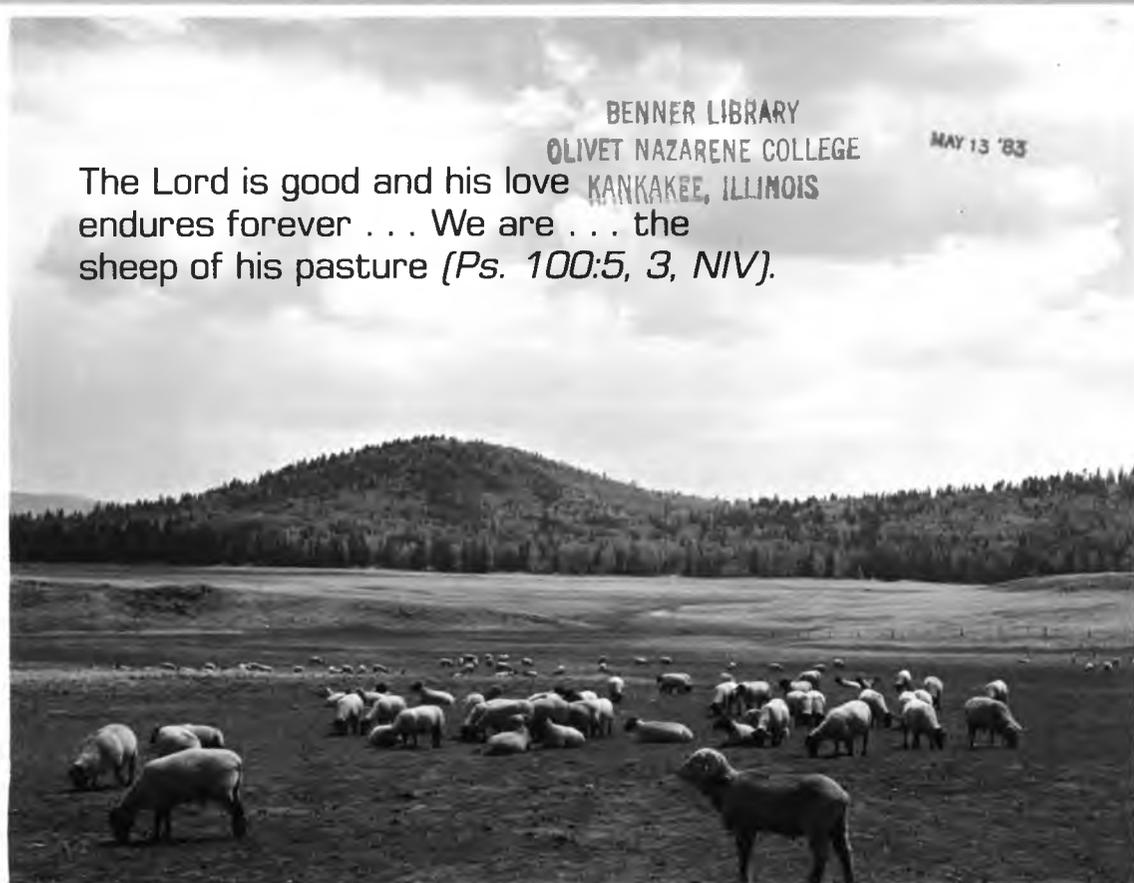


THE
**PREACHER'S
MAGAZINE**

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST, 1983



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MAY 13 '83

The Lord is good and his love endures forever . . . We are . . . the sheep of his pasture (*Ps. 100:5, 3, NIV*).

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suitable for Framing

Ministers Are Special

by Lucille Lavender

Ministers are people, too, I think. Ministers are made very special by their Maker, who issues them their special call.

They come in varied shapes and sizes like anyone else, but, according to most people, they have a special look. I don't know what it is, but I think this is so because often people exude such surprise: "You don't look like a minister!"

They have outstanding talents in every conceivable field of endeavor. Administration, writing, public speaking, diplomacy, psychology, economics, medicine, bedside manners, building, maintenance, teaching, counseling, comforting, conciliating, coordinating, and creating.

Ministers have anatomical characteristics that others don't have. They are built not to wear out as easily as normal creatures. They are more resistant to sleep and relaxation, so they can work a 16-hour-a-day, seven-day week. And, if they are wakened in the middle of the night by the telephone and they can't get back to sleep, they work on Sunday's sermon.

There is something unusual about their flesh, too. Their skin is extra thick and tough, so they can be roasted for dinner with a minimum of discomfort. And this helps them withstand possessive, particular, and peevish people.

Under this thick skin is a special cushion of insulation that keeps them immune to feelings other earth people have—like never getting angry, despondent, disgusted, or discouraged. It also insulates them against needing love, acceptance, praise, encouragement, and raises in salary.

Ministers are also all-knowing, all-wise, all-comforting, all-controlled, all-put-together, and all-ways there.

Do you know any ministers like that? I don't! And I ought to know . . . I live with one.

From *They Cry, Too!* by Lucille Lavender. Tyndale House Publishers. Used by permission.

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

Proclaiming Christian Holiness

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Cover photo by Richard Parker



Of Stars and Candlesticks

A Guest Editorial

by George E. Failing

*Consulting Editor, Preacher's Magazine
General Editor, Wesleyan Church*

More important than anything else to the Lord of the Church is the spiritual condition of the Church. Not its membership, nor its orthodoxy, nor its wealth, nor its missionary labors, but its love for the Lord.

While many today ponder—and vigorously disagree over—the prophetic interpretation of The Revelation, chapters 4 through 22, we would do well to consider the profound importance and plain meaning of the first three chapters. For in those early chapters we see the Church as Christ sees it: His evaluation, certainly, of seven churches in Asia in the first century, with a probable application of the various types of churches of any century, including our own.

We are introduced first to an exiled apostle “in the isle called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” It is stated that John was “in the Spirit on the Lord's day.” Interpreted simply, this means at least that revelation comes by immersion into the Spirit and by being secreted with God on “His day.”

But the apostle had nothing to write until he heard a voice. The voice said, “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last . . . what thou seest, write in a book and send it unto the seven churches.”

Before John took up his pen to write, he had a vision. At first glance he saw seven golden candlesticks. Gaz-

ing more intently, he recognized one in the midst of the seven candlesticks, “one like the Son of man.” John beheld His garments, His hair, His eyes, and His feet. Then he saw His face, in brightness as the sun shining in strength. When John gazed upon Jesus' face, he fell at His feet as dead, in awe and silence.

But then the voice came again: “Fear not; I am the first and the last . . . I am living forevermore . . . I have the keys of hell and of death.” The voice commanded: “Write what you have seen, what you now see, and what you will see hereafter. In particular, know that the seven stars are the angels [messengers] of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches.”

Light is revealed as the sun in meridian splendor, as stars that illumine a dark world, and as candlesticks that give light to an immediate area.

Christ always “walks in the midst of” His churches. Unceasingly and patiently, He ministers to each church, neglecting none.

(1) His presence is assuring. Count on the presence—He is there. (2) His presence is encouraging. He always commends whatever good He finds. (3) His presence is investigative. Not one item escapes His attention. (4) His presence brings hope, either hope for endurance or hope of restoration.

(Continued on page 15)

We Get Letters



In Tune

Dear Editor,

I just finished reading the June/July/August issue. I liked the new "themeless" approach. It appeared to be less confining and a much broader scope of concerns covered. I have read many religious magazines and subscribed to a few, but none have a minister's heart and life "in tune" like the *Preacher's Magazine*.

I really liked the article "What to Do when the Senior Pastor Leaves." This is a perfect example of issues that concern us and how to address them. I am working with a great senior pastor and a fine congregation. These words of experience will be valuable should the situation arise. There is no reason why we should bump our heads against the same rock.

May God continue to guide your staff as you labor to provide this valuable help.

—Doug Downs
Terre Haute, Indiana

* * *

Out of Tune

Mr. Tracy:

I am 72 years old and retired from the active pastorate now. I have enjoyed the *Preacher's Magazine* during all my pastoral years as well as now, but the article by Dr. Vogt in the June/July/August (1982) issue is the first I ever remember of anyone, especially a D.S., writing such an article.

The captions he mentions are good; then he goes on in the Strange Ideas to say things that are not true.

The idea from (John 4:36) stating that the reaper gets the rewards or pay; and the scripture plainly states that the sower, the planter, the reaper all are a part of the work and that God gives the increase, or rewards, or pay in the end.

Then he goes on stating from Matt. 20:3 about the farmer going into the

marketplace and securing help. Now it says that all received the same, regardless of the time they went to work or how much they accomplished.

I am sure he is directing his remarks at some of the pastors and workers who do not make a big splash as he would like for them to.

—Rev. Floyd Cummings
Monroe, Washington

* * *

First Sermon

May God Bless You Brother,

I wanted to write to you and let you know that I think the *Preacher's Magazine* is superb! I am a 21-year-old university student; my father is a minister of the Church of the Nazarene in Puerto Rico, and since he receives this magazine, I too enjoy reading it. The Lord has placed in my heart to proclaim His message and preach. This Friday night I will have my first sermon and I am so very excited. The *Preacher's Magazine* gives me many ideas that are helpful, and I would like to continue receiving it.

—Ivy Roldan
Carolina, Puerto Rico

* * *

First Copy

I've just received my first copy of the *Preacher's Magazine* and I love it!

My wife and I are in our first pastorate so you can see we need all the help we can get. Please keep us on your mailing list. Keep up the good work.

Thanks.

—Bruce Z. Cadle
Menominee, Michigan

* * *

Sermon Workshop

Wesley:

Just a note: I like what I found on pages 51-57 (Sermon Workshop) in the

Sept./Oct./Nov. issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*. That's what I need from you. Great job. Now just double it.

—Horace Smith
Logansport, Indiana

* * *

Appreciated

Dear Rev. Tracy:

I want to take the time to express my personal appreciation for the excellent leadership you are giving to the *Preacher's Magazine*. We have a right to be proud of our publication for preachers.

—Garland R. Wallace
Ardmore, Oklahoma

* * *

Prison Ministry

Rev. Tracy,

I am a new Christian—August 16, 1982, will be my first birthday in the Lord.

I have been a Nazarene since January 24, 1982. Pastor Sam Wood of the Alief, Tex., church has treated me like a Christian brother in every possible way. He has come to visit (on his son's birthday, by the way; a four-hour trip). He has made me a member of his church. He sends me the church bulletin. He and others write to me. He enrolled me in the Home Studies Ministerial Course. The list is endless.

I am writing to you for help. I want the Church of the Nazarene to begin a prison ministry. The Lord only knows why I am trying to seek support for this effort and help in this cause.

Professor Staples was an instructor of mine in college. I graduated from Bethany in 1965. It is good to renew his friendship. I was an atheist at Bethany. Can you imagine that? I spent three years at one of the finest Christian schools in the country and I was a stubborn, blind atheist. That is such a pitiful thing to say. Fortunately, God has

(Continued on page 51)

The Madness of the Ministry

James E. Means

*Professor of Homiletics and Speech,
Conservative Baptist Seminary*

There are times when our problems become ossified by our conscious or subconscious refusal to deal with them. It is precisely that kind of stubborn problem that I propose to examine in this article.

Through more than 20 years of pastoral ministry I have come to a measured degree of understanding of the difficulties faced by the undershepherd of God's flock. There is a remarkable thing about tenured service in the church: one tends to have fewer answers, but more intelligent questions, as the years pass. Collie tells the Hassidim story of the rabbinical wise man who was approached by a person for help in finding his way out of the forest. The wise man replied, "I do not know the way out of the forest; however, I have gone further into the forest than you and I will lead you that far and then we will try to find our way out together."¹ Neither do I know the way out of the dilemma, but I do feel that I have been a considerable distance into the "forest" and trust that together we may find our way out. At least I hope that we may take one giant step in the right direction.

Bluntly put and in grossly oversimplified terminology, our problem is one of facade. The Psalmist confessed, "I am poor and needy," but not many professional ministers are quite so ready to make such a humiliating admission. Such a blatant acknowledgment of need would be contrary to the image we normally desire to disseminate, an image of *omnicompetence*. We naturally want

to portray ourselves as those who have it all together and as those who have, with some degree of sweat, achieved an enviable level of confidence. Inwardly we may feel like crying, but outwardly we "pack up our troubles in our old kit bag and smile, smile, smile." The smile often turns to a sob when we are alone. Cedarleaf observed: "Somehow the open admission of a need for care goes completely counter to the image of the capable, mature, well-organized adult we want to portray. How we have built up the myth of the superhealer!"²

This problem is not a simple one. Consider with me a few of the subtleties and pitfalls of the issue. First, there is the minister who finds out painfully after a number of years of Christian service that he is in desperate need of being ministered unto, but, for a variety of reasons, has no one to whom to go. Perhaps he feels a slipping of his grasp on his own Christian faith. In a recent study of pastors who sought consultation at the Menninger Foundation one of the significant problems which came to light was

a desperate groping for relevant religious faith. Pastors themselves are subject to so many demands from others that they begin to feel in need of a pastor themselves. Many experienced this as a gradual sense of losing the reality of faith that they proclaimed, related to their own tendency to give up

When the pastor decides, perhaps by default, to go on disguising his need he has become a fit candidate for what John Wesley spoke of in 1756: “a madman of the highest order.”

on really important central tasks in favor of becoming mere functionaries, playing their roles with decreasing involvement, commitment, and integrity.³

This spiritual entropy in the lives of ministers and missionaries is no secret, but it is compounded enormously by the fact that most individuals in such prestigious positions have no one to whom they may confide their inner distress. We have fostered a Christian community in which it is unacceptable behavior for the minister to reveal his own need of nurture. He feeds everybody, but he himself starves. The premise that the study and preparation of sermons is adequate for the pastor's own needs of spiritual food is false. **It is tragically possible to grind out sermons by the score and to be left spiritually unfed.** The pastor comforts the afflicted and dresses their wounds, but there is no balm for him unless he can find it for himself. He assuages eloquently the doubts of his parishioners, but is deeply perplexed about his own carefully concealed doubts. He is available to all, but has no real friend of his own. He may become a professional drier of tears, but in secret weeps profusely and bitterly. Ah, occasionally at some far off ministerial gathering the man of God confides hesitantly to a colleague that he is troubled, but perish the thought of his home church finding out that he somehow, after all, is human!



Schrock Photo

Consider secondly, that as the issue increases in importance in the minister's life the availability of a sympathetic ear and effective nurture decreases. The pastor may have no difficulty sharing with members of his congregation that he has a touch of arthritis in his right knee, but is considerably more reluctant to share that he has developed an ulcer because of its association, in the minds of many, with worry and distrust in the Lord. And if perchance he should be so unfortunate as to have a marriage problem, he had better do everything possible to keep it a secret because it will damage his reputation, hinder his ministry, preclude a call to another church, and become the scandal of the community. If he is to get help at all, he figures it is necessary for him to sneak off to a professional counselor in another city and then worry that somehow the news will leak out. In other words, the more **the pastor needs help the less apt he is to find it within the Christian community in which he serves.** Hence it is that the pastor receives no help in the significant matters that confront him. His image must be the more protected as his need increases in its critical value. The facade must become higher and thicker the more needy the pastor. The ridiculous nature of this dilemma is self-apparent.

Third, there is the minister who actually has succeeded in deceiving himself into believing that he has risen above a need for care. As a pastor grows older and becomes more "successful" and climbs the ladder toward more status, acceptance, and eminence in his chosen profession, the pressure to conceal his own inner tensions or behavioral deviations becomes greater. It is one thing for an obscure nobody to admit failure, incongruities in behavior, inconsistencies in doctrine, but it is quite another thing for the distinguished bishop, the elevated theologian, or the veteran missionary to confess his need. Far better, he thinks, to blink back his tears, swallow hard, squelch his doubts, and play out his role even more cleverly as the years go by, hiding his anxieties, his resentments, or his desperation. As the religious life becomes more sophisticated there is a corresponding tendency to conceal, minimize, or deny the need of care altogether. Such a man comes eventually to repress his need and believes a lie about himself, that **he has become the invincible, infallible supersaint.** He prays, subconsciously at least, "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are . . ."

"Lives of Unquiet Desperation"

This problem of isolation and facade becomes one of spiritual pride. We feel awkward, embarrassed, uncomfortable, and ashamed of our capacity to cry. When our pride refuses to allow us to admit that we stand in need, it then becomes necessary to hide behind the face-saving mask of assumed adequacy. But the problem is deeper than one of pastoral pride. It frightens and threatens the laity to discover that their beloved pastor, like themselves, is groping, sometimes futilely, for answers to problems in his own life. The laity is comfortable in the thought that *someone*, namely the pastor, has the answers and is the model Christian. The layperson is fond of putting the pastor on a pedestal. We who are ministers have found that it feeds our ego to be on the pedestal and cannot find it within ourselves to

take ourselves down from the lofty position. Thus it is that the problem is two-sided. The laity is comfortable in the assumption that the minister has become the model achiever, and the pastor does not want to risk disillusioning his parishioners or diminishing his status. The problem becomes self-reflexive. The greater the status, the more incumbent it is to maintain it.

Certainly there are a few perceptive church members here and there who know that the minister has feet of clay, but it is so easy to be determined not to let that fact become generally known. Then when a minister, through sheer desperation or imminent collapse, does finally come out of the closet to confess his humanity, his weakness, and his need of care, **the reaction of his church often makes him wish that he had continued his facade.** Cedarleaf reported that when he admitted the need of care some "became cool and objective. Others fled in terror. Some demanded that I stop my plea for help."⁴ Only a few sensed and shared where he was in his torture and were willing to share their own pain.

Healey reported that surveys have shown that many ministers are "leading lives of unquiet desperation."⁵ Joseph Sittler coined the expression "the maceration of the minister" to express the horror at which he saw in the professional ministry today.⁶ What happens when the pastor is denied the freedom to develop his own personhood? What happens when the minister ministers year after year to everybody, but is ministered unto by nobody? What happens when the man of God awakens one day to find that his manhood has been emasculated, his family life has become a shambles, or his nagging doubts have been unresolved and have matured into unbelief? What happens when the under-shepherd has become mesmerized by the crushing, multifaceted role he is expected to play unceasingly? What happens when he can no longer maintain his precarious position atop the pedestal? Well, he does one of three things.

1. He leaves the professional ministry and seeks sanctuary in secular work.
2. He seeks the help of a psychiatrist, counselor, or mature friend . . . if one can be found.
3. He builds higher his wall of isolation, repairs his torn mask, touches up his facade a bit and grits it out a few more years, hoping desperately that somehow everything will turn out all right eventually.

Consider these options. **Option number one**, that of seeking secular work, appeals to many. But it is often very difficult. The typical middle-aged pastor is not really trained for any other work than the ministry. If he has been successful in the ministry he may be faced with a financial hardship in secular work at a time when his children are ready for their college education. Option number one also necessitates the admission of failure with its concomitants of multiplied explanations, embarrassments, and criticism. There is also the problem of guilt. Did not Christ say, "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God"? How then does the pastor who leaves his calling quiet the mental dissonance with which he is faced? Option number one, the sanctuary of secular work may

ultimately be chosen of necessity, but it is seldom a happy choice.

Option number two, the seeking of help, is similarly rejected by many. It, too, necessitates the admission of failure, or at least the admission of the pastor's need of care. But the real problem is "to whom shall we go?" Psychiatrists are frightfully expensive and in many localities a good Christian psychiatrist or professional counselor is nonexistent. The district superintendent, denominational executive, bishop, or seminary president may be incredibly busy, an inveterate blabbermouth, or just a long way away. The mature friend? Well, if there is one, can he really help? Does he have the training to

We have often substituted subservience for service and have become "Esau by choice" in trading our personhood and true freedom for the porridge of the pedestal.

deal with a sickness that may have reached the terminal stage some months or years ago? Clearly, option number two, though eminently logical, is fraught with peril, expense, or just downright impracticality.

That leaves **option number three**, that which bids the preacher to touch up his facade and grit it out with a desperate hope and a prayer. When the pastor decides, perhaps by default, to go on disguising his need he has become a fit candidate for what John Wesley spoke of in 1756: "a madman of the highest order." Many of us add complexity to the problem by the worship of the false god of which Herbert Marcuse speaks in *Eros and Civilization*, "the performance principle." **When a man makes a god of production, promotion, and prestige he can no longer recognize that he stands as a beggar at the door of grace** and must be ministered unto if he is to continue ministering with any degree of effectiveness. The man who thinks he has risen above the need of care or the man who purposely ignores that need has become spiritually obtuse.

Churches and clergy alike have fostered this madness of the ministry. Churches, for their part, do precious little, if anything, to facilitate the growth of their shepherd, to strengthen his professional competence, or—most important—to meet his personal need for care. After all, they subconsciously reason, the shepherd ministers to the needs of the sheep—whoever heard of the sheep ministering to the needs of the shepherd? Frazier poses the question as follows: "What does the real life shepherd get from his flock other than an occasional bleat and the prospect of someday fleecing them?"⁷ Obviously, the analogy of shepherd and sheep must not be taken too far.

On the other hand, we who are clergy have done much to compound our own problems and little to allevi-

ate our situation. We have often substituted subservience for service and have become "Esau by choice" in trading our personhood and true freedom for the porridge of the pedestal. We have allowed the ravages of oftentimes unreasonable church expectation to exacerbate our humanity. Cleal puts it succinctly when he says that the typical pastor

finds himself on a treadmill of routine that snaps his intellectual energy and kills his creativity, and he is frustrated by constant demands and interruptions of his parishioners. Eventually he begins to hate them, to hate himself for hating them, and finally to look for someone (a wife or a seminary professor?) to hate in particular . . . for getting him into such a mess.⁸

A Biblical Model of Ministry Includes Being Ministered Unto

A fellow pastor sat in my living room not long ago and told me that he had become a mere machine in which he routinely burped out a sermon or two for Sundays, a prayer when it was requested, a hospital call, or oil for troubled waters. What is meant to be the high and holy calling of Ambassador for Christ we have allowed to become "a treadmill of routine" and a stale caricature of leadership.

In part, at least, our distorted concept of the role of the minister is due to our gross misunderstanding of the biblical model. Take, for example, the typical image of the apostle Paul. When Paul flashes into our minds, what is our concept of him? Most likely we think of him as the greatest of the apostles, the greatest of the missionaries, the greatest of the preachers, yea, the greatest of all saints. He was not only the Hebrew of the Hebrews, but he was the man among men, the devoted, passionate servant of Jesus Christ. He was constantly assured, confident, and capable. He was the articulator and advocate of the Christian faith, of legally astute mind and perception, one who could do anything, suffer everything, become all things for Christ. He was a giant who stood alone, the worker of miracles, the possessor of all spiritual gifts and graces, the solver of problems, the caretaker of the church, the author of Scripture, the inspired one of God, the servant and pleaser of none but God. He was in need of none but Christ, the minister unto all men, the confronter of tyrants. While there is, of course, much truth in that portrayal of Paul, there is also much error.

