disease. Ecclesiastical aphasia usually occurs when an unpopular, often a unilateral, decision has to be explained. And while much research remains to be done, the current reading of the evidence supports a theory that ecclesiastical aphasia is psychosomatic. It occurs in consequence of the squeezing of the sap out of the *glans ethicus* by an intense desire to retain and increase both power and popularity simultaneously. Some corollary evidence, not yet fully investigated, seems to indicate that institutional self-preservation (or perhaps it's the preservation of the victim's place in the institution) may also produce severe aphasia. I'm not sure about these conclusions. They seem too simplistic.

I will keep you posted on new developments here. In the meantime, rejoice with me that one more supposed evidence of sin has been wiped away, and with such clinical neatness! We're on the brink of a stunning advance in the definition of sin!

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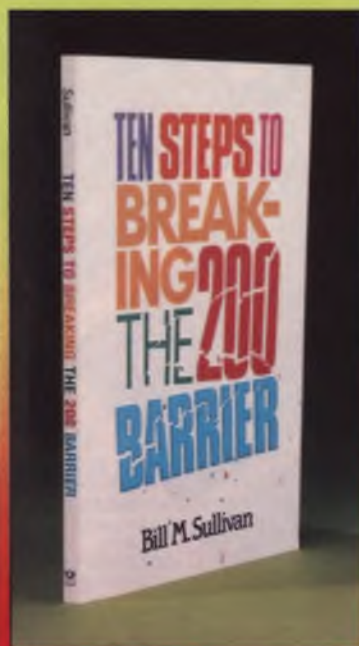
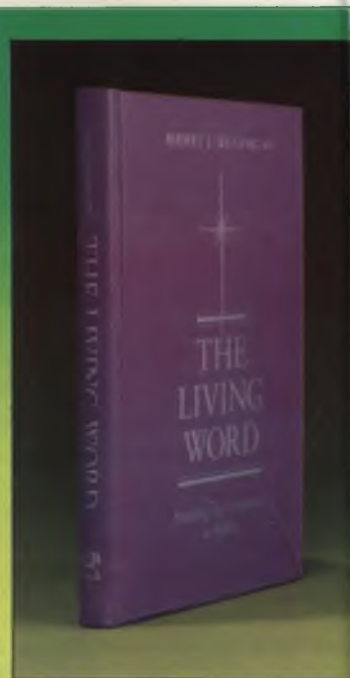
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