We tend to think that Paul was great because of his ministry, his devotion, and his gifts. I have never heard it suggested that the secret of his enormous accomplishments as a man of God might just be that he was so adequately *ministered unto*. We are fond of dehumanizing Paul, making him into some kind of a super-saint not subject to the weaknesses, the inconsistencies, and the needs of the rest of us mortal men. The truth is that he was no giant who stood alone; he found the need for many to minister unto him and because they did so, and did so effectively, he was able to be an achiever for the cause of Christ. Not only do we nearly deify Paul, but then we develop a fuzzy concept that somehow we too are to attain that lofty position of idealized and isolated adequacy and with an omni-

competence almost magically minister untiringly and with unflagging zeal slay the dragons that would devour the church. Such is sheer nonsense.

May I attempt to give a corrective to our false image of Paul? This man, who was the "least of the apostles" and "chief of sinners" by his own testimony, recognized his own profound weakness and desperate need to be ministered unto by his associates. He said we are all the members of "the body of Christ" and that "the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary" (1 Cor. 12:21-22). How often did he demonstrate his own critical need! He was at Corinth "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." On one occasion he "had no rest in [his] spirit" because he did not find Titus where he was supposed to be. Titus was his "partner and fellowhelper" (2 Cor. 2:13; 8:23). He spoke frequently of his infirmities, his weaknesses, his troubles, his perplexities, and his failings. From the time he was led by the hand into Damascus and ministered unto by Ananias, with few excep-

tions, God provided him with devoted and able companions who taught him, encouraged him, refreshed him, and succored him.

What would Paul have been without Barnabas who encouraged him and rescued him from obscurity in Tarsus? What could he have achieved had there been no Silas to sing with him in the prison at Philippi or no beloved physician, Luke, to care for his needs? Would he really have been so successful without Priscilla and Aquila who "laid down their own necks" for him? How about Paul without Phoebe who succored him, without the Lydias, the Marys, the Urbanes, the Epaphrodituses, the Timothy's, and the Tituses?

Consider the contribution to the life of Paul by Onesiphorus. We know nothing about Onesiphorus except that Paul says "he oft refreshed me" and "was not ashamed of my chain." When Onesiphorus was in Rome he sought out Paul "very diligently" and came to him. Paul reminds Timothy that when he was at Ephesus this man, Onesiphorus, ministered unto him "in many things." What would Paul have done without him?

Does the modern-day pastor have anybody like One-



© LEADERSHIP, 1982. Concept, Jerry M. Windsor. Artist, Joseph Farris.

"Of course this is confidential. Why did you ask?"

siphorus who “refreshes” him? The word used there in 2 Timothy 1:16 and translated “refreshed” in the King James Version comes from the Greek word meaning “to give someone breathing space” and then “to revive.” When Paul says that Onesiphorus refreshes him he is saying literally that he “provides me breathing space,” i.e., he doesn’t close me in, he doesn’t suffocate me, he lets me breathe freely, he lets me have the freedom to be myself. Most people have a very stereotyped role of “the preacher” and they get upset and not a little annoyed if he should refuse to conform to that role, that particular mold precarved for him. Very few people allow the pastor to be himself. Almost everyone tries to squeeze him into the suffocating role they believe he should play. But Paul says this man, Onesiphorus, does not suffocate me, he allows me the perfect freedom to be myself. With this man Paul did not need to put on anything, **he did not need to play a role, he did not need to wear a mask**, he did not need to pretend. The word *refresh* in its noun form means “relaxation” and hence we might infer Paul suggests that in the presence of Onesiphorus he could relax. With Onesiphorus Paul could just pour out his whole heart, perhaps his doubts, his frustrations, his joys, his fears, his sorrows, whatever, with absolute certainty that his friend would accept him, love him, encourage him, and would never, never condemn him. He would never be suffocated in the presence of Onesiphorus. Paul needed that man!

Perhaps some of you have read the little paragraph on friendship which reads as follows:

What is a friend? I'll tell you. A friend is a person with whom you dare to be yourself. Your soul can go naked with him. He seems to ask you to put on nothing, only to be what you really are. When you are with him, you do not have to be on your guard. You can say what you think, so long as it is genuinely you. He understands those contradictions in your nature that cause others to misjudge you. With him you breathe freely. You can avow your little vanities and envies and absurdities and in opening them up to him, they are dissolved on the wide ocean of his loyalty. He understands! You may weep with him, laugh with him, pray with him, and through and underneath it all, he sees, knows, and loves you. A friend, I repeat, is one with whom you dare to be yourself.

By that standard I think few of us have many friends. But such was Onesiphorus to Paul. We know nothing of Paul's ministry to Onesiphorus, but we do know that Onesiphorus ministered unto Paul in many things. And there were many such people in Paul's life. By far the saddest words Paul ever penned were those written at the end of his life when he was alone in prison in Rome. He pled with Timothy to hurry to him. He had need of him. He needed to be ministered unto.

Every one of us needs to be ministered unto and there are few ministers, to my way of thinking, that have been successful in developing the kind of support structures needed daily. Jesus said, “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28). And yet, there were women in those days who “followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him” (Matt. 27:55). Mary, Martha, and

Lazarus ministered unto Him. The woman in the house of Simon the leper ministered unto Him with her precious box of ointment of spikenard. And, at least on one occasion, the Father deemed it necessary to send the angels of heaven to minister unto Him. **No man is above or beyond the need of care.**

Not one of us can be effective for long who has not discovered that he must receive if he is to give. We must ask God to raise up around us those who are able to accept us, care for us, minister unto us with graciousness, with rebuke, with wisdom, and with love. Failing in this we will become “madmen of the highest order.” We will have succumbed to the madness of the ministry. We must be nurtured.

When Elijah fled into the wilderness and collapsed under the juniper tree and from there to the mount of God, his complaint was “I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away” (1 Kings 19:10). Yet God said, “I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him” (1 Kings 19:18). Isn't it a pity that Elijah didn't find one of those 7,000 who would minister to his needs? Is it inferring too much to suggest that Elijah thought he could do it alone, but then found tragically that he could not? Moses, for a time, thought he could do it alone, but Jethro gave him some ministry-saving counsel. The pastor must have support; he must have constant and meaningful nurture. God has no omniscient supersaints.

To stimulate discussion and creative thinking I offer the following few suggestions that might help us to take a step in the right direction—out of the forest.

1. We who are ministers must develop a greater level of honesty with our parishioners. In spite of the threat of their equilibrium we must start saying: “Here I am by the grace of God. I am human. I am not a supersaint. I do not have all the answers. I cannot do everything. I do not have all the gifts. I am a learner with you. I need to be nurtured, I need to be taught, I need to be comforted.” It is terribly difficult to change the image of the ministry, but it must be done. We must do all we can to argue against furthering a miserable tradition and we must stop adding to the development of the myth and the madness of the ministry.

2. We must discover more effective ways to minister to each other within our peer group. McElvaney writes: “We [need] a recognition of the importance of support structures and caring resources for ministers and their spouses and families. We are long overdue in enabling some vehicles through which ministers may give and receive care among themselves.”⁹ An occasional ministerial institute where we listen to a lecture is not enough. What we need is constant, ongoing ministry to each other in which we are nurtured and in which we may feel safe to confess our need and find healing.

3. Churches must be taught that it is their sacred responsibility to their pastoral staff to provide both time and money for the nurturing and refreshment process. Institutions of higher learning, including theological seminaries, have for years recognized the wisdom and

the necessity of providing sabbaticals for their professors for their refreshment, learning experiences, and new perspective on their ministries. It is high time churches begin to do the same for their pastors. There is an entropy process in any man's ministry. Wise is the church that recognizes it and meets the problem.

4. Pastors must ask God for individuals who can be a support group. Ask God for an Onesiphorus. Lots of them. Learn to recognize them out there in the congregation and let us not be too proud or too spiritually dull to refuse their care. Our future ministry depends upon it! Harris observes:

... [there is] a chronic conflict with laity over the purpose of the church in society, low salaries, isolation from peers, a numbing multiplicity of role demands, dissatisfied wives, no accepted standard of ministerial performance, apathetic church officials, confusion about what a minister is supposed to do and be—all become a destructive cluster of forces capable of eroding human enthusiasm and investment.¹⁰

Such are the pressures and conflicts that force ministers into the madness of the ministry, a lifetime of ever-increasing pretense. We must, however, find those with whom we may relate in honesty and change our image from that of supposed omniscience to that of men of "like passions," humble servants of the living God.

Have you seen the little placard that reads:

We have not succeeded in answering all your questions. The answers we have found only serve to raise a whole set of new problems. In some ways we feel we are as confused as ever, but we believe we are confused on a higher level and about more important things.

We may be as confused as ever, but let us hope that we are confused about something important and that we have taken one step—however small—out of the forest which is the madness of the ministry. 

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NOTHING CAN KILL A MINISTER

by C. Neil Strait

A pastor had this sign on his desk: "Nothing can kill a minister unless it first kills his experience with God." I thought that a challenging reminder. But, I also thought about the things that might kill a minister's experience of God.

His failure to keep his appointed "Quiet Time" will kill his experience of God. The warmth of God will grow cold, where there is no feeding of the fire. The daily "Quiet Time" is a must for the contemporary man of God. Without it he survives on his own resources, and those at their best are inadequate for the needs of his day.

His failure to keep **encountering the Word** will kill his experience of God. The minister must encounter Truth not only for his soul's survival, but for its perspective of who he is, what God wants to be in his life, and what resources of spiritual depth are available for him. Study of the Word

will keep one's experience with God alive and well.

His failure to keep **the doors of obedience** open will kill his experience of God. The Psalmist said: "When we obey him, every path he leads us on is fragrant with his lovingkindness and his truth" (Ps. 25:10, TLB). Disobedience brings estrangement to any relationship, and especially will it bring estrangement between man and his God.

His failure to keep his **commitment to his job**, his church, his calling, will kill his experience of God. While the minister preaches commitment to his people, he needs to check his own commitment. It is easy for the measurement of the mediocre to become the measurement of the minister. But where it does it invites creeping death to his experience of God. God wants our best—for our good and His!

His failure to **keep his priorities straight** will kill his experience of

God. One misplaced priority can usurp a greater part of life than a minister should give. And before long, if uncontrolled, it has blunted his spiritual life.

His failure to keep his heart **open to giving** will kill his experience of God. A minister said one day, "If my people will not give 10 percent, why should I?" A good answer would have been, "You should because it is right—right for you, right for your ministry, right for your family, right for your relationship with God." When the heart clasps its hands too tightly around its purse strings, there follows, close behind, death to the experience of God.

Guard well, then, your experience of God. Be careful that nothing intrudes that will diminish that glow and warmth of relationship. Remember, nothing can kill your ministry if you keep your experience of God alive. 

A SKELETAL WARM-UP

On Being a Prophet in Today's Mixed-up World

by Garland Wallace

Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Ardmore, Oklahoma

We are living in a pressure-cooker world. I do not know of any group of professionals subjected to the multiplicity of role expectations to the degree we are in the ministry. Wally Metts, in a *Moody Monthly* article, "Your Pastor's Thorniest Problems," states five areas of hardship for the pastor.

Scheduling. Imagine a combination psychologist, teacher, perennial friend-of-the-family who is expected to make house calls to his entire constituency. He administers his work force, all volunteers, and must educate them in their fields. He is expected to visit the sick and to preside over funerals, weddings, and special occasions. Add personal and family commitments, and you begin to understand the pastor's scheduling problem.

Administrative requirements, volumes of mail, and other duties are increasing for the pastor too. To preserve his spiritual leadership amid a 60-hour work week, the pastor must call upon spiritual reserves to ease emotional stress.

A sense of inadequacy and guilt. Growing schedules mean hard choices. When some needs and duties are unattended, the conscientious pastor often blames himself. The blame is fed by criticism from church members and by the frustration of trying to reach a mobile population.

Pressure on his family. The growing number of activities for children and adults can keep the family going in different directions. This results in little time to cultivate deep family relationships.

Finances. Some pastors spend a third of their income on transportation. As mobility increases, so does the distance between the pastor and his people. Many times this means an extra car to strain the family budget.

The burdens of those to whom he ministers. Stress-

oriented illness, divorce, teenage pregnancies, and other family tragedies are a heartbreaking reality to the pastor.

We are also coping with change in the church. Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., said:

The church is in deep human trouble, its fabric tattered by many current agonies. Even a multitude of worthy human causes, seeking a significant forum for their pleas, are badgering the church to compromise its fundamental roles as scripture defines them. A strangely sanctified worldliness, the product of economic affluence and its concomitant problems, has invaded and polluted Christian motivation, discipline, and commitment. And in the midst of it all, happily engaging in the oldest dodge there is, the church in too many instances avoids addressing its real problems by tinkering awkwardly with its structure and machinery!¹

What does all this mean to ministers? The pressure to perform; the frustration of trying to be theologian, preacher, counselor, financial wizard, taxi driver, nail pounder, custodian—all of these have a tendency to thrust us into an identity crisis.

How many pastors do you know who have recently quit the pastorate? How many do you know who have discussed it? How many more have thought about leaving and have never said anything to anyone?

I confess to you I have felt like Jeremiah. The people said, "So come, let's attack him with our tongues and pay no attention to anything he says" (Jer. 18:18, NIV). But Jeremiah replied, "His word is in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my *bones*. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot" (Jer. 20:9, NIV, italics added).

I feel a skeletal warm-up taking place. In spite of all the challenges of my unique role, I feel a fire burning so

intensely within my bones that I am sure of my role and certain of my identity.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he hath anointed me to preach the
gospel to the poor;
he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted,
to preach deliverance to the captives,
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty them that are bruised,
To preach the acceptable year of the Lord
(Luke 4:18-19)

Martyn Lloyd Jones, Westminster's great preacher of the Word said, "Preaching is the highest and greatest and most glorious calling." Let's keep our identity clear. Within the scope of ministry we are preachers first—everything else second. We are proclaimers of the Word Incarnate. We are His messengers, and His company benefits are unbeatable; His retirement plan is the best.

John the Baptist is one with whom I can identify in my quest for a proper appraisal of myself as a preacher. John gives a good example of prophetic preaching. The common denominator for every true prophet of God is that he is a faithful mouthpiece for the Lord.

The History of the Messenger (Matt. 3:1-12)

John was a Spirit-filled preacher (Luke 7:13). He was sanctified, separated, and sound in his preaching. He called for repentance, for straight living, and told of the promise of the Spirit and of coming judgment.

John served in a special time. There had been no prophet in Israel for 400 years. He was the herald of something new. He paved the way for the coming of the Lord. He preached not only in a geographical wilderness but also in a spiritual wilderness.

This is no time for uncertain sounds in our preaching. We, like John, have the privilege of being a herald of His coming. Jesus is coming, let us be prophets in a bold proclamation of the choice between impending wrath or extended grace.

In the February 8, 1980 issue of *Christianity Today*, Carl F. Henry, in an interview with Martyn Lloyd Jones, asked:

Q: How would you chart the next 20 years of world history, if we have them?

A: I'm afraid I see nothing but collapse. I think that democracy is the ultimate position politically; we passed through all other forms of government. But beyond democracy there now looms either dictatorship or complete chaos. The end is more likely: 666 is the number of man, and this is democracy—man worshipping himself, his own likeness. I'm not sure at all that we have 20 years. . . . I think we are witnessing the breakdown of politics; I think even the world is seeing that. Civilization is collapsing.

Q: What parting word have you for the secular man or woman who does not take Jesus Christ seriously?

A: I can only say: Flee from the wrath to come, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I realize I live in a world suffering from terminal illness, what a privilege to point mankind to the cross of Christ, to the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world.

The Humanity of the Messenger

In Matthew's Gospel, chapter 11:2-5, we see questions begin to arise in John's mind, "Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?" v. 3, (NASB). Perhaps, for John, the Messiah was not moving with enough haste in establishing His kingdom.

We, too, have questions. We do our best. We pray, We visit. But all our work seems to be so slow and inadequate. We must remember our opinion of Jesus will

"I feel a fire burning inside to call an inadequate world to an adequate Christ."

determine whether or not we are defeated by our circumstances. Is He Lord? Did He die for our sins? Does He save? Will He build His church? Is He interested in me? Does He care about my church? Does He see me in my prison?

We will always have an identity crisis if we have questions about Christ. When we are sure about Him, we will be sure of our ministry. He will answer our questions, just as He did for John. "Go and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:4-5, NASB).

The Hazards to the Messenger (Matt. 14:3-10)

Prophetic preaching is costly—"I plead for us to learn again to let the Church be the Church. This will call for Christian courage that may prove professionally costly."² Prophets don't win popularity contests. John rebuked sin in the palace and he landed in prison. But not for one second did John consider purchasing freedom by compromise. He could have been palace chaplain with a big salary and prestige if he had kept quiet. John's integrity cost him his head.

"The Church—beginning with people like you and me—must be willing to pay the price involved in the recovery of its authentic character in our world if men and women are to hear its ancient evangel again with open minds, and to respond to it."³

The Heart of the Master (Matt. 11:7-11)

Jesus cares. If I know what He thinks of me, then I know where I am. Jesus praised John. John was no wavering voice. He was no windblown reed. He was a prophet of noble character. Jesus honors our faithfulness when we extend an uncompromising call to men to come out of sin into holiness of heart and life.

What did Jesus think of John? He said, "Among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:11, NASB). Our world needs some prophets—men who are willing to give their all now, in order to hear, "Well done good and faithful servant" in the future.

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The successful minister does not live under the tyranny of Murphy's Law.



by John W. May

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Personal Miracles Available

What place does PMA have among those vocationally engaged in the work of the ministry? Is it purely psychological, or is there a deeper meaning than positive mental attitude? I believe there is! To many the words have come to mean **Personal Miracles Available**.

More than a theory, spiritual PMA becomes a philosophy of life when it is applied to the tasks of the ministry. It becomes a basic foundation for spiritual success as well as physical attainment. It generates an inner satisfaction in knowing that God is able to do all things for us, in us, and through us. Jesus said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). St. Paul supports this promise with the positive statement, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

Success and security are fully as important to the minister as they are to anyone else. A calling does not immunize anyone from human concerns, nor should we feel guilty when we think about these things. Insurance studies indicate that 54 people out of 100, now 25 years of age, will be dependent upon others for their livelihood by the time they are old enough to retire. This frightens us, and it involves more and more thought as each birthday passes. So we look for better ways to be effective and successful, and often faith falls to frustration.

The type of faith Jesus talked about is not mere men-

tal assent on one side, nor presumption on the other. It is the kind that claims new ground and conquers impossible situations. It does not deny conflict but doggedly faces it, realizing there is help available. According to the Bible, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4).

A frustrated minister recently said to me, "Someday I'd like to go to a place where there are no problems, no budgets, and (he finished sheepishly)—no church!" He realized there can be no success without conflict, and no dynamic church without challenge and responsibility.

A fact that is not easy to face is that the preacher can, and does, control his future. A district superintendent once said that 25 percent of men in the ministry create a place for themselves; 75 percent have to be placed. These 25 percent are not all superpastors, possessing dynamic personalities and pulpit ability. They are men who believe: believe in their calling, believe in their God, believe that **Personal Miracles are Available**. This means power, motivation, and aspiration.

Power

Some have confused dynamic power in the ministry with dictatorial power. Rather, it is power to persuade and move people, and it operates according to spiritual rules.

The greatest power that any Christian worker has is

prayer. We preach it to others; we need to practice it personally. Every successful minister has found that some problems he could not plan through, promote through, or program through, he could pray through.

Persistence in prayer, honestly and wholeheartedly pursued, will lead directly to vital faith that any task can be accomplished, if God is in it. But prayer power only works when it is used regularly on a day-to-day basis; sometimes several times a day, sometimes in whole days or nights of prayer. That is why it is so important to schedule time to pray, and to let nothing, however legitimate, interfere.

Effective proclamation is a second element essential to finding success. Mealy-mouthed sermonizing does nothing for anyone. The history of the Christian Church is that through 2,000 years it has depended on faithful and forceful proclamation of its tenets.

A wise minister accepts a church for what it can be, not what it is. This means accepting the blemishes as well as the beauty. He or she visualizes the church

A salesman is self-motivated; a minister, Spirit-motivated.

servicing all its ministries in the most effective way. He or she is filled with optimism in spite of obstacles, such as inadequate building and infertile ground. An optimist sees a church half full; a pessimist sees it half empty.

One minister was nicknamed "Dreamer." He saw his dreams come true in fantastic ways. In one pastorate seven valuable acres of land were given to the church in answer to prayer and faith, on which he erected a beautiful sanctuary and parsonage. A cluster of church buses were parked on the property, a successful parochial school prospered, and the growing church entered many new areas of service. All of this occurred in the midst of miracle after miracle. The pastor found that **Personal Miracles were Available** and the church became known as "the miracle church." He has now relocated to another community and another challenge, and the same thing is happening.

Motivation

We have all seen the headlines containing the words "Plan Ahead" in which the writer runs out of space before he gets all the letters in. This is a picture of the work schedule of many ministers. Because the work of the ministry is of a spiritual nature, and the minister is dependent upon God, he or she may be tempted to take the fatalistic attitude toward the work that whatever will be, will be. Neither failure nor success are a matter of accident, but of attitude.

Some piously scorn goals and graphs, declaring how wrong it is to "count noses" or to become "slaves at the altar of statistics." Isn't it strange that the Bible counts *twelve* disciples, *seventy* sent out two-by-two, *five thousand* fed by a miracle involving *one* little boy and *five* loaves and *two* fishes, and *three thousand* converted on the Day of Pentecost?

The first step to successful motivation is to ascertain

where we are now, and where we can be in a given time. How to get there involves graphs, charts, and check-points in weeks, months, and years.

When goals are aggressively attacked, things begin to happen. The preacher gets a light in his eyes that was not there before, the morale of the congregation begins to lift, and the old Ship of Zion gets underway.

Nearly every serious problem I have had in the ministry has been people-related—not location, not inadequate facilities, not burnt-over areas. I once pastored a downtown church and one Sunday afternoon canvassed a 10-block area adjacent to the church with the help of members of my congregation. We found 23 unchurched families! The next Sunday 14 people contacted by this initial visit were in church. Not bad for a couple hours of work!

It is necessary to measure, and it is necessary to move. Doubts, fears, anxieties, and timid stabs at reaching success spell death to one's work. As a young minister, I was sometimes entertained in the home of my district superintendent along with others. He always awakened us in the morning shouting up the stairs, "Up and at 'em, boys; daylight's a-wasting." The successful minister has no alternative to mobility. He realizes that if his church grows it will not do so by planning from his office only, but by plodding among the people.

Church growth and personal success do not result from dangling obstacles pessimistically before the eyes of the congregation. Count every successful minister you know. Every one of them is buoyant and confident. They do not live in a dream world but turn their dreams into deeds. They do not waste time mourning over that impossible task or that irascible person. They do not subscribe to Murphy's Law.

Successful men are those who are willing to take calculated risks. To try and fail is better than not to try at all.

A friend of mine pastors in a sparsely populated area, having about 500 people to draw from. He scheduled a week of revival services and announced at the beginning that they would have over 400 in attendance the next Sunday. Although he hammered away at it all week not everyone caught his enthusiasm, but some did and gave him help. No contest, no gimmicks, no giveaways; his plan was a concentrated calling program. His evangelist told him that he really didn't believe it could be done until the pastor borrowed chairs from a local mortuary to seat the people beyond the normal capacity of the church. On Sunday morning 462 people came!

The difference between the motivation of a salesman and a minister is that a salesman is self-motivated and the minister is Spirit-motivated. The principle of success, however, is the same: What the mind of man can conceive, the mind of man can achieve. The successful salesman has to convince himself that he is the greatest salesman in the world. The successful minister believes that God can make him equal to his task.

Spirit-motivation is not automatic; it must be sought, cultivated, and practiced in life experiences. The ministry is not merely a vocation, it is a Divine calling.

Aspiration

Pity the person who has lost the romance, or the spirit of adventure out of his or her calling. With some it is the

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Of Stars and Candlesticks

(Continued from page 2)

The apostle was not one of the “stars.” Rather, he had seen Christ, had heard His voice, and recorded His words. He then sent the letter to the star or angel of the church. The star seems to have been the pastor.

Christ has orderly lines of communication. He first revealed himself as “the sun in his strength” to the apostle. Few, very few, pastors have so seen Christ. But if the pastor will read the letter Christ commissioned the apostle to write, that is enough. The pastor then has responsibility to present that message to the “candlestick,” the members of his congregation. From their pastor, the “star,” they have sufficient light. The light passes from the “sun” through the apostle, to the “star,” and through the pastor to the “candlestick,” the church. The purpose of God is to plant a candlestick in each community. And how will the candlestick give light if the pastors fail to ignite the candles and supply them with the oil of truth?

No church is capable of discerning its own spiritual condition. It may recall former days of strength and glory. It may review glowing reports and develop charts to accent its progress.

But the life of the church, like that of any Christian, is either developing or becoming decadent. Even the apostle Paul admitted, “I judge not mine own self . . . he that judgeth me is the Lord” (1 Cor. 4:3-4). So any church should freely admit it cannot know its own condition without a present revelation from Christ. Only Christ can say, “I know [present tense!] thy works.” Without that revelation the church easily assumes too much, and may lose all. For the church that will not hear Christ’s message and heed His admonition, will cease to be a church: the candlestick will be removed.

The most important duty of the pastor is to “read” Christ’s letter to the church and faithfully communicate that truth. First-century apostles did not trust only in a “once-delivered” word of truth. In a time of congregational turmoil, while Spirit-filled laymen took care of the temporal business, they themselves made one commitment: “We will give ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” Fresh messages from God are as necessary to the soul as is fresh food for the body. Pastors dare not rely on old outlines, backdated illustrations, and contemporary “crumbs.” Pastors must seek “bread corn,” mill it well, and prepare it for the congregation. The people are hungry. The worst famine on earth is not that of lack of bread and water, but for “hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8:11).

The most important duty of the church is to hear Christ’s message and to obey the word they hear, the word they also see exemplified in the pastor’s life.

The church is in danger. There are the dangers of false teachers, dangers of immoral living, and dangers of absorption in “the cares of this life.”

But the greatest danger of the church in any age and of any doctrinal persuasion, is that of “leaving the first love.” The Ephesian church was rebuked for that sin and called to repentance. The Laodicean church, neither hot nor cold, had also lost the fervor of first love.

The real tragedy of leaving the first love is this: love for Christ has been replaced by another love. At Ephesus love for Christ had been replaced by love of orthodoxy. At Laodicea love for Christ had been replaced by love of ease, of wealth, of increase in assets.

Christ is so tender in His rebuke. “As many as I love [Greek, *phileo*—I feel friendly toward], I rebuke and chasten.” In other words, “If I did not care what was happening to our fellowship, I would not disturb you. It’s not pleasant for Me to humble you and urge you to repentance. But I love you so much that I will stand at the door of each member of the congregation (was the church incapable of corporate repentance?), and I will hope each erring Christian will invite Me to sup with him.”

That was the first century, A.D. This is A.D. 1983. Over 1,900 years have passed since Jesus’ death and resurrection and since the Holy Spirit descended in power on that Pentecost Day in Jerusalem.

Then all 120 disciples left the Upper Room with hearts aflame. Fellowship and evangelism were their chief activities. Their presence shook Jerusalem. Miracles, such as the healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate, occurred almost spontaneously. Their sense of priorities did not permit those earliest Christians to consolidate quickly an organization or to reform a pagan society. What they had they shared; none among them wanted for basic human needs. Like a closely knit family, they supported and encouraged each other. The flame spread. “All Jerusalem” believed that these people belonged to Jesus Christ: they spoke and acted like Him. And when persecution scattered them, “they went everywhere preaching the word.” The flame spread.

It’s 19 centuries later. We may well ask ourselves, Is the holiness movement simply another evangelical thrust? I doubt that we believe this. Do we not feel, rather, that God has raised up the holiness movement as the “Nazarite” testimony in these latter days? Has not God required of us a separation, a passion, a commitment that He has not required of some other Christians? And why would God do this if He did not purpose to emphasize again the duty of all Christians to pursue that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord?

We believe that Christ is more than a life-giving Savior. He is the Searcher of hearts. His eyes are as coals of fire and His feet as burning brass. Our God is a consuming fire—now. As we follow Him, He will consume our selfishness, our greed, our love of position, our pride of grace. Thank God, He will.

Prayer: Lord, help us holiness pastors to be stars that ignite the candlesticks of God, and help us holiness people to let our candles burn with the flame of holy love. Amen.



“Watching a child die is a rotten thing. There is no answer for it. There is no salve for the wound of it. Anyone who thinks there is hasn’t watched a child die. One of the best things a minister can do is to admit all of that, first to himself and then to his parishioners who are the parents of a dying child.”



“IS IT TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT GOD?”

Visiting the Ill or Dying Child

by Nina Herrmann Donnelley

Joe was sitting on the edge of his bed. An IV tube was stuck in his arm, but otherwise he looked like a fairly chipper six-year-old.

I was a new student chaplain on the general medical-surgical floor at Children’s Hospital. The children on this floor, in most cases, were not seriously or critically ill—which meant that they could be a bit more lively in talking with a chaplain, or a bit more up to ignoring her!

“Hi,” I said, “my name is Nina Herrmann and I’m the new chaplain on this floor. What’s your name?”

“Joe White.”

“Hi, Joe White. Do you know what a chaplain is?”

“No—do you give shots?” he asked, with the universal look of a child faced with a needle.

“No,” I smiled. “They won’t let me.”

“That’s good. Do you play games?”

“I can. But that’s not the main thing a chaplain does. Do you go to church at home?”

“Yeah, most of the time.”

“Do you know the person who stands up in the pulpit and preaches—the minister?”

“Yeah—are you one of those?”

“Yes. Only I work here at the hospital instead of at a church.”

“But you’re a real minister?”

“I sure am.”

His face immediately lighted up. (I wasn’t expecting such a joyous response!). “Good,” he said, “I have a question I want to ask you.”

“Okay,” I said, with the fleeting thought that I might be better off at the dentist’s.

“Is it true what they say about God?”

(Digression: I was a television reporter before becoming a minister, and one lesson I learned from a number of schooled politicians is this: When faced with a difficult question, answer with another question. That at least will give you some time to think, and at best will help you find out more precisely where the person is coming from.)

"What exactly do you mean, 'What they say about God?'"

"You know, like God is there, even though you can't see Him."

Pretty good for a six-year-old, I thought. He's already grasping some theology! "Yes, Joe, I believe God is there even though we can't see Him."

Long pause. Big smile on face. "Good! Then I believe in Santa Claus, too!"

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Cor. 13:11).

Other than the fact that it is a humorous story, the example of Joe shows that children are first children, whether well or ill, and that they reason differently from adults. I had put *my* expectations onto Joe, thinking that he would expect me to answer, theologically, a difficult religious question—and it did indeed turn out to be one packed with theology. But as I was grappling for all my University of Chicago Divinity School "book learning," Joe was figuring out, very logically, that if God is truly there even though we can't see Him, then Santa Claus must truly be there, too, even though we can't see *him*. And when one is six years old, that is very important.

Listening Time

One thing to keep in mind when visiting ill children is that they are, first and foremost, *children*. Parents will ask you questions which—at least at first—they will expect you to answer. Children will ask you questions which, given some help and listening time, they often will answer for you, frequently with amazing, innocent insight or delightfully logical reasoning.

A key phrase here is "listening time." Many ministers think that they have to have something to say, some consoling message of Jesus and the lambs hidden in their breast pocket when they visit the ill child. But often they merely need the ability to listen.

In visiting a child who does not have a terminal illness or severe trauma, the minister can bring continuity between times that the child is in church and Sunday School, and can show that the love and caring of a church—the Body of Christ—goes beyond the walls of the sanctuary.

If you know that a child is going to go to the hospital, a telephone call beforehand would be nice. Most children don't get telephone calls from adults. To keep the call special, call the child and only the child. (Be sure, before you call, that he knows he is going to the hospital!) Tell him he'll be missed for the Sunday or Sundays he's gone, and that you'll be saying a special prayer for him while he's in the hospital. It's not necessary to promise to come to see him at this time unless you're especially close. (If you do promise, be sure to keep your

promise, or let him know that you can't and why. Children remember promises very literally.) Also, tell him that you'll look forward to seeing him back in Sunday School and church very soon. If you were in the hospital in your childhood, tell him so, without going into great detail. That way he'll know that you "lived through it" and apparently are fine.

Many children look up to their ministers with a touch of awe. A brief telephone call will mean much and can add some "importance" to going to the hospital. Letting him know you'll look forward to seeing him in church again soon will help take away some apprehensions of the unknown. (Most children going to the hospital for normal procedures—reassured of this by their parents and others—are not afraid of dying because they have known no one in their peer group who has died in the hospital. If they *do* have a peer who has died in the hospital, it's important that parents be reminded to reassure the child that his hospital stay is *not* like his friend's and that he doesn't have anything like his friend had.)

An earlier brief telephone call can be made to the parents to let them know that Johnny and they are in your prayers; that you'll keep in touch; and that if they feel like talking at any time, they can call you. (This last you should offer at your discretion, in line with your earlier commitments and with the needs of the family.)

If the child is having surgery and if you have a reasonably close relationship with the family, your appearance will be appreciated during the operation. This is a tense time, regardless of the nature of the surgery, and your presence and a prayer for God's guidance of the surgeons, success of the surgery, strength and peace for the parents, and a quick recovery for the child will be welcome. Don't stay long unless you can tell that your continued presence is important to the family. The appearance and prayer are what will count.

If the surgery is critical and the outcome not reasonably certain, you can say to the family as you leave, "I have to go now, but Johnny and you will be in my prayers and on my mind. May I ask the volunteer [or nurse] to call my office with a report when surgery is over?" This move lets the family know that you will be thinking of them and that you realize this is an uncertain and difficult time; without putting the burden of an immediate report on them, it gives you an automatic report to help you follow through quickly should anything go wrong. Most surgical waiting rooms are staffed with volunteers who will call when surgery is over. Be sure you remember to leave your name and number and the name of the patient.

If you don't know the family well, a visit during surgery may only add to their discomfort, and could make them wonder if you know something they don't. It may meet your needs to "pastor," but it may not meet their needs. A phone call before and a visit afterward may be best.

Assuming that surgery goes routinely, one visit to the hospital is normally sufficient—again, depending on your relationship with the child and family. Most ministers think it's grand if they can arrive when both parents are there with the child. Three with one blow! And it's certainly easier to talk with the parents, especially when

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things have gone well! But we should remember that the child is the one who is hospitalized. He's the ill parishioner. He deserves our attention, too.

It's best not to visit the child when he's still in a lot of pain. That's "Mommie and Daddy" time. A card is nice—a colorful one that sits up. It doesn't have to be religious.

Visit the child when much of his discomfort is gone, and at a time when his school friends won't be there. Ask the child—not his parents—what's been happening to him (his surgery or illness), and listen, sympathizing when appropriate. Shots aren't fun! Let him show you his bruises or his scar. Ask him if he's made any new friends in the hospital and who they are. Let him show you his gifts and flowers. Bring him a church bulletin from the Sundays he's missed. Even if he can't read it, it probably has a picture on it. If his name is in the bulletin, have it underlined.

Before you go, offer to say a prayer with him and Mommie and Daddy, if they're there. It's nice if everyone holds hands at this time. Don't be afraid of seeming "uncool." People *expect and want* ministers to pray. Even better, ask Johnny and Mommie and Daddy if they want to "help you pray," or if they want to "pray, too." Most people don't think they should—or can—pray when the minister is there to pray. And some are afraid because they think they won't know what to say as "well" as the minister. But if you can let them know that this is a nice thing and an OK thing, without pushing it, it can help them and you a lot—often especially in serious or terminal cases.

Surprisingly, Johnny may take to it more easily, and thereby encourage his parents to pray, too. I usually say, when adults are present, "Would you like to pray with me before I go?" If they nod "Yes," I then say, "Why don't you go first, Johnny" (or Mommie or Daddy), and then I

bow my head. It can catch some people by surprise; but more often than not they'll pray aloud, and it will turn out to be an important thing for all concerned.

If I'm alone with the child, I'll usually say, "Johnny, would you help me say a prayer now? Why don't you talk to Jesus first?"

An important follow-up to the hospital visit is a call when Johnny gets home or a personal welcome when he returns to church, whether the welcome is from the pulpit, as can be done in smaller churches, or person to person.

If your church has a library, get some books written for children on children going to the hospital and having surgery, on children with physical disabilities, and children dying. Also get some books on those topics for adults. *About Handicaps*, by Sara Bonnett Stein (Walker, 1974), is written for parents and children to read together, with a column for each. Resources such as these can be helpful for parents and children alike.

Someone to Talk To

Watching a child die is a rotten thing. There is no answer for it. There is no real salve for the wound of it. And anyone who thinks there is hasn't watched a child die. One of the best things a minister can do is to admit all of that, first to himself and then to his parishioners who are the parents of a dying child. It is, in my belief, the first and single most important step in their relationship throughout. The longer the minister tries to pretend that he has the answers, or that there *are* absolute answers now on earth, and the longer he pushes "strength," and "stoicism," and God as salve for the wound, the further he'll be from the reality of the process.

Having said all that, I would add that it doesn't mean

that faith in God cannot help during the process of suffering. Faith in God does not make the pain less real or the horror less absolute. But it does give us *someone to talk to who is always there*: someone to talk to in hope, in fear, in loneliness, in frenzy, in despair, in anger; someone to have to *not* talk to; and someone to come home to again someday with a “peace which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:7).

For seven years I haven't been able to shake her And I doubt that I ever will. She was a little girl hungry for a love that went beyond earth, because she knew she was dying, though she never came right out and said it. I had the title of chaplain, so she found me. She came to chapel at Children's Hospital, and I was preaching that Sunday. She adopted me to talk to.

Her name was Laura and she was nine years old and had leukemia. She was a loner—no brothers, no sisters. She had a mother and a mother's boyfriend who visited and who cared, but who couldn't really ever believe that Laura would die.

She had wisps of hair. Once, only once, did she show me a photo of her with long, thick, dark hair. “I cried too much when it fell out,” she explained. “I still cry when I look at the old pictures too long.” She put the photo away. “Will you come to see me when you can?” There was no demand, no schedule. She had been in hospitals too long. She knew the lingo. She would be brave enough to ask, but survivor enough to take what she got. She got me—more often than the textbooks tell you she should have. But, looking back, I wish it could have been even more.

We didn't always talk. We didn't always *do* something. We didn't always have lights on. It wasn't always visiting hours. It wasn't often very long, except for the last two nights. Mostly, we just sat with each other, and sometimes I rubbed her sore legs and knees.

“What's heaven like?”

“Why do you ask?”

“I have leukemia.”

“What do you think heaven's like?”

“No pain. To have my hair long again. To be able to run again. To be pretty again . . .”

“That's what heaven's like. That and seeing God.”

“But that scares me.”

“Why?”

“Will He be mad at me? I haven't always been as good as I could.”

“Are you sorry about that?”

“Yes.”

“You could tell God that, even now.”

“I did already. But I didn't know if it was time, or if He heard.”

“He heard. And any time to talk to God is the right time.”

“Then He won't be mad?”

“No, He won't be mad. I don't think He would have been mad, anyway; just disappointed. But He'll be glad you talked it over with Him, and glad you understand what you did that you don't think was as good as you could have been. He'll forget all about it even. He probably has already.”

“Really?”

“Really. So heaven can be just new, long hair and no pain and running and being pretty again—though you're pretty right now, even though I know you don't believe me.” She shook her head. “So in heaven you'll be pretty to you, too . . . if that's still important to you when you get there.”

“It will be.”

I wanted to hold her and throw my arms around her and cry with her and tickle her and laugh with her, then and so many other times. But all of that would have hurt her horribly. So we talked and sat with each other.

In the end I rubbed her legs and gave her Kleenex while blood oozed out her nose and mouth, and sat in a nighttime room with her between shots of morphine that had stopped helping days earlier.

No salve. No answer.

Ministering with Continuity

How do you visit a dying child? With her permission. And more than once or twice or three times—from the beginning, not only at the end.

In Laura's case, I was lucky. She found me. She wanted a minister to go through this with her, if possible. I was there, and she found me. She was close to her mother, and I didn't replace her mother. Laura gave me my own place.

It isn't always that easy in the beginning. But don't underestimate your potential value in relationship with a dying child. It's easy to do that because then it's easier not to get involved with the child. I know. I've been that route, too.

It is important when visiting a dying child—just as in visiting an ill but not dying child—to visit the *child*. That doesn't mean time should not be allowed for the parents, the siblings, and the family together. But the child deserves her own minister, too.

It is a huge task to become truly involved as minister to a dying child and her family. But you are pastor of a congregation. If the child and family are known in your congregation, then many members will be concerned about their welfare, and a lot of them will want to *do* something but will be afraid or uncomfortable or unsure. You, as pastor, not only represent God (in your own fallible way!) in all of this, but on behalf of your congregation you can represent their caring to the child and her family. By ministering with continuity to the dying child and her family, you also are ministering to and on behalf of your congregation.

I met Laura reasonably early in her next-to-last hospital stay. I had a chance to know her while she still could race about the halls pretty well, dragging her ever-present IV pole and bottles behind her with the arm to which their tubes were attached. Often she would be waiting for me by the elevator, to show me some pictures or a toy. But it took *time* for Laura to build up trust enough to talk about God and heaven and leukemia and how she felt as a person. And time is what you need if you are to visit the dying child with her permission.

Try to visit the child each time she's in the hospital—twice a week, at least. If she's ill at home, telephone or

stop by with some regularity (call ahead). Don't stay long. It's important with a child, or any patient with whom you are trying to build trust, to leave before she begins to realize that she wants you to leave. If a parent is always there, that's OK in the beginning, especially if you don't know the child well. But soon try to find a visiting time when the child's parents aren't there. A head nurse or social worker often can tell you this.

In situations of long-term hospitalization, the unit's head nurse or charge nurse, social worker, and hospital chaplain can be invaluable. Try to get to meet them (remember, they're busy, too) and leave your name and number and ask that they contact you any time they have new or important information. (It's best to have the family's permission.) At the same time, knowing that you are interested and involved will mean much to the hospital staff.

When talking with the child, ask her to tell you what's been happening to her and how she feels about it. Let her know that it's OK to be scared or to cry—that it's normal under the circumstances. Ask her about visitors and gifts and cards; about school and friends and pets. If she cries, that's all right. Just sit quietly, or hold her hand, or hold her, depending on the level of trust built up. But be careful not to equate having the child cry in your arms or bare her soul to you with "success." "Success" is ministering to the child where *she* is, along with occasionally opening doors that she has the option to go through.

In time, it can be helpful to find one thing that you can do together that can carry over from visit to visit. With one child I played a game of "war" each visit. With another I said nightly prayers. With another I played finger puppets. When a child sees you, if she can think of something happy related to your visit, she will look forward to your visit. Often, the more ill she becomes, the less actively or the less often you'll do the things that got you "started." But by then the trust, the relationship, will not need a prop.

Another thing that can be effective through the long process is a small stuffed animal or a doll. Don't bring it on your first visit, but maybe on your seventh or eighth. Perhaps it will be an animal similar to one that appeared in a story you read together, though it doesn't have to be.

Tell the child you thought of her and of your visits together when you saw the animal or doll, and you wanted her to have it. Name the toy. Then, as the child becomes worse, sometimes the animal can help you communicate feelings when the child is too depressed or frightened or ill to talk for herself.

"Hi, Mary. How are you today?"

Silence.

"I guess not too good."

Silence.

"Fido, how do you think Mary is today?"

Silence.

"Hmmm, even Fido's not talking. I wonder, if Fido felt like talking, how he'd say Mary's feeling today?"

Mary: "Awful."

"That's too bad. Why would Fido say Mary is feeling awful?"

Mary: "Because I have to have another operation . . ."

Another helpful way of communicating is to draw pictures together. Often a quiet child will express her feelings in drawings. If you have trouble in this area, many children's hospitals have recreation therapists or "child life therapists" who are very creative. Talk with one who knows the child you're visiting and ask for ideas.

In visiting a dying child, give her some control. Don't assume that she wants to see you every time, though that may be the case. Ask her.

If she can't talk much or doesn't want to talk much, you can bring some church news or tell her a funny story about yourself. But don't do a lot of this. Just sitting with her and holding her hand, rubbing legs or joints that may hurt (ask before you do this), holding her in your lap and rocking, if possible—even older ill children respond to this—and saying a prayer with her can be enough, or even better, than a lot of talking. Let the child guide you.

As I mentioned earlier, prayer is important. Don't assume that it's not desired or that there can be a "wrong" time to offer it. Rarely, if ever, is there a "wrong time" for offering prayer, even if it's rejected.

I said earlier that faith in God gives us "someone to have to *not* talk to." A child—or adult—who has been praying and suddenly doesn't want to pray, or who appears to be taking an obligatory, indifferent attitude to offered prayer, likely is angry with God.

Children, when angry with or hurt by their parents, often will stalk off and say, "I'm never going to speak to you again!" It's the helpless child's way of hitting back at the parent who appears to be in control within a situation the child doesn't understand. The same can be true when "talking with God" suddenly becomes difficult.

If you encounter this reaction, it can be a clue to where the person is in her struggle with the dying situation, whether that person be parent or child.

The minister can be a steady, stable rock for a dying child (even if the minister isn't feeling inside like a stable and steady rock, and even if the minister weeps occasionally with the child—or the parents). That doesn't mean that the minister can or should or will replace a parent or sibling or friend. It does mean that a minister can be a visible reminder of God's love and caring to a dying child and can have a special, ongoing place in the "process."

It may be that the child never will open her soul to you. But again, that is not the only measure of "success." Our goal as ministers in visiting the dying child can be quietly, steadily to say, by our presence, by our continuity, by our giving of personhood and caring to the child herself, "God is *with you* throughout this, and He cares about you and loves you. You are valuable each day to God."

We may never say that in so many words; but we will say it if we make the commitment of presence—not merely at the end, like the vultures, but from the beginning.

"A little child shall lead them." Ill and dying children will lead us through our visits with them if only we will let them.



MISSIONS: DEAD OR ALIVE— THE CHOICE IS YOURS

You are the key to the success of the missionary program in your local church. And that is a weighty responsibility

Missions must never be relegated to a second-class standing in the church. We must never give the impression that it is the responsibility of widows and retirees alone. It must always be our heartthrob.

If the task of missions is to remain central, then you must take an active interest in, and give faithful support to your local mission society.

But even beyond that we must all weave the theme of missions into every area of the church program.

It should invade your preaching, your pastoral prayers, your worship

services, your budget, your Sunday Schools, your youth groups.

Here you will find a number of suggestions about how you can weave missions into various programs of the church.

We hope they will stimulate your thinking and encourage you to make this a very special year of missions emphasis for your congregation.

IDEAS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. Every Sunday night take 5 to 10 minutes for a missions vignette focusing on one of the world areas in which your church ministers. You will find that 52 Sunday nights are not sufficient. You may need to double up, or you may want to extend into the following year, giving your people a concept of the magnitude of God's blessing in the past and the challenge of the present. Some ways of highlighting this emphasis would be:

- Prepare a bulletin insert or handout sheet each week, giving some of the basic information about that country, including, for example: a map, population statistics, church statistics, names of some key missionaries and national workers, prayer requests. Statistics may be

obtained from your denominational headquarters.

- Create a flag display, adding one new flag each week for the country that is being highlighted.

- Prepare a lighted world map, adding a light each week for the country being emphasized.

- Create an outline world map, coloring in the outline of each country as it is covered.

2. Keep abreast of prayer requests from the mission field, and include the major requests in your Sunday morning pastoral prayer. Print them in your bulletin as well, and encourage the congregation to pray for the requests all week long.

3. Incorporate a special missions column in every issue of your church

newsletter. Include prayer requests, promote your local meetings, highlight current mission books, highlight one of the countries being studied.

4. Meet with your mission council and plan a strategy for the year that will involve the entire congregation—not only those who attend periodic mission meetings.

5. Schedule at least two missionaries and one missions film for the coming year. Your publishing house has a catalog of all the films, slides, and videocassettes available on missions.

6. Search for ways of guaranteeing that your church financially supports missions.

- Make sure your church board

and treasurer are in agreement with paying the budget on a monthly basis.

- Utilize the various ideas already suggested to create heightened awareness on the role of your people in missions.

- Consider a Faith Promise convention if you are not using that concept. This is a planned method of mission giving over a period of a year. Mission supporters promise to give a specific amount for world evangelism, over their normal tithes and offerings.

7. Working with your youth and children's leaders, with your district, and with your denominational headquarters, select missions specials that will interest and involve your young people in the task of missions. This kind of involvement may lead them toward a commitment for full-time missionary service.

8. Encourage your children's leaders to focus on missions once a month in children's church.

9. Make sure youth program includes a regular missions emphasis, too. Your young people need to be confronted with the possibility of God's call to full-time service.

10. If your congregation is never gathered at one time around a missions theme, consider planning an all-church missions banquet in conjunction with your missions council. You might want to do this as part of an annual Faith Promise Convention.

SERMON OUTLINES ON MISSIONS

Preach missions sermons at least once every two months. Some suggestions follow:

Sermon 1: Alabaster—The Magnificent Pittance

Scripture Background: Mark 12:41-44

Emphasis:

- A. The Pitiful Magnificence: the glory of the great gifts given with wrong motivation becomes pitiful and meaningless in God's kingdom.
- B. The Magnificent Pittance: the small amount given in love and

sacrifice is seen as magnificent in the eyes of God.

Sermon 2: Building for God

Scripture Background: Exod. 35:4-10, 20-29

Emphasis: In order to build a house of worship, the people brought

- (1) gifts (offerings)
- (2) skills (work and witness)

Sermon 3: Resurrection Responsibility (Easter Sunday)

Scripture Background: 1 Corinthians 15—16

Emphasis:

- A. In this passage we find that resurrection is our source and guarantee of
 - (1) life, 15:22
 - (2) forgiveness, 15:17, 34
 - (3) hope, 15:19, 51, 52
 - (4) victory, 15:55-57
- B. The responsibility of resurrection:
 - (1) the collection, 16:1-3
 - (2) the open door of ministry, 16:5-9
- C. If the Easter message be true, we are obligated to share it with the world by every means possible.

Sermon 4: Resurrection Mission

Scripture Background: Matthew 28

Emphasis:

- A. The Power of the Resurrection, vv. 1-10
- B. The Opposition to the Resurrection, vv. 11-15
- C. The Mission of the Resurrection, vv. 16-20

Sermon 5: Sounding Out the Gospel

Scripture Background: 1 Thess. 1:5-10

Emphasis: We can send the gospel ahead of our missionaries of the gospel, so that they find a good report when they arrive. Compare this passage with some of the stories available about the success of mission radio broadcasts.

Sermon 6: (General) Peter—Missionary to the Gentiles

Scripture Background: Acts 10—11

Emphasis:

- A. The Training of God's Servant, 10:9-20
- B. The Assignment for God's Servant, 10:20-23

C. The Challenge Facing God's Servant, 10:24-29

D. The Preparation for God's Servant, 10:30-33

E. The Message of God's Servant, 10:34-43

F. The Fruit of God's Servant, 10:44-48

Sermon 7: No Unfinished Towers

Scripture Background: Luke 14:28-30

Emphasis: After dealing with the passage itself and its basic lessons, apply the truths to the fact that we have begun a missionary program and we have begun buildings around the world. Our gifts help to ensure that what we have begun will be completed and that they not become a laughingstock to those who would seek to discredit Christianity.

Sermon 8: The God Who Gives

Scripture Background: Deut. 8:7-18

Emphasis: Explore this passage, emphasizing the importance of gratitude, which becomes the motivation for giving.

Sermon 9: Of Booths and Sacrifices

Scripture Background: Deut. 16:13 ff.

Emphasis: The Feast of Tabernacles was held in the month of October as a festival of thanksgiving—a time at which sacrificial gifts were brought to God. After examining the various biblical passages relating to this feast, apply the truths to our own thanksgiving and harvest celebrations, and the gifts for others that are often a part of it.

Sermon 10: Sent to Proclaim

Scripture Background: Rom. 10:11-18

Emphasis: "How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?"

Sermon 11: Commissioned by the Lord

Scripture Background: Acts 6, 8

Emphasis: The Call to Philip

- A. The call to service, 6:5
- B. The call to witness in his own territory, 8:26
- C. The call to ministry in another culture, 8:5



There Is No Substitute for Theology

by A. W. Tozer

We being what we are and all things else being what they are, the most important and profitable study any of us can engage in is without question the study of theology.

That theology probably receives less attention than any other subject tells us nothing about its importance or lack of it. It indicates rather that men are still hiding from the presence of God among the trees of the garden and feel acutely uncomfortable when the matter of their relation to God is brought up. They sense their deep alienation from God and only manage to live at peace with themselves by forgetting that they are not at peace with God.

If there were no God, things would be quite otherwise with us. Were there no one to whom we must finally render up account, at least one big load would be gone from our minds. We would only need to live within the law, not too hard a task in most countries, and there would be nothing to fear. But if God indeed created the earth and placed man upon it in a state of moral proba-

tion, then the heavy obligation lies upon us to learn the will of God and do it.

It has always seemed to me completely inconsistent that existentialism should deny the existence of God and then proceed to use the language of theism to persuade men to live right. The French writer, Jean-Paul Sartre, for instance, states frankly that he represents atheistic existentialism. "If God does not exist," he says, "we find no values or commands to turn to which legitimize our conduct. So in the bright realm of values, we have no excuse behind us, nor justification before us. We are all alone, with no excuses." Yet in the next paragraph he states bluntly, "Man is responsible for his passion," and further on, "A coward is responsible for his cowardice." And such considerations as these, he says, fill the existentialist with "anguish, forlornness and despair."

It seems to me that such reasoning must assume the truth of everything it seeks to deny. If there were no God, there could be no such word as "responsible." No

To learn how I can escape the guilt of sins committed in my brief yesterdays, how I can live free from sin today and enter at last into the blessed presence of God in a happy tomorrow—that is more important to me than anything that can be discovered by the anthropologist.

We learn with difficulty, forget easily, and suffer many distractions. Therefore we should set our hearts to study theology.

criminal need fear a judge who does not exist; nor would he need to worry about breaking a law that had not been passed. It is the knowledge that the law and the judge do in fact exist that strikes fear to the lawbreaker's heart. There is someone to whom he is accountable; otherwise the concept of responsibility could have no meaning.

It is precisely because God *is*, and because man is made in His image and is accountable to Him, that theology is so critically important. Christian revelation alone has the answer to life's unanswered questions about God and human destiny. To let these authoritative answers lie neglected while we search everywhere else for answers and find none is, it seems to me, nothing less than folly.

No motorist would be excused if he neglected to consult his road map and tried instead to find his way across the country by looking for moss on logs, or by observing the flight of wild bees or watching the movements of the heavenly bodies. If there *were* no map, a man *might* find his way by the stars; but for a traveler trying to get home the stars would be a poor substitute for a map.

Without a map the Greeks did an admirable piece of navigating; but the Hebrews possessed the map and so had no need of human philosophy. As one not wholly unacquainted with Greek thought, it is my belief that but one of Isaiah's eloquent chapters or David's inspired psalms contains more real help for mankind than all the output of the finest minds of Greece during the centuries of her glory.

The present neglect of the inspired Scriptures by civilized man is a shame and a scandal; for those same Scriptures tell him all he wants to know, or should want

to know, about God, his own soul, and human destiny. It is ironic that men will spend vast amounts both of time and of money in an effort to uncover the secrets of their past when their own future is all that should really matter to them.

No man is responsible for his ancestors; and the only past he must account for is the relatively short one he himself has lived here on earth. To learn how I can escape the guilt of sins committed in my brief yesterdays, how I can live free from sin today and enter at last into the blessed presence of God in a happy tomorrow—that is more important to me than anything that can be discovered by the anthropologist. It appears to me to be a strange perversion of interest to gaze backward at the dust when we are equipped to look upward at the glory.

Whatever keeps me from the Bible is my enemy, however harmless it may appear to be. Whatever engages my attention when I should be meditating on God and things eternal does injury to my soul. Let the cares of life crowd out the Scriptures from my mind and I have suffered loss where I can least afford it. Let me accept anything else instead of the Scriptures and I have been cheated and robbed to my eternal confusion.

The secret of life is theological and the key to heaven as well. We learn with difficulty, forget easily, and suffer many distractions. Therefore we should set our hearts to study theology. We should preach it from our pulpits, sing it in our hymns, teach it to our children and make it the subject of conversation when we meet with Christian friends.



From *The Best of A. W. Tozer*, compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe, Baker, 1978. Used by permission.

Personal Miracles Available

(Continued from page 14)

result of a bad experience in which they lost a people-related skirmish. Some have to constantly fight a natural timidity. Some must battle the tendency to sleep late because they are not required to punch a clock. Some have a tendency to fritter away time because they have no organized schedule handed down to them.

The bottom line in the ministry, as in any other calling, is production. The church must advance. If it does not, the people will occupy themselves by picking at each other like chickens in a barn lot pick at a sick or wounded fowl.

Failure cannot be rationalized away or excused. The old cliché that God keeps the records is true. But so do the people, and they may not be as understanding.

The task may be formidable but faith is powerful, and

Personal Miracles are Available. A pastor will never know whether he can accomplish what needs to be done, until what needs to be done is attempted. And the time to start is now.

Readers of motivation materials have seen the question, "How do you eat an elephant?" The answer is obvious: "In little pieces!" It follows that the answer to how to tackle the tasks of the church is "in little pieces."

Potential, however, is not uniform. Everyone cannot build a crystal cathedral like Robert Schuller, build the largest Sunday School in the country like Jack Hyles, or capture the hearts of a metropolitan city like Don Wellman. But all ministers have a potential to reach, and to some reaching 100 can be as meaningful and rewarding as reaching 1,000 or 10,000 is to others. A chapel in Gravel Switch can be just as beautiful as the glass miracle in Garden Grove.

Personal Miracles are Available today. He that applies the principles of positive, spiritual motivation given in the New Testament will accomplish the task.



Pain: Catalyst for Christian Holiness

by Donald M. Joy

Professor of Religious Education, Asbury Theological Seminary

Fresh out of seminary, the elderly Presbyterian minister next door to my Free Methodist corner called to me one day. “Mr. Joy,” he said, “a new family has moved into the house at the edge of town on Fate Pike. They are poor people, and I think your church might have a ministry with them.” I made mental note of the name, managed a “thank you,” and bit my lip. I was angry. He, a Presbyterian in a brick church, was stereotyping Free Methodists and me—“your church might have a ministry” with these poor people. Then I managed to smile. “Thank you, Dr. Glenn,” I said, “that is one of the nicest things you could have said about our church. I’ll call on them today.” I did. They were desperately poor people, but in their previous village, some Nazarenes had led them to Jesus. We did have a ministry together.

Today, I watch a quickly growing church not far from where I work. They have bought easily into slick and quick strategies and programs for attracting people. My students who work there in placements report that the poor, the black, the divorced are systematically eliminated from “follow-up” ministry.

While teaching at Princeton Seminary, a group of ministers stayed behind after the seminar to talk about “father absence.” They reported that separated and divorced persons stop attending church. “How could we change that?” they were asking. I had pointed out that God loves single parents and has made them the special concern of the church. God is “a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows” (Ps. 68:5, NIV), and “He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow” (Deut. 10:18, NIV), finally defining acceptable faith: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world” (Jas. 1:27, NIV). “God’s kind of church, then,” I had concluded, “is one where you may find hurting, broken people flocking to find healing and wholeness. It is not for nothing that the ancient popular song of David asserted, ‘Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord [the Church?] will receive me’” (Ps. 27:10, NIV).

Human Tragedy or Redemptive Comedy

For three years I have been consulting with a congregation in transition and reconstruction. Pastor and people have had significant contact with perhaps 300 new people during that time. I have been amazed at the healthy way everyone has been able to first accept, then release persons who felt uncomfortable with the emerging style of ministry. Choice couples and families and singles have been guided to other congregations nearby, more suited to their immediate needs. I noticed a pattern. In a congregation with an open and healing heart, those who have not suffered deeply or having suffered are not yet ready to deal with their pain are eager to find a place of anonymity and less vulnerability.

I suggested once to a commission meeting of the church that I had a name to submit for their consideration—since that issue was under study in the congregation. “Bethesda Community,” I suggested. We all laughed. “All of us have been deeply wounded, and all have managed to work our way into the healing water.” Ultimately my suggested name did not make the final list. It now appears, however, that they are about to adopt the name “Christ’s Community . . .” followed by their denominational identification.

It is my thesis that *the path to Christian holiness lies necessarily across the valley of deep human suffering*. It is not suffering itself that produces radical ethical sanctity, but the response to suffering. Aristotle noted in his *Poetics* that “tragedy” is characterized not by the characters, but in the story line, by the “change in the hero’s fortunes from happiness to misery . . . because of great error on his part.” Comedy, on the other hand, differs from tragedy “which makes its personage worse,” because in comedy the central figure passing through deep trouble emerges as one “who is better than men of the present day.”

Living, as we do, in a culture which despises pain and masks suffering with chemicals, most Christians may never deal even with the suffering honestly available to them. And in that shining majority of evangelicalism that is swept up in success, positivism, and ecstasy, there is

The Incarnation and the Atonement were God's interventions aimed specifically at transforming the damning effects of the Void . . . our Tragedy is made into God's Comedy.

likely to follow a profound superficiality of faith and a vacuum of ethical maturity. Aeschylus, classical Greek dramatist, caught it clearly in his lines from *Agamemnon*, "Zeus, who guided men to think, has laid it down that wisdom comes alone through suffering . . . Justice so moves that those only learn who suffer."

It follows, then, as a corollary to my thesis, that *our congregations provide the potential settings in which classical "tragedy" may be turned into classical "comedy."* Instead of damnation, Dr. Faust may be snatched from the flaming pit of Mephistopheles and away into the arms of God to the sound of laughing and cheering angels.

The Trajectory of Transformation

I wish to work here with combined insights and resources from John Wesley's construct of "entire sanctification" and with a social-science research base called "moral development." Elsewhere¹ I have described in detail the interface between these two constructs. And in this journal I have described potential "radical moral development in the church."²

Wesley saw the "natural man" give way to the "legal man," and ultimately changed into the "evangelical man." And in this flow, the locus of control moved from "fear" to "fear mixed with love," at last to the reign of "love alone."

Piaget, Kohlberg, Fowler, and others of us have verified that humans construct increasingly complex perspectives through which to process their life experiences. We all tend to move from "self-centered" to "other-considered" to "value-centered" perspectives. In this sequence of stages toward maturity, justice is first characterized by "vengeance," then by "equality," and finally, by "equity."

In both of the above systems, (a) the progress through the levels is on a continuum, with no levels omitted, and (b) progress is given its momentum by processing life experience—by disequilibrium/stress, which leads to significant "leaps" or transformations. Note, too, that (c) two major life transitions separate the three levels, and that (d) because the "leap points" are major transformations, they tend to be avoided—life often seems less threatening if new and painful experience is left unexamined. *Ultimately the major transitions are not completed unless the person comes to a point of desperation at which going forward requires the collapse of old systems.*

I wish to put forward, therefore, the proposition that *justification by faith and entire sanctification in the classical sense of the terms are distinctly denoting the holy "Comedy" that may accompany the two major life transformations.* Thus, the natural man, motivated by fear

and self-centeredness, pride and shame, when confronted by defeat or catastrophe may be beaten down, may see God as vengeance and strike out to recover and establish private territory, or such a person may be enabled by God's grace to take "a second look." The transforming perspective brings into focus the "other" as well as "others," and true social responsibility is born. To be "justified" is to be "put right" in all relationships. So, the natural man may become the "legal man" in which love now tempers fear, and where justice is seen as "fair distribution and retribution among all persons."

Duty and the approval or disapproval of significant others (including God, Scripture, and Church) characterizes this level. This ordered and safe kind of life may be without significant defeats or catastrophes and, if so, tends never to collapse into the new and higher form of liberty and grace. But if rules, order, and absolutely predictable reciprocity ever collapse, the person is likely to forsake faith or, in a grace-filled transforming experience take the abandoned plunge into the net of "love alone" where Wesley sees the "evangelical man." Here human judgments are tempered by "equity" (God-adjusted rewards and punishments based on variables among persons), and unconditional commitment to "values" of integrity, worth of persons, and the unchanging aspects of God's character: righteousness, justice, and love.

James Loder, in describing such a *Transforming Moment*³ notes that at the purely human level, when (a) *the lived world* is encountered (b) *the self*, ordinary growth occurs, moving us toward systematically more complex ways of coping with reality. Before long we encounter conflict, pain, or ambiguity, which he calls (c) *the void*. Without supernatural intervention void turns inevitably to despair and cynicism. To those who live only in a two-dimensional reality of (a) and (b), life is an unfair game, and since there is no painless way out of the game, they grind alone. But God breaks through with a fourth dimension (d) *the Holy*. The Holy penetrates and consumes the void, transforming the very pain or catastrophe into the solution: Tragedy becomes Comedy. Loder explicates the Emmaus event to illustrate how with a "double negation," the Emmaus couple receive the "broken body" (bread) from the "risen Lord" and He disappears from their sight, denoting the transformation of blinding grief into the blinding light of grace-bestowed reconstruction and discovery.

God's salvation scheme appears to be a grace-lubricated conveyor belt by which we are enabled to move from one transformation to another. In early or otherwise innocent experience, the grace is "prevenient." In later or otherwise self-reflective choosing experience, the grace is available and responsive. Note

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A JOB DESCRIPTION: You Are Now a Trustee

by Ralph J. Ferrioli

Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The word *trust* is defined as a "firm belief in the honesty, reliability, and faith in another." Trust is a responsibility resulting from confidence placed in one. The word *trustee* is defined as "one to whom another property, or its management, is entrusted." The word literally means "entrusted to another's care."

The growth and proper function of the church are closely related to its leadership. The pastor needs the assistance and support of well-trained and godly trustees. A trustee should own a *Manual*, read it, and understand it. He should understand the district and general church function regarding budgets, assessments, and government.

You have been duly elected as a trustee to serve in that capacity for at least one year. You deserve to be congratulated for the trust the congregation has bestowed upon you. However, to be expedient and effective in your position, you must understand your responsibilities—become familiar with your duties and functions. The nominating committee has accepted your qualifications with complete confidence

in your ability to serve. The congregation has voted from an official ballot for your election. Your leadership and service must go together.

Your office calls for the highest level of confidence, and you must be an example of faithfulness both to the congregation and the community. Your influence as trustee depends upon your attendance at the services of the church, along with an example of Christian stewardship in the things you do. Many Christians will look to you for admonition, strength, and example because you are an important lay leader. You are now their representative in your position as trustee.

At the first board meeting of the new church year, a chairman of the trustees should be elected. He will be in direct contact with the pastor about any special meetings that may be necessary; he will act as liaison between the pastor and the church board. At the annual church meeting, he will be expected to bring a report of all activities completed by the trustees during the year.

Duties of the Trustee

A trustee is to be aware of the

physical appearance of the church, parsonage, and properties. He should always be an insistent advocate of up-to-date, clean, well-painted, properly illuminated facilities for the constituency and the community. The Lord's house and property should always be kept as beautiful and clean as possible. A church building needing paint or repairs can deter the community from worshipping there.

The outside of the parsonage should be maintained as well as the interior. A well-groomed house will give credibility to the pastor as one leading an active, enterprising congregation.

The church should be adequately heated and cooled; fire extinguishers kept up to date and properly filled; the rest rooms kept bright and clean; the faucets should not drip, and all plumbing should function properly.

If there is a Fellowship Hall and kitchen facility, they should be free from odor and all appliances kept free from rust and stain. Exit signs should be lit during every service and the doors kept free from any obstacles.

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A JOB DESCRIPTION: You Are Now a Steward

by Ralph J. Ferrioli

Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The nominating committee has reviewed and selected your qualification for leadership as a possible steward on the church board. Your name appeared on the election ballot, and you were elected by the people to serve at least one year. You deserve to be congratulated for the trust the congregation has in you. The church should be enriched by your leadership.

To be an effective steward, you must understand what your responsibilities are. To do this, you should comprehend and be exposed to the total operation of the church. You need guidelines and directions to enable favorable results in your contribution to the life of the congregation.

The building and financial concerns of the church, as well as its evangelism outreach, should be the chief objective of the stewards. Stewards are necessary to the welfare and growth of the church, adding much to the spiritual needs, as well as the physical. If the pastor must carry the total load of the church, in addition to his required duties, both the pastor and church will suffer. He can multiply his ability

to perform his pastoral duties by an alert Board of Stewards who assist by functioning knowledgeably and carrying out their duties to completion.

The local church is not left to devise her own standard for leadership but has excellent guidelines and instructions in the church *Manual*. The *Manual* provides the denominational standards with governing laws, prohibitions, doctrines, and judicial guidelines. The steward must not only understand his relationship to the local congregation but also to the denominational activities and ministry. Denominational loyalty is expected, as well as allegiance to the local church. Although the local church is free to manage its own affairs, she nevertheless is never cut off from the denominational purpose and organizational philosophy. The stewards should understand the budget system of the denomination and support this as their financial lifeline.

As a steward, you must not be an entity to yourself. You are part of a team and must abide by the majority decision of the church board. Many pertinent problems may be dis-

cussed on the board that are meant only for the ears of this executive body. It is never wise and often disastrous to talk about problems revealed and discussed by the church board. Stories that leak out of a church board usually return distorted and out of proportion. The steward should never resort to gossip.

At the first board meeting following the annual business meeting, the board should elect a chairman of the Board of Stewards. This chairman can be considered the liaison between the pastor, board, and congregation. His or her active role is to oversee other committees designated or chosen by the pastor.

The steward should be interested in revival within the church, and in maintaining an evangelistic atmosphere. Planning special services and speakers, in consultation with the pastor, the steward should instigate and promote interest among the congregation. As is the custom of many churches, the entertainment of special speakers falls upon the pastor of the local church. Where churches are financially able, the speaker can be housed in a mo-

tel. In any event, usually he takes his meals with the pastor. Some churches have a special committee from among the stewards to arrange and supply the desserts for at least the dinner meals during the campaign. If this is to happen within the church, it must be instigated by the Board of Stewards. The pastor should be reimbursed or given a food allowance to entertain a speaker. The evangelist should receive an adequate salary for his services, as well as traveling expenses, and social security on the money earned.

Pastoral Care

The steward should be interested in the parsonage family and the need of maintaining a proper decorum in the pastor's home. If the refrigerator, washer, and dryer are supplied in the parsonage, repairs of these should be kept up to date. The chairman of the stewards should keep in close communication with the pastor with regard to the needs of the parsonage.

The steward should review, with the trustees, the pastor's financial needs. His salary should be reviewed in light of the rising cost of living and raised whenever possible to be commensurate with the financial income of the church.

The steward should see that the pastor and his wife are reimbursed for all church-oriented meetings. The pastor's wife should be encouraged to attend with him whenever it may involve her; such as, pastors' and wives' retreats, assemblies, and any other district functions so designated. The pastor should take his vacation when it comes due and be encouraged to rest by not taking any meetings while vacationing. A helpful scale many districts use in determining the pastor's vacation time is: two weeks vacation for pastoral service up to 10 years, three weeks up to 15 years, and one month for 20 years of service.

The chairman of the stewards should hand down from election to election a list of birthdays of their pastor and family. There can be a lack of communication between the stewards and congregation regarding the remembrance of the pastor and family on their birthdays. The

pastor can be forgotten on his birthday unless the chairman of the stewards reminds the congregation of this type of remembrance for their leader. At Christmastime, it would be acceptable to present the pastor with an extra week's salary. A pastor will work the more devotedly if he feels his congregation loves him.

Under the direction of the chairman of the stewards, the steward is responsible for preparing the elements of Communion on the day designated by the pastor. This should be done in a reverent manner and in advance of the church service. The Communion table should be cleared of everything but the elements of Communion. A white, appropriate cloth should be placed over the Communion tray and removed at the time of the Communion service. At the close of the service the Communion utensils should be cleaned and properly stored.

Hospitality should exemplify the stewards. They must realize that the spiritual life of the church includes the total community.

Caring for the poor and unfortunate must be part of the program of the stewards. Some churches have a benevolent fund to care for an emergency need. Projects should be initiated for food baskets, Thanksgiving baskets, Christmas gifts for shut-ins and unfortunates, as well as a program for the elderly.

In case of death, the stewards should have a committee to help with food preparation and assistance to the bereaved. This act of benevolence is the touching of people for the sake of Christ.

The stewards should be aware of any in the hospital who should be remembered with prayer, flowers, and cards. Among themselves or by committee, stewards should oversee showers (i.e., wedding, baby, etc.). They should be sensitive to the needs of the fellowship hall and kitchen, making certain that kitchen utensils, flatware, and paper products are in supply.

The stewards can help at baptismal services, making preparation for robes, towels, and whatever other request the pastor deems necessary.

The stewards can serve on mem-

bership and nominating committees if the pastor so desires.

Yes, your responsibilities as a steward are many. As you read over the many facets of your position, you realize there is much more to the Board of Stewards than just attending a monthly board meeting. The stewards are a part of the backbone of the church, and their office must function positively to maintain a harmonious, spiritual, alive church.

Along with the pastor and other members of the church board, you share in the vision for the growth that has always been emblematic of Christ's Church. In a true sense, you are part of a great ministry perpetuating the commission and task set forth by God in fulfillment of His vision of building the Church. 

You Are Now a Trustee

(Continued from page 28)

Administratively, the trustees should give guidance to the board regarding the financial interests of the church. The pastor of the church is the ex-officio, or executive manager of the congregation. The trustees are those who manage for others or hold title on behalf of others. While the pastor is responsible for administering to the body, the trustees are responsible for teamwork, making the administration successful and fruitful. In a true sense, they are a management team under the leadership of the pastor. As good managers, they will insist upon payment of all local bills, budget payments, and insurance when due. The best way this can be accomplished is by supporting the church's yearly financial budget. The trustees must find proper solutions for the raising of monies and the payment of all expenditures. Budgets, the lifeline of the denomination, have been fairly apportioned to each congregation by the Ways and Means Committee. The financial contingency upon which the district works can be affected drastically by late or nonpayment of budgets.

Audit

The treasurer's books should be audited each year by a committee

appointed by the church board. This committee should consist of two people plus the pastor, if so determined. The persons selected to serve on this committee should have some experience in financial matters and understand an audit.

In case of a change of treasurer during the church year, the books should be audited before giving the responsibility of treasurer to another.

Church stewardship is a necessary form of service to Christ, and proper management of sacred monies and materials is a pastor's and trustee's responsibility. It is the task of the Board of Trustees to control the budget expenditures, remembering that they have been entrusted with money from others and that they are responsible to those people. The trustee is never a one-man crusader; he always works in cooperation with the majority decision of the board. Self-interest has no place on the church board.

If there is a shortage of funds, the trustees do not have the right to try and balance the operating budget by borrowing money without the written consent of the district superintendent. To pay bills from another fund can be a serious mistake. To hide the nature of a financial problem from the congregation is a practice of deception. Most congregations would rise to the occasion of giving if they knew the true situation.

The pastor and trustees, along with the stewards, should set up a yearly contingency by discussing every facet of church expenditure and determine how much money the treasurer should set aside each week in an allocation.

Every member of the board should receive a monthly financial report from the treasurer (preferably typewritten and photocopied) so they may be enlightened as to the money received and disbursements made. A well-informed church board is one that knows where it is going and what is expected of them.

Caring for the pastor's salary should not be left completely to the stewards of the church board. The trustees and stewards should review the pastor's salary yearly and keep up to date with his current financial situation. A church that loves

its pastor wants the board to be considerate and fair with him. Many a good pastor would probably have stayed longer in a pastorate if the board considered his true value to them and shared with him remuneratively as the church grew and prospered financially.

The trustees should be aware of the building needs for the congregation. To expand in meeting these demands of growth is all-important. The pastor should be supported in maintaining a growing climate among the people. He cannot do it alone; he needs the support of intelligent men with a vision of enlarging the kingdom of God.

In planning a new construction, the Board of Trustees can serve as the building committee. If the board is a large body, it may be wise for the pastor to select a building committee either from the Board of Trust-

ees or from the congregation. However, the trustees should periodically receive an up-to-date report from this committee of the plans to build and the estimated costs for such construction. In most states, no bank action will be taken for such construction loan until the official Board of Trustees submits authorization along with the congregation's decision to build. The trustees play a very important part in any form of construction in the church. In most cases, a bank loan cannot be received without the signatures of the Board of Trustees.

To serve as a trustee is not for the sake of popular self-interest. You are to be a disciplined follower of Christ and take the responsibilities entrusted to you seriously. You can be a credit to your church and your Lord through the office of trustee.



Does Your Church



Strix Pix

Need a Computer?

by Jim Christy

Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Greeley, Colorado

Personal computers are arriving in American homes by the millions. More and more small businesses are getting computers. The number will continue to expand. It is just a matter of time before a personal computer will be available to nearly everyone who wants one. The local church, too, will have to decide if it is a worthy piece of equipment for its work.

The church I pastor was given a computer. Without any preparation we were thrust into the world of computers. After nearly a year's use, we have found it one of our most valuable pieces of equipment. If it broke down we would immediately replace it, even though we have had some negative experiences.

Before your church decides to buy a computer, it would be wise to face some potential problems. Computers can sit and collect dust as well as any other fancy piece of equipment. Their value is in use and the more they are used the more valuable they become to the pastor and the church.

The Bad News

Here are some potential problems you will face when your church enters the computer world.

1. *Computers are not as easy to run as typewriters*
The advertisements declare that anyone can run a

Nazarene

UPDATE

UPDATE EDITOR, NINA BEEGLE, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

SEED, SOIL, AND STATISTICS

Some of Jesus' stories were recorded by only one of the synoptic writers; others by two. But when three of the Gospels relate the same parable, it is strong evidence that the Holy Spirit thought the message was very important and inspired the writers to put it down. The Parable of the Sower is such a story. Matthew tells it in chapter 13. Mark relates it in chapter 4. Luke gives his version in chapter 8. Each heard the Master explain the real meaning of the story in the same way. Three truths are very evident.

I. *Gospel seed is good seed, wherever it is sowed.* Jesus identified it as "the word of God." It germinates wherever it is planted;

- in the depressed inner city or the affluent suburb
- in the Western World or the Third World
- in the university or the penitentiary.

II. *All soil is not equally fertile.* The pathway, the rocky ground and the thorn patch are not ideal seed beds. Good seed planted there does not result in a satisfactory harvest. Jesus, himself, did not see the same measure of success in every place where He ministered. When He went back to His hometown "he did not do many miracles . . . because of their lack of faith" (Matthew 13:58, NIV).

III. *Statistically measurable crop production is the primary goal of seed sowing.* Matthew and Mark specifically mention the "good soil" man who reproduces his faith in 30, 60, or 100 other converts. Luke speaks of those who "produce a crop" (8:15d). A crop means more than just recovering the amount of seed sowed—it means increase.

This old parable has an unmistakable application for modern-day ministry. We've been sowing lots of seed—good, gospel seed. But something has gone wrong with the harvest. Last year our "yield" was only 2.88 percent net increase in members—not even "threefold," to say nothing of 60-

100-fold. And the percentage was only this high because in some world areas the increase was 10-fold or more. In the United States (where 70 percent of our membership is located) the gain was only 1.28 percent. This means that we barely harvested what we sowed!

Jesus was very evidently concerned about increase statistics, so we must be, too. That's the basic reason why we are asking each pastor to report two vital statistics quarterly.

1. *Sunday School Attendance.* Increase in the number of those attending means that more seed is being sowed, for the seed is the Word of God—that's the curriculum of the Sunday School. Admittedly, every enrollee will not be converted and unite with the church. Some seed will fall on pathways, rocky soil, and thorn patches. But the more seed that is sowed, the more likelihood that some will be planted in good soil and produce a crop. That's why (as the late Gordon Olsen kept reminding us) "Sunday School is big business!"

2. *Church Membership.* Our continual emphasis upon church growth is not a numbers game. Ever since Acts 2:47 those who are being saved have naturally been added to the church. Any evangelism which does not incorporate converts into the community of believers is suspect. Sunday School evangelism, revival evangelism, personal evangelism—all should result in new Nazarenes being received into the church.

The end result of all this should be *the production of genuine disciples who will reproduce their faith.* St. Luke's account adds a very meaningful dimension to the harvest process. He equates the good soil with those who "by persevering produce a crop" (8:15, NIV). We do not believe in "unconditional perseverance," more popularly known as "eternal security." Jesus made it clear that "he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22b, italics mine). He was speaking about real discipleship which has a quality of perseverance about it. One of the most vital functions of pastoral ministry is the nurturing or discipling which produces this kind of disciples. Before being received into membership, new converts should be introduced to *Discipleship—Your New Life in Christ.* This excellent study of the beliefs and practices of the Christian faith will ground them in the Word. When emotions ebb, they can stand firm on this solid foundation. Then they will not only persevere themselves, they will reproduce their faith 30 percent, 60 percent, or 100 percent. The good seed sowed in good soil will then produce a good harvest.



By General Superintendent
Eugene L. Stowe

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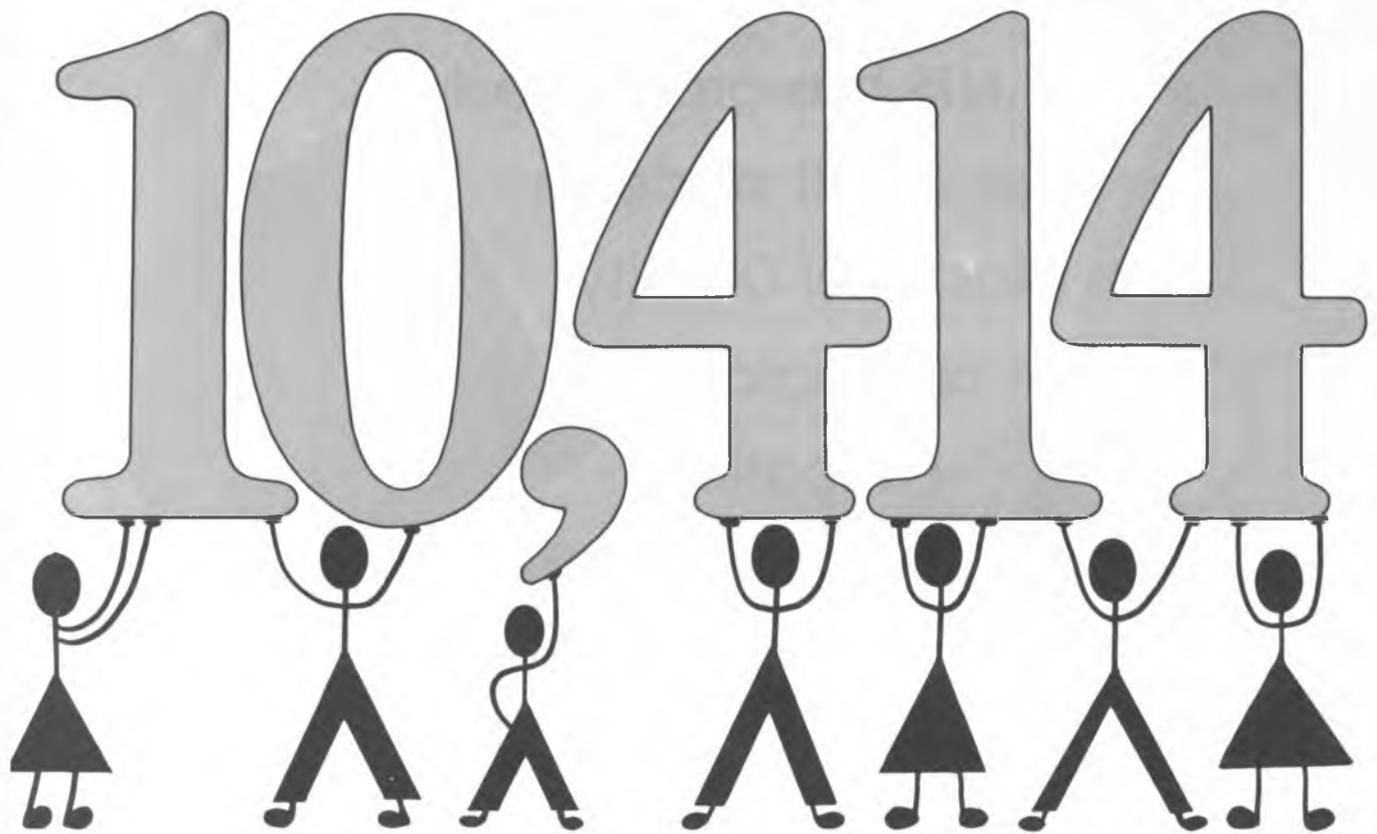
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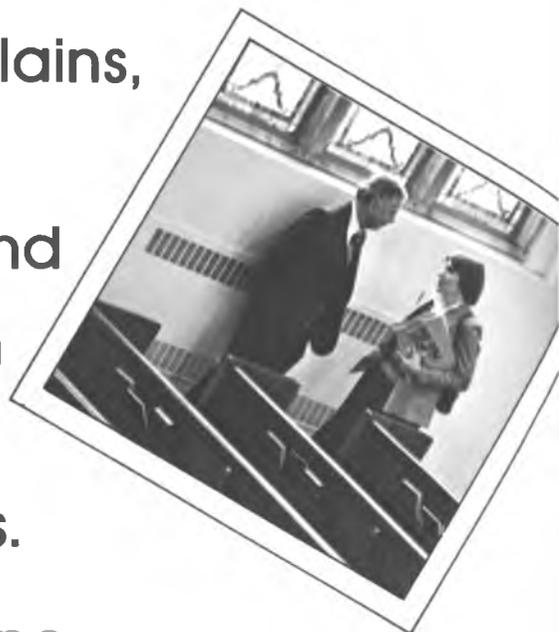
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THERE ARE MISSIONARIES' CHILDREN in every Nazarene college? Far from home. How about adopting one? Invite him / her to come and speak. For the holidays. Have the NWMS send a box of goodies once in a while to him/her at college.

MISSIONARY SPEAKERS ARE AVAILABLE anytime? But be sure to put in your request early—a year ahead is not too soon. Most of the better-known missionaries on furlough are booked up a year ahead.

THAT YOU CAN GET STUDENTS who have been on a **SUMMER MINISTRIES** assignment to come for a weekend? Often they have slides and a fresh approach to missions. Contact your nearest Nazarene college for names; or write Youth Ministries, Christian Life Division, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131, for names of those from the school nearest you.

THAT IF YOUR GENERAL BUDGET IS PAID AND YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING EXTRA SPECIAL FOR MISSIONS you can write to the World Mission Division (see address above) for a **SPECIAL NEED** on any mission field you choose, in any amount you choose? There are items like Bible college student scholarships, tents, cars, equipment for hospitals, for evangelism, missionary children's school uniforms or expenses, even chapels. Or you could send in any sum for the work of _____ missionary, and name the missionary you wish to receive it. Or it could be for Christmas gifts for national pastors' children. World Mission office will send a list of suggestions in the amount you choose. Whatever you select, your gift will be sent with the next monthly allotment and the missionary will be notified who it is from and what it is for.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

PASTOR—a Service to You

When you change address, fill in the form below and mail.

Name _____ Date of Change _____

Former Address _____ ZIP _____

Former Church _____

New Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Name of Church _____ District _____

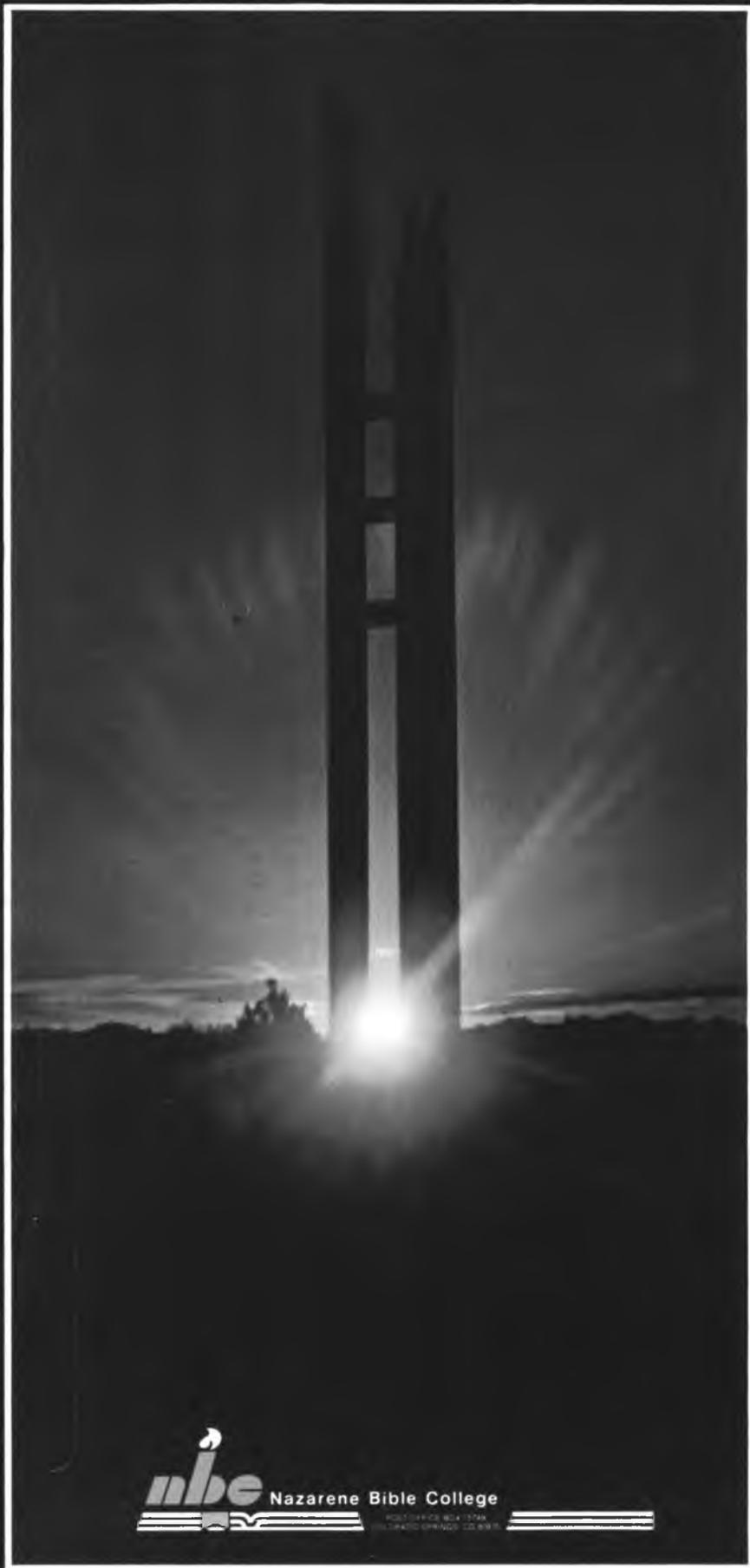
New Position: Pastor (); Evangelist (); Other _____

All official records at Headquarters, including those in the General Secretary's office, and the periodicals checked below will be changed from this one notification.

Check *Herald of Holiness* (); *World Mission* (); *Preacher's Magazine* ();

Other _____

(Clip and send to the Subscription Department,
 Nazarene Publishing House, P.O. Box 527, Kansas City, MO 64141.)



The path of the righteous is
like the first gleam of dawn,
shining ever brighter till the
full light of day—

Wisdom is supreme; therefore
get wisdom.

Though it cost all you have,
get understanding.

Proverbs 4:18 and 7, NIV

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THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE

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

LEADERSHIP • INSPIRATION • FULFILLMENT • ENRICHMENT

NEW MINISTER FOR NEW MINISTRY:

David Wilson Chosen as Pastoral
Ministries Coordinator

Rev. Wilbur W. Brannon, director of Pastoral Ministries, announces the acceptance of David Paul Wilson to assume responsibilities for the new VideoNet and continuing education ministries to pastors, February 1, 1983.

Rev. Wilson graduated from Olivet Nazarene College and Nazarene Theological Seminary, and is a doctoral candidate at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Wilson taught in the Fort Lauderdale Public Schools from 1972 until 1974. He was youth minister at Pompano First Church from 1972 to 1975, and at Overland Park Antioch Church, Kansas, in

the year 1975-76. He pastored Independence Trinity Church from 1977 until 1979 and the Orlando Colonial Church from 1979 to the present. He was involved in continuing education on the Central Florida District.

Wilson explains the "clincher" in his decision to accept the new position: "When Rev. Brannon first contacted me, my attention was immediately captured by his statement, 'One of our objectives is to dispel the notion that Kansas City is Mecca; instead, the concept of Kansas City serving the church must be uppermost.' When I visited the Division of Church Growth I sensed



that idea from those I met.

"I am also tremendously challenged by Pastoral Ministries acting as a 'clearing house' for ideas and potential problem solving for pastors."

Wilson's undergraduate training was in education. "I have always had a keen interest in continuing education for pastors," he said.

"I've been working in a field education program, and this has whetted my appetite for the kind of ministry I will have here. It is imperative for us as pastors to keep up with the changes that are occurring in the church and in the methodologies used to accomplish the work of the church.

Wilson's motivation is evident in the goals he set for his new task even before he had "tried on" his new desk and chair. "There are two phrases I have chosen as guidelines for my work," he said. "For VideoNet it is *Information Through Demonstration*. It will be our goal to 'show and tell' rather than just tell. We will look for ways to meet the pastor's needs through the monthly VideoNet that will be coming out in the fall. Problems and needs of pastors are seldom unique, and there may be a wide variety of answers. I'm interested in helping to find

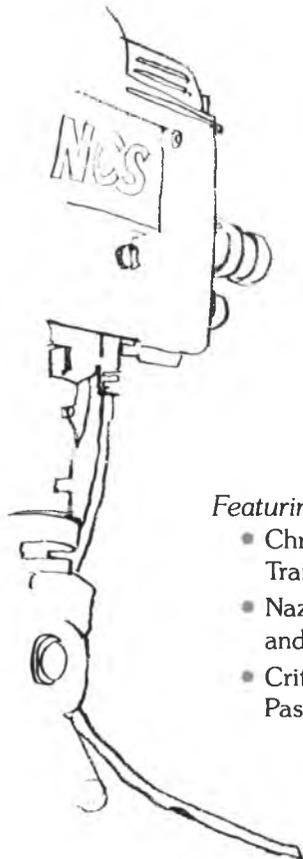
SOMETHING NEW VIDEONET

A Monthly Videotape Subscription Program
for Pastoral and Congregational Use

IT'S FOR YOU AND IT'S
COMING THIS FALL

Featuring:

- Christian education Training Segments
- Nazarene News and Views
- Critical Issues in Pastoral Ministry
- Equipping
- Developmental Opportunities
- Technical Services



those answers for and through our pastors.

"For continuing education the phrase is *Develop and Update*. If we can keep our pastors growing, our church will be stronger. To do this we must provide the easiest, fastest, most comprehensive means of in-

struction.

"A secondary, and perhaps less tangible, goal is to enhance the work of the general church in the eyes of our pastors. A man always works better if he is encouraged and morale is high. If we can demonstrate real caring by listening and

attempting to answer felt needs, Pastoral Ministries can be a vital link between our pastors and the general church."

Wilson and his wife, Joy (Spear), are both fourth-generation Nazarenes and children of Nazarene pastors.

BUILDING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

CONET is a "ministry to ministers." A network of qualified persons is being devised to help "facilitate wholeness for the minister and family." To say ministers are not subject to brokenness is to exempt them from fallen humanity and their identification with the Cross.

There are three critical transitions in the life of pastors. The first is a time of testing and experimentation. He is changing from a student-in-school to a pastor-in-parish. After three to five years he usually asks, "Should I stay in this kind of work or not?" This person may leave the ministry, change his specialty, or confirm his original commitment and move to a second assignment.

Around age 40, he feels he has gone about as far as he will go, and he remains in the ministry it will be 20 more years of the same thing. The question at this point is, "Do I want to do this for 20 more years?"

Then at age 60-65 the time comes for retirement and most are not ready for it either financially or notionally.

Other transitions include entry or re-entry into the ministry, changing churches, when the spouse seeks a separate career, or when the "nest" becomes empty.

These occasions could be made easier with the help of someone who can be trusted in an environment of absolute confidentiality. There are crises that come to us all that call for the perspective of a consultant. Consultants, counselors, and enrichment specialists are wanting to be a part of a helping network

that is compatible with the church but separate from its ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The theological orientation of CONET is based on:

- an unashamed commitment to Christ
- a Wesleyan definition of Christian holiness
- a reconciling, redemptive ministry of the kingdom of Christ
- healing and wholeness (spiritual, mental, emotional, physical) within a biblical understanding

Target areas are being researched for pilot projects with the goal of servicing every region in the U.S.

and Canada through Pastoral Ministries and interfacing with World Mission to benefit its regions.

Things you can do:

1. Register your support with your district superintendent.
2. Send names of persons who may qualify as resource personnel for the network.
3. Write your questions to Pastoral Ministries.
4. Volunteer your services as a part of the referral network.
5. Give suggestions to Pastoral Ministries, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.



CASE STUDIES

Case Studies for discussion appear on pages 48-49 of this issue of *Preacher's Magazine*. Call a fellow pastor, or pastors to meet you at a favorite restaurant for discussion

and interaction on these studies. Let this be the springboard for sharing your personal concerns with each other.

COURSE OF STUDY CHANGES

COURSE NO. 114.2 (Speech), the new text is *Fundamentals of Human Communication*, by Robert G. King. It replaces *Communication for the Contemporary Student*, by W. A. Linkugel and E. C. Buehler. For **COURSE NO. 234e**, *Socials for All Occasions*, by Mildred Wade, replaces *Fun Plans for Church Recreation*, by Agnes Durant Pylant. **COURSE NO. 334a**, *Five Practical Lessons on Song Leading*, by Don Brown, replaces *Song Leading*, by W. Hines Sims. □

COURSE OF STUDY REVISIONS

NEW 1983 EDITION OF "HANDBOOK ON THE MINISTRY"

The new 1983 edition of the *Handbook* is off the press. All changes

are now effective. Persons enrolled in the Course of Study: Local Preachers, Licensed Ministers, Ministers of Christian Education, Ministers of Music, Song Evangelists, Deaconesses, and Chairmen and Secretaries of District Boards affecting the ministry; Boards of Ministerial Studies, Boards of Orders and Relations, Advisory Boards, etc., and all persons making reference to *Manual* paragraphs 423 and 438 are urged to order a copy today. □

INFORMATION FROM THE HANDBOOK

Write to the NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE, Box 527, Kansas City, MO 64141 for—*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, *Handbook on the Ministry*, free price brochure for the Course of Study, study guides (HM 437.2). Specify ones needed. For the Ministerial Course of Study:

One volume for Years One and Two (S-1). One volume for Years Three and Four (S-2). For Ministries of Christian Education: One volume (S-3). For Music Ministries: One volume (S-4). For Deaconesses: One volume (S-5). Local Preacher's License (forms). Textbooks and reading books for all courses. MusicPak for song evangelists and ministers of music. Write to PASTORAL MINISTRIES, Division of Church Growth, International Headquarters, Church of the Nazarene, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131 for—Enrollment forms, Certificate of Graduation forms, Course Record Forms for Board of Ministerial Studies, Free Brochure, "Called to the Ministry?" Information and credit certificates on Advanced Ministerial Studies, Free Brochure, "The What, Why, and How of Continuing Education." □

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1982-83—The Year of the Young

- May 30—June 7, 1983 NIROGA, Hawaii
- June 13-16, 1983 Faith and Learning Conference—ONC
- June 20-26, 1983 World Youth Conference, Oaxtepec, Mexico

1983-84—The Year of the Diamond Jubilee

- August 29—September 4, 1983 Youth Week
- September 12-17, 1983 NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
- September 19-23, 1983 NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
- September 26-30, 1983 NIROGA, Adirondacks
- October 4-6, 1983 Conference on Evangelism—Winnipeg
- October 9-16, 1983 Diamond Jubilee Week
- October 10-14, 1983 NIROGA, Canadian Rockies
- October 23, 1983 Organization of Diamond Jubilee churches
- October 1983 (Tentative) Chaplains' Retreat
- October 1983 European Military Personnel Retreat
- December, January, February "How to Live a Holy Life" Enduring Word Series
- January 3-5, 1984 Sunday School Lessons
- January 17-19, 1984 Conference on Evangelism—Phoenix
- January 24-26, 1984 Conference on Evangelism—Fort Worth
- February 20-24, 1984 Conference on Evangelism—Tampa
- SUMMER, 1984 NIROGA, Florida
- May 28—June 1, 1984 WILCON II, College Campuses
- NIROGA, California

1984-85—The Year of Church growth

Goal—75,000 New Nazarenes

- August 27—September 2, 1984 Youth Week
- September 10-15, 1984 NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
- September 17-21, 1984 NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
- October 1-5, 1984 NIROGA, Adirondacks
- October 1984 European Military Personnel Retreat
- February 18-22, 1985 NIROGA, Florida
- June 20-22, 1985 General Conventions, Anaheim
- June 23-28, 1985 General Assembly, Anaheim
- August 26—September 1, 1985 Youth Week
- September 9-14, 1985 NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
- September 16-20, 1985 NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
- September 30—October 4, 1985 NIROGA, Adirondacks
- October 14-18, 1985 NIROGA, Canadian Rockies

OTHERS

1983-84 MISSIONARY STUDY/ READING BOOKS

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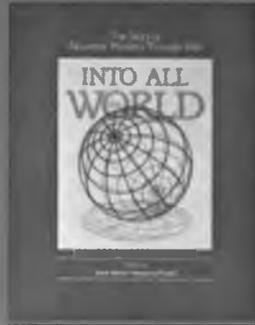
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(choose any 4)

- After the birth of your first grandchild.
- When one of the “old gang” expires suddenly.
- During your pastor’s next sermon on heaven.
- Other _____

Any of the above may serve to remind us that time is still marching—and today is a very good time to prepare your will, so that your heirs won’t be at loose ends “tomorrow.”

Your church, too, can benefit—or Christian education or missions. You can put the whole world in your will through a special bequest to the work of Christ.

HOW TO START: Use the coupon at right to request our free booklet, “How to Write a Will That Works.” There’s no obligation.



Life Income Gifts Services
 Church of the Nazarene
 6401 The Paseo
 Kansas City, MO 64131
 Attn: Robert D. Hempel

In Canada:
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 Box 30080, Station B
 Calgary, Alberta, Canada
 T2M 4N7

Mr. _____
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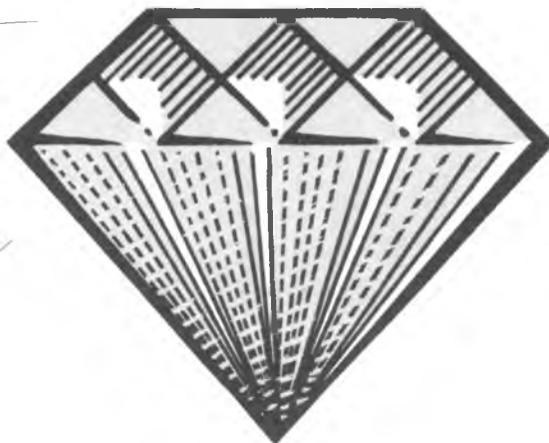
State _____ ZIP _____

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 (Mon.) (Day) (Year)

YEAR OF DIAMOND JUBILEE

1983



FALL SUNDAY SCHOOL DRIVE

October 2, 9, and 16, 1983

GOAL: To record on October 16 the largest denominational Sunday School attendance *under roof* in the 75-year history of the Church of the Nazarene.

OCTOBER 2—LET THE CELEBRATION BEGIN

Launch your plans for the Diamond Jubilee and let everybody know!

OCTOBER 9—HERITAGE SUNDAY

Trace the roots of the Church of the Nazarene and commemorate its 1908 beginnings.

OCTOBER 16—GIANT 75TH BIRTHDAY

Celebrate the Church of the Nazarene's Holiness Heritage by recording your church's largest Sunday School attendance ever.

These resources are available:

- | | | | |
|--|---------|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outside Banner | SI-1908 | <input type="checkbox"/> Diamond Jubilee Certificate | CT-1908 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birthday Invitation | PC-1908 | <input type="checkbox"/> Filmstrip Produced by Children's Ministries— | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balloons | AW-1908 | "A New Church Is Born" | VA-1908 |

Order from Nazarene Publishing House.

REPORTING: The local Christian Life and Sunday School Board chairman will phone in (1) the attendance on October 16, and (2) the number of new church members received on October 16 by profession of faith to the district chairman by Sunday afternoon, October 16. By Tuesday noon (CDT), October 18, the district chairman will phone in the district attendance total and the number of new members to the Kansas City Division of Christian Life and Sunday School.

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KEOGH

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Address _____

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ZIP _____

Back box (est):

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IRA _____



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- An average of 2.2 people read each newspaper delivered to a household.
- 72% of working women read a newspaper every day.
- 70% of adults look at every page of their daily newspaper.
- Use of one color in your ad can increase readership more than 50%.

WAYS TO USE THE NEWSPAPER?

● REACTION.

The church can use the newspaper to bring the gospel to bear in the community through reaction to “secular news.”

● INTEREST.

The church can use the newspaper to disseminate church news which interests or affects the community at large (social action or service program, local history, personalities, etc.).

● PROMOTION.

The church can use the newspaper for promotion of the church, its activities, ministries, etc.





PLANNING AN ADVERTISEMENT STRATEGY . . .

● WHO?

Who do you want to reach with your ad? Is there a prime target you are after: men, women, teenagers, the elderly, the entire family? If you have made that decision, then running your ad in a certain section or on a particular page of the newspaper can increase its readership. Knowing “who” will help determine “when” and “where.”

● WHEN?

When should you run your ad to reach the people you’re after? Certain pages or sections of the newspaper draw heavier readership during certain days of the week. For example, Wednesday & Thursday are grocery store ad days, drawing a heavy readership from women; Saturday & Sunday’s sports information draws heavier male readership; and there are also specific days when many newspapers carry church page news.

● WHERE?

Where in the paper should you place your ad? This, also, is determined by who your target audience is, and when you choose to run your ad. You can request that your ad be placed on a specific page, but most newspapers will not absolutely guarantee its placement. The only way to guarantee placement on a specific page is to pay a “premium,” an additional fee that guarantees your ad will be placed on the specific page you request.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



DEVELOPING A GOOD AD . . .

● ORGANIZATION.

Layout should be organized for maximum clarity, showing clearly what you have to offer. A well-organized ad will initiate more response because more people can tell what is being advertised.

● LOGO & FORMAT.

Give your ads a strong identity by developing a logo that is distinct, instantly recognizable, locates the church, and provides an image that sells the church. This church “signature” should appear on every piece of printed material associated with the church.

● HEADLINE.

This is the most important part of any advertisement—it determines whether the ad will be read. Develop a creative headline that gets the readers’ attention; calling them by name, speaking their language, and offering them some benefits.

● COPY.

After attention is assured and the church is identified, it is the copy that makes the advertisement. Your copy should describe the benefits of what the church is offering; giving complete and specific information, using simple language, and telling the reader how/when to respond.

(For further information contact your local newspaper or Nazarene Media Services.)

DIAMOND JUBILEE



Celebrate by

displaying . . .

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SI-1908

\$29.95

showing . . .

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Join Papa, Mama, Elizabeth (10), and Matthew (8), on their trip in a horsedrawn cart to Pilot Point, Texas, to experience the birth of the Church of the Nazarene. Recommended for the birthday celebration in primaries, middlers, and juniors on October 16, but of special interest for adult viewing also. Thirty-five professionally illustrated, full-color frames. 15 minutes. Includes cassette and script. VA-1908

\$9.95

presenting . . .

Diamond Jubilee Keepsake Certificate

"I was in Sunday School on October 16, 1983, the Diamond Jubilee Sunday," reads this attractive parchment certificate. A lovely memento every adult as well as child will want as a lasting remembrance of this once-in-a-lifetime event. 5 x 7", suitable for framing.

CT-1908

Package of 25 for **\$1.00**

decorating . . .

"75th Birthday" Balloon

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AW-1908

Package of 50 for **\$4.95**

reading . . .

75th Anniversary Edition

Phineas F. Bresee—A PRINCE IN ISRAEL

By E. A. Girvin. A reproduction of the original 1916 edition, this biography tells of the man God used to organize and lead a group of committed people into founding the Church of the Nazarene. Deluxe crimson and gold clothboard binding. A historic volume timely to own and give. 466 pages.

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inviting . . .

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Remind and invite members and friends to this great historic occasion. Designed with space for providing local church information. Suitable as a handout or mailer. 3½ x 5½". PC-1908

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Buildings cannot contain the church that is composed of people reaching people for Christ through Church Planting.

MISSION ACTION SOURCEBOOK is designed to facilitate your MISSION ACTION COMMITTEE in:

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3. Preparation of the church for outreach
4. Cultivation of target community
5. Launching the Mission Action church
6. Maintaining the outreach ministry in progressive stages of development
7. Organizing the Mission Action church
8. Providing permanent facilities

MISSION ACTION SOURCEBOOK will help you work the plans you have made in faith and prayer and, with God's help, to realize your DIAMOND JUBILEE goals for planting new churches.

228 NEW CHURCHES in our year of DIAMOND JUBILEE,
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75 NEW CHURCHES organized on October 23, 1983. One for
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ture, and develop a new congre-
gation after January 1.



RENEWAL CITATION
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gregation and pastor
who rendered mer-
itorious service in the
renewal of a dead
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**DIAMOND
JUBILEE PLAQUE**
Awarded to new
congregations who
organize on Sun-
day, October 23,
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A new award. Given to the church
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August 28, 1983



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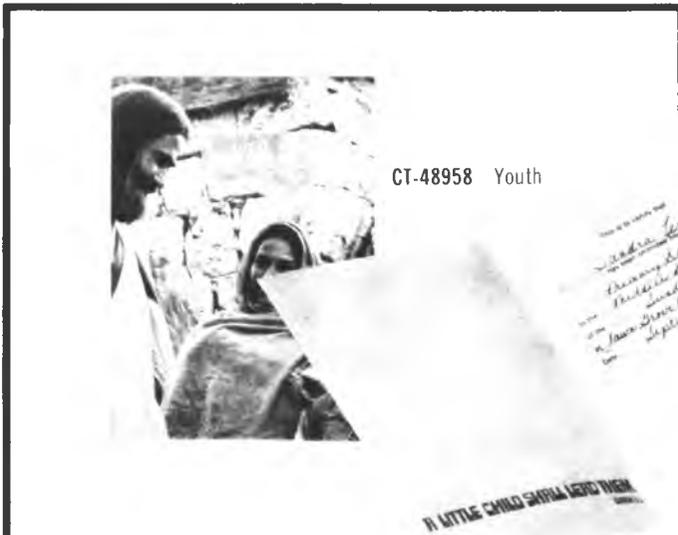
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computer. "If you can type, you can run a computer," we are told. The big difference between a typewriter and a computer is in getting the material from the screen to the paper. That brings us to

2. Computers need to have printers to be much good

It is one thing to have the material on the screen. It is quite another thing to get it on paper. The whole business of putting computer materials on paper is an art. It takes more than typing skills to do that. Therefore,

3. Computers require software

Software is instructions to the computer on what and how to do things. These instructions are called programs. You can write your own programs or buy them already written out. The video game cartridge is an example of a program (that is, software) available for computers. If you write your own program, it may take you one or two years to get all the "bugs" out, depending on how complicated it is. An alternative is to buy software and modify it to meet your church's needs.

Once you have a computer, a printer, and some programs,

4. Computer printouts require a method of reproduction

It is not feasible to make printouts of all the materials a church wants distributed. Computers are not intended for mass reproduction unless the materials are to be individualized. Most church materials can be mass-produced. That means the church must have either an offset layout, electronic stencil maker for mimeograph, or a good copy machine.

All these items mean

5. There is more cost to a computer than a computer

Besides the computer there are these extra costs:

Empty Disks	\$5.00 each—need several dozen
Software	\$100 for each program to begin, will need one for producing written documents and one for bookkeeping
Printer	\$650 to \$5,000
Cable to printer	\$30.00
Paper	\$40.00 a box of 3,200 sheets
Ribbons	\$12.00 each
Address labels	\$15.00 a box
Copier or offset	\$2,000 to \$10,000

Obviously this is not something a church wants to just go out and buy. The most expensive printer may not be the best for your church's needs. The field is highly competitive and prices for similar products vary greatly, although there is practically no price break available for software.

6. It takes time to get information into the computer

Our church has 200 members, a mailing list of 300, Sunday School enrollment of over 300, and a preschool. To get this information fed into the computer took weeks with a secretary who could enter 70 to 100 words a minute. The material then had to be formatted. That took some more weeks. We used what we had as it was ready, but some things are still not "on line" because the information is still being entered, corrected, and formatted.

The Good News

Now that all the bad news is before you, get ready for the good news. Our computer has become the nerve center of nearly everything that happens. Here are some reasons:

1. The computer provides us with huge storage in a small space

All the church records can be contained in a desk drawer: membership lists, Sunday School class records, music inventories, correspondence, birthdays, anniversaries, addresses, phone numbers, offerings, bank balances, personal giving, calendars, minutes of meetings, newsletter and bulletin formats. The list extends as long as your needs. I keep copies of articles I have written, sermons preached (or planned), upcoming news notes, and materials necessary for my district responsibilities.

2. The computer provides us with easy access to all these materials

If I need a certain list of names or I want to work on next Sunday's sermon, I insert the right disk, tell the computer the code words, and there it is on the screen. If I want a printed copy, I punch three letters and the computer spews out hundreds of words a minute. If I want to know how much money remains in the Sunday School account, I follow a similar pattern.

3. The computer provides us with easy updating and correcting

Every week our mailing list changes. With a computer it takes two or three minutes to find the name and correct it before printing a new list. My writing can be easily changed whether it is a word, a sentence, or a page.

4. The computer provides us with neat, letter-perfect copy

Of course, if the information placed in the computer is in error, the computer will reproduce the error. With a little work, though, and a keen eye, the number of mistakes can be small.

The computer will center, space, and arrange materials any way we want them. If we print a copy and do not like it, we simply change the instructions and try again.

There are about as many ways to produce materials as the imagination can contrive.

5. The computer provides us with personalized materials when we want them

If we are sending out a notice to a few, we can put each person's name on the notice with ease.

6. The computer provides us immediately with what we need

An original bulletin can be set up in 10 minutes. A newsletter in 30. If we are unhappy with the way it looks, a revision takes 30 seconds. Up-to-date financial reports can be printed faster than they can be read.

* * * * *

There is one key to a computer going to church: the operator. It must be someone who is willing to work with the system, someone who understands programming

(or is willing and able to learn), and someone who has a hankering to tinker.

I fit the above description. The congregation affectionately refers to the computer as my toy. When the computer was given to us, I had never before touched a computer keyboard. I did not have time to go back to school, so I hunted up manuals. It took me many weeks to learn. I could not begin to write a big program, though I write many small ones, producing an array of things for the church.

I taught my secretary how to put information into the system and save it. I put information on a Dictaphone that is then entered into the computer. Later I call the information up and revise it. I also taught the church treasurer how to keep books on the computer. Our first treasurer's report from the computer revealed percentage income and spending and immediately showed us where some of our weaknesses were.

The Big Question

Should your church get into computers? I would encourage any church I pastor to invest in one. If I can ever afford it, I hope to own one myself. I would like to have my library listed on a computer, as well as many of my written materials. I think my personal finances could be helped by better records.

But cost is a factor. And the need to know how (or be willing to learn) to run a computer is essential. I believe the costs are going to continue to drop. Eventually computers will be everywhere, and I hate to see the church come dragging in last. By and large I think it is the pastor who had better learn the system.

(Warning: Once you have used a word processor-software program for writing manuscripts—you will wonder how you ever managed on the old electric typewriter.)

PROGRAMMED REVIVAL OR GOD'S NEW THING?

by Kenneth Vogt

District Superintendent, Washington Pacific District, Church of the Nazarene

Many books have been written and many sermons have been preached on revival. The Scriptures deal with it on occasion and imply the necessity of renewal throughout. For our purposes, let's assume revival and renewal are the same. That is not really true, for each has its particular emphasis.

Right on the mark is Titus 3:5b, "We are saved by the washing of regeneration and the *renewings of the Holy Spirit*." But can we have revival on demand?

By the process of what we might call "precasting revival and renewal," we tend to limit both God's ingenuity and His sovereignty. The Lord God is not compelled to renew us twice in the same way. He is the God of infinite variety and comes to us in new, refreshing ways time and time again. We can affirm that what He does is indeed new; as Jeremiah the

prophet stated, "Behold, I will do a new thing." It is precisely this newness that is the constant source of rejuvenation for His people and His Church.

We could precast revival by saying that revival is not a miracle, but a law. This gives the preponderance of emphasis to methodologies. That is to say, if we do certain things God will respond or react with revival.

- If we plan the music well
- If we do sufficient and proper advertising
- If we have cottage prayer meetings
- If we have pre-prayer services
- If the preaching is revivalistic
- If the prayer patterns of the saints are altered

By these, and many other conditions, we could inadvertently attempt to cast revival into the mold of

our own preconceptions. My point is that a revival or a great spiritual renewal may be all of these, and yet it is much more. There is a mystery about it. It is the supernatural working of a Sovereign God. In times past, it would seem, God has often chosen the time, the place, and the extent and depth of His mighty moving Spirit, not without human instrumentality, but through it.

Could we say, then, that God comes in renewal irrespective of human involvement? Of course not. However, God does come in *His* way. Local churches, college campuses, and even entire nations have been singled out in the sovereign will of God for the mighty movings of His Holy Spirit. Our prayer should always be, "O, God, be pleased to send Your mighty revival tides to us in *Your* way." Then let us confidently expect Him to do a new thing.

I AM NOT AFRAID OF DENOMINATIONALISM

by Robert Hudson

*District Superintendent, El Salvador,
Central America, Church of the Nazarene*

Independent” and “interdenominational” are words ringing out from many Christian circles these days. Their idea is that their Christian mission will produce more fruit if they have no ties to a denominational structure.

On furlough, I was talking to a proindependent associate pastor working within one of our denomination’s churches. He was fresh from a three-day conference with a pastor from an independent superchurch. He felt we should hide from the denominational name in everything from visitation to the church sign. He felt something like “New Life Mission,” or “The People’s Church,” or “The Community Bible Church” would be better names. He felt the renaming process would be the seed for great growth in the church.

The logic was that anyone who had had a bad experience with our denomination would be alienated by our church name. My reasoning was, “greater is the number of people who have had good experiences with our church than those who have had unfortunate experiences.”

It was not surprising when I returned to a different church in the same area a few weeks later to find the same fellow looking for work in the other church. While he had not been completely successful in the former church in burying the denominational name, he was completely unsuccessful in his church growth efforts.

Traditionally, churches are members of a larger family of churches. Paul kept a close tie within the network of churches as did John from the Isle of Patmos.

While a few independent churches have recently become extremely large and have exposed that growth to a nationwide audience, my studies indicate that a larger percentage of the denominational churches grow large than do the independents. The hierarchy of a denominational structure helps to keep a church moving, whereas the independent church body has no one interested and dedicated to their growth beyond themselves. Examples of this help from higher church officials can be seen from Paul and John to our present day.

When a local church of a denomination begins to lose sight of the blood-stained cure that brings salvation and tries to find the cure to moral and social problems within man’s power, the hierarchy can deal with the problem and maintain a soul-saving organization. It is easier for an independent church to become little more than a businessmen’s service and social club.

In World Mission areas, missionaries have often seen an independent missionary serve sacrificially for years with much less security than a denominational missionary, and when illness, discouragement, or age forces him home, there is no

one to replace him. The impact of his ministry is lost. The denomination in this case would send out a replacement, making it economically and spiritually more efficient.

A unity of denominational churches is better able to secure funds necessary for such things as colleges, missions beyond the local city, and publishing houses. Through unified effort, the people are better able to use their spiritual gifts. The one called to preach can find a superintendent who will lead him to a church. The missionary can go to the field without undue worry about his support—in sickness and in health.

There is room within the denominational framework for the teacher or professor, the printer, the construction man, the musician, and the writer. People of every economic strata can find the church that fits their needs without changing vital doctrines.

It is hard to think of an independent church that was strong a generation ago that is still strong today. However, one rapidly thinks of several large denominational churches that have been strong for generations.

While a denominational structure forces one into budgets and subjection outside the local church, it has established its stability across the years. Denominational churches do not depend on, nor are they subject to, a single, strong leader. Yes, I can think of a few independent superchurches whose pastors go far and wide declaring that independence. However, I have seen hundreds of independent churches which had good beginnings with strong pastors, but today rundown buildings bear silent witness of their transiency. There was a time in the last 50 years when they wanted to reach out, but they had no guidance. As a result, they turned in and never reached beyond the local town and the local church.

I have seen denominational churches fail, but my studies show that their chances of growth and endurance are better. There is a modern Paul or John to bail them out of their problems. Their vision is worldwide, and they meet the spiritual needs of their people.

I asked a youth what his doctrine was that declared his independence from any denominational outreach. He answered that he had no doctrine.

I asked him if he believed in the blood-bought gift of our Lord Jesus Christ—our most important Christian doctrine. He tried to explain that he *did* believe in salvation, but did *not* believe in any denominational doctrine. As his explanation progressed, so did my realization that his spiritual mission had few outreaches beyond his local church. I saw the weakness of his stand, and the stability of my own denomination. 



by Raymond C. Kratzer

HOW TO HOLD A CONGREGATION WITHOUT A ROPE

The delivering of a sermon is a challenging procedure in which the man of God seeks to convey God's message that has been burned into his heart during the past week. When he stands before his people; he may be conscious that a great variety of situations clamour for the attention of his hearers. Some have come from a week of frustrations. Others may be struggling with hard-to-make decisions. Sorrow may have invaded the lives of others, and they have come to church to find solace.

Amid the myriad of distracting circumstances, God's servant stands to bring a whole congregation to the wonderful Christ who is able to solve every problem and bring meaning to every situation. This greatest of challenges must be met with effective speaking, touched by the Spirit of God.

The genius of public speaking is an elusive quality which needs to be constantly sharpened and improved. This involves the use of the voice with all of its expres-

sive cadences, as well as the implementation of every part of one's personality.

Many persons produce satisfactory results in their particular occupation through the skillful use of their hands. The carpenter can build a house or a piece of furniture and experience a degree of excellence. The artist can visualize the beauty he conceives as he deftly places the paint upon the canvas, creating a masterpiece.

The materials out of which a preacher produces results include ideas, figures of speech, facts, similies, illustrative material, and many other entities. The instrument through which he molds these items is personality and the way he projects it is through the medium of speech. His mannerisms, eye contact, and facial expressions are important, but the most vital instrument in the total production is the voice. The flow of his words, the content of his message, and the manner in which it is

delivered will make all the difference in the world as to its effectiveness.

The Bible says that God has chosen through the foolishness of preaching to save the world (1 Cor. 1:21). If this is deemed so important in the mind of God, then the preacher ought to consider carefully every ingredient that goes into a sermon in order to make it a vehicle of power to mold the lives of people for good.

When a minister stands up in front of his audience to deliver a sermon, he has an invaluable opportunity to influence a number of people for 20 to 30 minutes. Often destiny lurks within the framework of his remarks as sensitive souls listen to him. The choir may have sung beautifully, the soloist may have thrilled the hearts of people, but unconsciously they await the spiritual treat they have anticipated all week from God's servant. If the message is poorly given, inadequately designed, or untouched by the Holy Spirit because of insufficient time in prayer and preparation, the service may end with disappointment and possible disillusionment.

In the December (1979) issue of *Time* magazine an article was titled: "American Preaching: A Dying Art?" It told about a survey made by George Plagenz of the Cleveland Press who visited many churches in the past two years, and rated the sermons on a "one- to three-star" basis. He said he found only two preachers worth three stars.

The article indicated that one of the problems with poor preaching was "poor preparation." It gave as a rule of thumb for minimal preparation "an hour in the study for each minute in the pulpit."

Many things must be considered if the preacher is to rate more than one "star" for his efforts. He must be alert to the many facets of effective preaching and strive, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to regain the important place the pulpit should have.

Every public speaker must be aware of the interest span of people. This varies from person to person depending upon many things. Some members of a congregation would listen with interest to their pastor no matter what he said. Others would find their minds wandering far afield, if the tone of his voice or the lack of luster in his preaching failed to stimulate them. Others would find certain messages very interesting regardless of the way they were put together. But on the whole there are certain guidelines to follow so that most of the congregation can be held without a rope—this is to say, their interest should be maintained for at least 30 minutes. Let us look in depth at some of the rules which apply.

1. Tone and volume of the voice are very important, and the use of microphones and public address systems has greatly improved this aspect of public speaking. People will involuntarily be disenchanted with a minister if they do not hear distinctly what he is saying. The Word emphasizes repeatedly that if we have ears to hear we should hear. I am sure the main intent of this admonition is that people should *heed* what is being said. On the other hand, if they have not *understood* because the message is not heard, they are not to be blamed altogether for their lack of obedience. One of the finest compliments any minister can have is, "Our

preacher speaks so distinctly that we can understand every word he says."

2. Eye contact is also important. A minister should not consider the audience as an impersonal group. He should speak to people—to individuals. It is helpful if he looks at a certain person for a short time as he speaks, and then shifts his glance to another, then another and another. During a message a pastor should have looked at almost every individual in the congregation for a few moments. The phenomenon of "eye contact" is amazing. No matter how many persons are in an audi-

A pastor stands before his people as the oracle of God. Discipline in thought, in preparation, and in performance should imbue every message.

ence, if you look at someone for a few seconds, he is conscious of this and senses that you are interested in him. If you are too bound to your notes, or if you look over the audience at some impersonal thing, people will become restive and begin to shift, and your message may fall by the wayside.

If in the body of the sermon the pastor recalls a pertinent episode with a certain member of the church, he can say with benefit: "I remember talking to Jim Jones last week and hearing him tell of a wonderful answer to prayer." While this is being said, the pastor looks at Jim and the audience immediately has a sense of empathy in this narrative of someone they know.

The eyes are the windows of the soul, and there is nothing so meaningful in dialog or in preaching as to have the warm reflection of people in these sensitive orbs which God placed on our faces.

3. Awareness of the attention span is imperative to effective preaching. Since it varies from individual to individual we should find a happy medium and plan our preaching accordingly. With this in mind, well-planned sermons become more productive. We need to learn what makes people tick, and how their attention span can be recharged, so they will absorb the content of the message and feel its impact upon their hearts and lives.

4. One of the finest ways to maintain a high interest level is to use illustrative material. Jesus was the Master Preacher, and the Bible says, "never spake he without a parable." He knew the workings of the human mind and its inability to absorb deep theological truths unless many windows were put into the discourse. One of the greatest messages on salvation found in Sacred Writ is Luke 15. As you read this chapter you will discover it is one story after another. The theological content is minimal, but we cannot easily forget the stories or the truths they illustrate.

An alert pastor will not get so lost in his preaching that he does not notice the dull look on the faces in his

audience and the fact that he is losing his hold. If he has captured them in his opening remarks, he will want to hold them until the conclusion so he might drive them to a decision. To go beyond the climax of a sermon is a tragedy and a waste of people's time. The excellence of a fine message may be dissipated by lack of perceptiveness at this point.

Assuming that the attention span of the average individual is not more than five minutes, what can be done to renew alertness when it begins to sag? You could ring a bell, or pound the pulpit with your fist, or clap your hands, but this would probably only shift attention to the noise you were making rather than to your message. People may even lose the thread of your discourse. Why not try what Jesus did? Tell a story!

In a 20-minute sermon, it is not overdoing it to have at least four illustrations, some from life experiences and some from the Bible. If this has not been your design, try it!

If you are alert to the loosening of the cords that bind a congregation to your trend of thought, watch what happens when you say, "I remember a certain individual who had a most unique experience . . ." (Then tell the story.) You will be amazed how people's eyes open wider, they sit up a little straighter, and if you could be near them, you would possibly observe them breathing a little more lightly. When you finish relating the incident, then drive home a spiritual truth. The glue of illustration will cement it in the minds and hearts of people.

Wholesome humor is a good device to recapture attention. If people can laugh a little during a 20-minute sermon, it will open up their biological channels until more oxygen will be dispersed into their mental machinery. I am sure Jesus knew the power of humor. You cannot read some of the illustrations He used without realizing that they produced laughter in His audience. For example, the story of the man who made the excuse that because he had married a wife, he could not accept an invitation to supper (Luke 14:20).

Children in an audience ought not to be neglected. If they can be interested, you can be sure some vital truths will lodge in the hearts of the most intelligent persons in your congregation. I considered it the greatest compliment in my ministry when a young lad or a young lass came up to me after the service and said: "I enjoyed your sermon, it was so interesting."

The minister's anecdotes, stories, life experiences should all be in good taste. He must be careful not to insinuate something that might embarrass a person in his congregation. A layperson told me that her pastor sometimes illustrated so pointedly that one could not help feeling he might use them derogatorily in some other place when he was preaching. He would say: "I once had a Sunday School superintendent in one of my churches who did this or that," and then go on to relate an incident that implicated this person derogatorily. I am sure he was only trying to shed light upon a spiritual truth, but in so doing he muddied the waters for at least one person in his congregation.

Courtesy, tact, and consideration for people must always temper everything a minister says from the pulpit.

This fulcrum should never be a place where he takes undue advantage of his listeners who have no opportunity to dialog with him.

5. Appropriate use of object lessons can hold an audience also. On the parable of the 10 virgins, interest could be heightened by having a facsimile of the kind of lamp used in that far-off day, showing its limited capacity for oil and the necessity of having an adequate resource for refilling.

One of the most dramatic illustrations of faith in my experience happened when I was a lad and Dr. Melza Brown was my pastor at Denver First Church. He called his son, Harold, to the platform and asked him to climb up on the pulpit. Dr. Brown went off the platform and stood in front of the pulpit and said to his small son: "Jump into my arms." Harold jumped into his father's arms without hesitancy. That we should not be afraid to obey our Heavenly Father when He asks us to do something, even though it may take a leap of faith was aptly demonstrated. Our confidence in our God was strengthened.

Other factors may distract people in a church service. An observant pastor will do his best to correct them so his preaching will have maximum effect. For example, the temperature of a room can add to or take from concentration on the message. A stuffy room dulls the minds of the listeners.

An inadequate nursery for babies and small children may diminish church attendance because parents find it difficult to worship, and others are bothered by excessive noise and crying. Such situations distract and loosen the hold of a sermon on people's minds.

A choir sitting behind a pastor while he preaches can either add or subtract. If they are trained to listen alertly and keep their eyes on him, it could add to his message as well as to augment human interest. On the other hand, if choir members shift around a lot, find opportunity to whisper to each other, or look bored and disinterested, this can short-circuit the attention of people in the congregation. It will take a superhuman effort on the part of the preacher to overcome such a situation.

A pastor should be aware of the choir and not neglect them in his preaching time. It is not beside the point for him to turn around occasionally and allow his sermon to be personalized to them for a few sentences.

A pastor's attire or grooming may detract from a message by fragmenting the attention of the listener, especially if the attire is "way out!" Certain habit patterns such as preaching with hands in pockets, or a rigid grip on both sides of the pulpit, may divert from his message. Such idiosyncrasies can, unfortunately, slacken the rope that binds God's message to the hearer.

A pastor stands before his people as the oracle of God. Discipline in thought, in preparation, and in performance should imbue every message. Energy expended in building a sermon will not be lost if the preacher is alert to rules for holding his audience's attention. God will honor such diligence by adding the powerful touch of His Holy Spirit to a "workman's" efforts because he has done his best to be effective in holding forth the Word of Life.



Holiness— Love It and Live It

By Bud Reedy

Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Several years before John Wesley's time, a book about holiness was receiving a great deal of attention in Britain. Its title: *Holiness, the Only Way to Happiness*, by Thomas Brooks.* This thick volume of 58 sermons was widely read. The purpose of this treatise, said Brooks, was to encourage his readers:

. . . to study holiness, to love holiness, and to be restless till you have experienced the power, and the life, and the sweet of holiness in your own lives and heart.

Those few words jumped off the page and into my imagination. It occurred to me that, as preachers, these three elements must be present if we are to preach holiness effectively.

First, we must study holiness. Our study of holiness doctrine cannot be finished when the degree is completed and the diploma is tacked to the wall. The study of holiness should be a lifelong pursuit. Fortunately, advocates of this distinctive doctrine have been prolific writers. There is, therefore, a wealth of print on the subject of holiness to be studied and enjoyed. There are books about its history. *From the Apostles to Wesley: Christian Perfection in Historical Perspective*, by Dr. William M. Greathouse, and *Christian Perfection and American Methodism*, by John L. Peters, are extremely helpful in understanding the doctrine's history and devel-

opment. *Exploring Christian Holiness*, by Taylor, Bassett, et al., and *Entire Sanctification*, by J. Kenneth Grider, are among the recent titles that deserve our attention. These are books that approach the subject from a theological perspective. Richard Howard's *Newness of Life* and Mildred Wynkoop's *A Theology of Love* are outstanding treatments of holiness theology. Every holiness pastor should set personal goals for the continual study of holiness, historically, theologically, and devotionally. After all, Paul's advice to young Timothy was, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15, NASB).

Second, we must love the doctrine of holiness in order to preach it effectively. A dear saint in our local church never fails to testify of her "love for the holiness way." I have been called to preach holiness . . . "to Christianize Christianity" as Wesley so aptly said it. I do so willingly because I love holiness. I believe it is biblical. I believe it is what God requires of His people.

I've seen it work in the lives of my people. I believe it equips them to live the victorious, mature Christian life.

Holiness preaching is so much more meaningful and effective when done by one who loves the doctrine. The one who loves the holiness way

will want to preach it as winsomely as possible.

Finally, we must wrestle with the reality of holiness on a personal level. Holiness is to be both preached and lived. Pastors must model holy living for their people. Paul realized the crucial importance of modeling when he shared with the believers in Thessalonica: "You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you may work in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2:10-12, NASB).

The way we pastors conduct our living can be strong proof of the validity of the holiness message. Our people will be attracted to holy living as well as powerful holiness preaching. The two go together. Like Brooks, we holiness preachers must be restless until we have experienced the power, and the life, and the "sweet" of holiness in our lives. This pursuit is a serious one because it affects not only our personal piety but the spiritual growth of those whom we shepherd.

The challenge for those involved in holiness ministry becomes obvious. We are to strive to grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually for the cause of holiness. 

*London: Crips, Sims, and Mortlock, 1662.

WE ARE MOVING AGAIN

by Frances Simpson

Thank you for the lovely parsonage which we have enjoyed to the fullest as we lived and entertained within its walls.

Thank you for the times you've invited us to share food and fellowship in the sanctuary of your homes.

Thank you for the vegetables and fruit that you have brought from your gardens and fields.

Thank you for the cards and little gifts which said, "We love you; we are praying for you."

Thank you for your cooperation in the many projects, programs, and plans that we have shared together these years.

Thank you for being interested in our children—for every prayer, every word of encouragement offered in their behalf.

Receive your new pastor's wife with open arms. Accept her as she is and make her better because of your love. Welcome her children, boost her husband. Lift her up daily to the throne of God in prayer.

The above is taken from an article I inserted in the church newsletter as our family was preparing to move to a new pastorate. A few weeks later, after we had settled into our new location, I wrote the following to our new congregation:

Our furniture is in place, the dishes in the cupboard, the linen in the closet, food on the shelves, the boxes almost gone. We've begun the process of making a new home.

Home is a combination of many things—shared experiences, built-in memories, lots of laughter and a few tears. It means having friends over, cooking hamburgers on the patio, putting up a Christmas tree. It means picking a rose from our garden, enjoying sunsets, seeing the snowfall, taking neighborhood walks.

It means family devotions under this roof, entertaining evangelists, having the teens over.

Building a home takes time, and we've begun this wonderful adventure again. Thank you for making it easy.

Life can change so quickly. In a matter of days my husband and I moved from a familiar house surrounded by family and friends to a new one, leaving behind our son and his bride and getting our daughter ready to attend college 700 miles away. We transferred from a congregation where we knew every name to shoulder a new church where we knew no one. From a town where I could find my way around we moved to one where I would get lost for sure. We left a district where we knew most of the pastors and wives to join one where we were strangers.

Moving is not something peculiar to pastors' families, for Americans have always been a restless, mobile people. A recent newspaper article stated that one-fifth of our population is due to relocate within any one-year period. From country to town; then from the city to the suburb they go. The reasons are many—work, seeking a slower life-style, trying to escape brutalities of man and nature.

We in the parsonage usually move for one reason. Like Abraham of old, we seek to follow the call of God. We may, on occasion, misinterpret His voice, but so did Abraham a time or two.

From a survey of ministers' wives on one of our districts I gathered some interesting information. These ladies had been ministers' wives for an average of 15 years and had served an average of four churches. Almost one-third of their moves had been out of state. More than 98 percent of the moves were rated good. Only one was rated definitely bad.

I asked: What were the major problems caused by moving? The severing of friendships by both parents

and children topped the list of answers. School adjustments for the children came in second. Next was the difficulty of learning a new congregation and a new neighborhood. Other things were listed such as finances, finding a new doctor and dentist, emotional stress, the culture shock of moving from country to town or vice versa.

I also asked: How can the pastor's family successfully master the problems associated with moving? Several helpful suggestions came from their answers. First of all, we must commit each move to God, believing that it is in His divine will for us at that time. Secondly, we must, in faith, accept the change as a challenge. High on the list was the involvement of children in the move—visiting their schools, finding out about the transfer of credits, discovering the recreational opportunities available. Some suggested involving children in placing furniture and decorating the new house.

Now that I have been a pastor's wife for 28 years and am a few months into our fifth pastorate, I'd like to suggest the following rules for making a successful move.

1. Leave the old congregation behind. Someone has probably already been selected to take up where you left off. Let her do it. Make it easy by breaking ties as graciously as possible. You will exchange cards with a few the first Christmas and may even count a family or two among your lifelong friends, but make the contacts few.

2. Embrace your new church. Though the buildings

may not be up to par, though the members be many or few, let the people know you love them. They will love you in return.

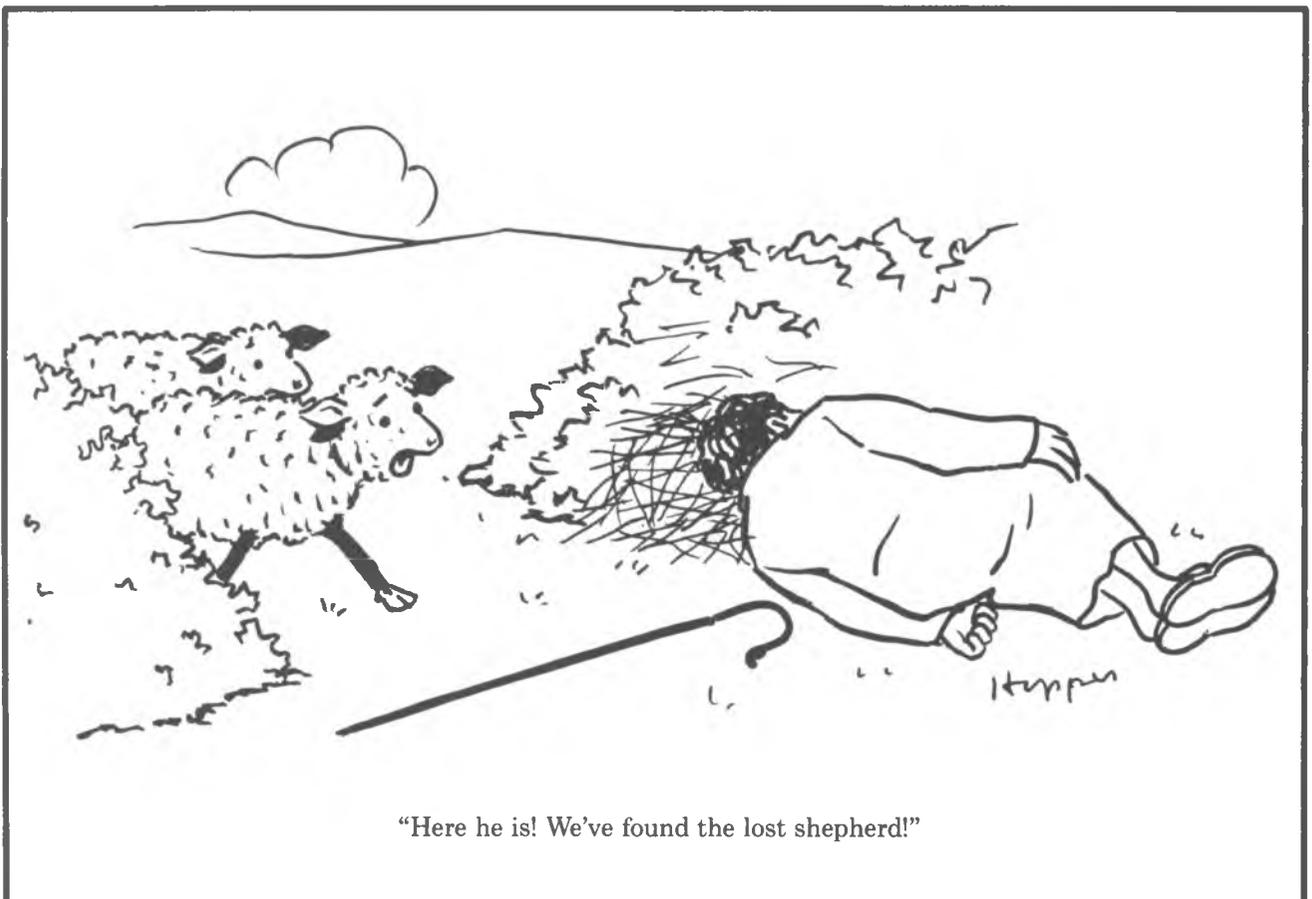
3. Don't keep referring to the past. This includes church buildings, people, associates, and districts. Your people will smile the first time you call the new church by the name of your former one. They will probably ask how you conducted a particular program in your former parish; but as quickly as possible, live in the present.

4. Learn your people by name. In a large congregation this becomes a chore, but work at it. Churches with directories will gladly send you a copy before you move. Some of these are pictorial and can be valuable tools.

5. Encourage your husband. If he is like mine, for the first six months he wonders why he moved. Though he knows he prayed through about the matter and that God's will is at work, he leans toward the best of yesterday and hesitates at the big job ahead. He needs reassurance from you as well as from God. This period will pass.

6. Learn your town and the surrounding area. Study city and state maps. Find out the various areas in which your people are located. Make a list of the local attractions, museums, and nearby vacation spots. Utilize these in your family outings and as visitors come to see your new home.

7. Serve the Lord with gladness. This rule works whether we are in our first church or our tenth. It will hold us steady in Ohio or Texas, Africa or Alaska. 🐑



John Wesley and Social Holiness

by Bob Black

Professor of Religion, Bartlesville Wesleyan College

When John Wesley and his Methodist preachers asked themselves God's purpose in raising up their movement, they decided it was "to reform the nation, more particularly the church" and "to spread scriptural holiness over the land."¹ The reform Wesley sought was social as well as spiritual; in fact, he thought it impossible to separate the two. "The gospel of Christ knows no religion but social," he wrote, "no holiness but social holiness."² Negatively, that realization kept him from the lures of the mystics and the religious Lone Rangers. Positively, it led him to an active concern for the welfare of the whole man. Consider his attitude toward slavery, for example.

Few in or out of the church condemned slavery during the first three quarters of the 18th century. Wesley's friend and fellow evangelist George Whitefield spoke out against the *mistreatment* of "the poor Ethiopians" but found justification for the institution of slavery in the Old Testament! He bought 50 for his orphanage in Georgia because "it is plain, to a demonstration, that hot countries cannot be cultivated without negroes."³ Besides, he hoped to convert them and their posterity to Christianity.

Wesley did not consider slavery a proper mode of evangelistic outreach, however. Long an opponent of the slave trade, he called national attention to it in 1774 with the publication of *Thoughts upon Slavery*, a graphic argument against the legitimacy of the practice. When Granville Sharp organized a Society for the Abolition of Slavery in England, Wesley was quick to endorse the effort. He pledged full support, offered tactical advice for the crusade, and noted while his Methodists in the West Indies were freeing their slaves and urging others to do the same, he favored Parliamentary abolition of the slave trade because it struck "at the root of the problem."⁴

In what appears to have been his last letter, written only four days before his death, Wesley encouraged

Anglican Evangelical William Wilberforce in his legislative campaign for abolition.

Unless the divine power has raised you up to be as *Athanasius contra mundum* (Athanasius against the world), I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise in opposing that execrable villianly which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils; but if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? Oh, be not weary in well-doing. Go on, in the name of God and in the power of His might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it.⁵

When in 1807 the victory was won and the slave trade abolished in the Empire, much of the credit was due to the Evangelical Revival in general and Wesley in particular. The same may be said of prison reform. John Howard, the Father of English Prison Reform, met Wesley in 1787 and went away "determined that [he] would pursue [his] work with more alacrity than ever."⁶ Wesley who began visiting prisoners during his student days at Oxford, had been working for prison reform throughout his ministry.

Wesleyan reform in other areas deserves mention. The 18th century was England's "Gin Age," and Wesley's opposition to the distilled liquors could not have been more vocal or determined. They were "liquid fire," their dealers "poisoners-general." On the grounds that the liquor traffic wasted almost half of England's grain annually, grain that Wesley coveted for the hungry, he urged Prime Minister William Pitt to champion a bill making distilling a felony.⁷

Methodist relief efforts for the poor began as early as 1740, just two years after Aldersgate. An interest-free emergency loan fund was created, a "poorhouse" (wid-

IN THE BEGINNING . . .

Joining a church is (according to Sandra and Edward McNulty in *Spinning Your Wheels for Jesus*, River House) sometimes like joining a religious chain gang. A pledge is usually made to be a diligent and faithful worker, giving one's time and talents freely. Indeed, many people claim if you don't give a newcomer work to do immediately, he will go to a busier church that "needs" him. And this is so true, for no one wants *not* to be needed.

Thus it was that in the beginning was a Committee. And the Committee was good. The Committee was fruitful and multiplied into many committees. Subcommittees were formed. They met and then met again with the Committee to tell them what they met about, what they did, what they're doing now, and what

they're going to do. The next meeting will be to decide on when to meet. Then we'll decide to meet to decide on what to decide to do. Then we'll decide to do what we decided on. If we decide not to do what we had decided to do, we'll meet again to decide on what not to do. If we do what we decided on, we will then meet again to decide on whether or not it was meet and right so to do.

Idle hands are the devil's playground. The goal is to keep everyone doing and meeting and deciding. It keeps them off the streets. (And that's certainly not the place for a good Christian to be caught!) Remember that salvation comes through *faith*—and we're going to *work* like everything to prove it!

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ows' home) instituted, a dispensary established, a workshop organized, and schools begun for poor children. It has been estimated that Wesley himself gave away £30,000 during his lifetime. Once he took pictures from his walls to raise money for a poor girl, and at the age of 81 he caught a "violent flux" by walking through ankle-deep snow for five days to collect £200 for London indigents.

Wesley's concern for the rights and economic well-being of the common man led him to call for agrarian reform in the widely dispersed tract, "On the Present Scarcity of Provisions." Land that had once provided homes and income for hundreds of small farmers had been consolidated into large holdings by the wealthy gentry, in Wesley's view "perhaps as mischievous a monopoly as was ever introduced into these kingdoms."⁸ The open English countryside had become a maze of fencerows. These "enclosures" drove families out and prices up, adding to the abuses of the Industrial Revolution. Wesley sought legislative controls on the size of farms, proposing an annual limit of £100.

Not all reformers were evangelical Christians, of course. Nor were all Evangelicals united in social reform. But John Wesley was both an Evangelical and a reformer, and for him there was a causal connection. In a letter to Dr. Conyers Middleton, parts of which were later printed as "A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity," he

posed the question, "Who is a Christian indeed?" His own answer: one who conforms to the image of God, which is love. The Christian's love is a "universal, disinterested love," which not only produces right affections but is also "productive of all right actions. It leads him to an earnest and steady discharge of all social offices. . . . It constrains him to do all possible good, of every kind, to all men. . . ."⁹ That brand of genuine Christianity was evident in his own life, and through preaching, persuading, and pamphleteering, he urged others to do it as well. When John the Evangelist died in 1791, he was lauded in the national press for his political and social reforms.

One of the ironies of the modern holiness movement has been the tendency of individuals and churches who stand in the tradition of John Wesley to claim their spiritual but not their social heritage. For Wesley, the gospel was indivisible. His was a warmed heart and a ready hand.

NOTES

1. *The Works of John Wesley* (Zondervan Edition), 8:299.
2. *Ibid.*, 14:321.
3. Luke Tyerman, *The Life of the Rev. George Whitefield*, 2:272-73.
4. *The Letters of John Wesley*, John Telford, ed., 8:6, 17, 275-76.
5. *Wesley's Works*, 13:153.
6. Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Reverend John Wesley*, 3:495.
7. *Wesley's Letters*, 8:234-36.
8. *Wesley's Works*, 11:56.
9. *Ibid.*, 10:67-69.

FISHING

by John M. Drescher

Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen. And lo, there were many fish in the waters all around. In fact the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry.

Week after week, month after month, and year after year, these who called themselves fishermen met in meetings and talked about their call to fish, the abundance of fish, and how they might go about fishing.

Year after year they carefully defined what fishing means, defended fishing as an occupation, and declared that fishing is always to be a primary task of fishermen.

Continually they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions of fishing. Further they said, "The fishing industry exists by fishing as fire exists by burning."

They loved slogans such as "Fishing is the task of every fisherman," "Every fisherman is a fisher," and "A fisherman's outpost for every fisherman's club."

They sponsored special meetings called "Fishermen's Campaigns" and "The Month for Fishermen to Fish." They sponsored costly nationwide and worldwide congresses to discuss and promote fishing and hear about all the ways of fishing such as the new fishing equipment, fish calls, and whether any new bait was discovered.

These fishermen built large, beau-

tiful buildings called "Fishing Headquarters." The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman and every fisherman should fish. One thing they didn't do, however, was fish.

In addition to meeting regularly they organized a board to send out fishermen to other places where there were many fish. All the fishermen seemed to agree that what is needed is a board which could challenge fishermen to be faithful in fishing.

The board was formed by those who had the great vision and courage to speak about fishing, to define fishing, and to promote the idea of fishing in faraway streams and lakes where many other fish of different colors lived.

Also the board hired staffs and appointed committees and held many meetings to define fishing, and to decide what new streams should be thought about. But the staff and committee members did not fish.

Large, elaborate, and expensive training centers were built whose original and primary purpose was to teach fishermen how to fish. Over the years courses were offered on the needs of fish, the nature of fish, where to find fish, the psychological reactions of fish, and how to approach and feed fish.

Some spent much study and travel to learn the history of fishing in the centuries past. They lauded the faithful fishermen of years before

who handed down the idea of fishing.

Further the fishermen built large printing houses to publish fishing guides. Presses were kept busy day and night to produce materials solely devoted to fishing methods, equipment, and programs to arrange and to encourage meetings to talk about fishing.

Many who felt the call to be fishermen responded. They were commissioned and sent to fish. But like the fishermen back home they engaged in all kinds of other occupations.

They built power plants to pump water for fish and tractors to plow new waterways. They made all kinds of equipment to travel here and there to look at fish hatcheries. Some also said they wanted to be part of the fishing party, but they felt called to furnish fishing equipment.

After one stirring meeting on "The Necessity for Fishing" one young fellow left the meeting and went fishing. The next day he reported he had caught two outstanding fish. He was honored for his excellent catch and scheduled to visit all the big meetings possible to tell how he did it.

So he quit his fishing in order to have time to tell about the experience to the other fishermen. He was also placed on the Fishermen's General Board as a person having considerable experience.

Now it's true that many of the fishermen sacrificed and put up with all

(Continued on page 55)



In the "Preacher's Magazine"

50 Years Ago

THE PURE IN HEART

Text: Matthew 5:8

I. ANALYZE THE TEXT

- a. The words of Jesus, their significance.
- b. "Blessed"—Wesley says that *blessed* could be properly translated "happy."
- c. "Pure." See other associate scriptures (1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:22; Jas. 1:27; Heb. 1:1-4).
- d. The secular world believes in purity.

Illustration. Advertising signs read "pure whiskey," "pure beer," "pure wine," "pure baking powder," "pure food."

- e. God can make things pure if the devil can.

II. THE SIN QUESTION; SIN IN TWO FORMS

- a. All sin is impurity.
- b. Original, or inherited sin.
- c. Actual sins, or, transgressing God's law.

III. THE PROCESS OF SALVATION

- a. Orderly: forgiveness of actual sins.
- b. Some evidences of sins forgiven.
 - 1. The sinner *stops* sinning.
 - 2. The world trend taken out of the heart (1 John 2:15-16).
 - 3. A love for the souls of others.
 - 4. Desire to be holy.

IV. SANCTIFICATION MAKES THE HEART PURE AND REMOVES ORIGINAL OR INBRED SIN

- a. Sin in the regenerate. All churches agree and experience confirms.

V. THE POWER OF PURITY

- a. Purity means added spiritual strength.
- b. Purity means an enlarged spiritual vision.
- c. Purity means moral courage.
- d. Purity means success in soul winning.
- e. Purity means *the soul shall see God.*

—C. E. Cornell,
1929

PAID-UP POLICY

"Layman are often inconsistent in requiring a standard of living of the preacher that his income will not provide. They expect him to appear well on

all occasions and to keep his home and family in good trim. . . . If the preacher overspends he is ruined, and if he asks for more money he is misjudged. But whatever happens . . . the preacher is wise who practices the apostolic role of 'Owe no man, but love.'"

—J. B. Chapman
June 1933

EASY BOOKS

"It must be true that the ease with which we get some things prevents us from appreciating them. . . . Never have books been so easy to secure. While some books remain unreasonably high in price, one may now, since the advent of the Dollar Reprint Edition, obtain books on almost any subject at \$1.00 a copy. Almost every small town and hamlet has its public library where books may be borrowed free of charge."

—P. H. Lunn
June 1933

25th ANNIVERSARY SLOGAN

"The slogan (for the 25th Anniversary of the Church of the Nazarene) suggested by General Superintendent Williams and adopted by the committee is, 'Speak unto the people that they go forward' (Exodus 14:15).

"We can 'go forward' in spite of every obstacle; the financial depression cannot stop us from 'going forward' in spiritual things."

—November 1833

IT WAS EVER SO

"The Christian belief of God comes out of modern doubt unscathed and stands in a clearer light after any investigation."

—Basil Miller
December 1933

MORE RELIGION NEEDED

"Our government rests on religion. It is from that source that we derive our reverence for truth and justice, for equality and liberty, and for the rights of mankind. . . . The government of a country never gets ahead of the religion of a country. There is no way which we can substitute the authority of law for the virtue of man. Peace, justice, humanity, charity—these cannot be legis-

lated into being. They are the results of a Divine Grace." "We do not need more national development, we need more spiritual development. . . . We do not need more government, we need more religion. . . . We do not need more of the things that are seen; we need more of the things that are not seen."

—President Calvin Coolidge
January 1933 (Selected)

STILL AND STAGNANT

"Frances Willard received the blessing (of sanctification) in Evanston and was called to Lima, New York, to preside over Genesee Wesleyan Seminary. She was advised by a Methodist doctor of divinity not to testify there on account of the Free Methodists. It was cruel advice. She afterward wrote, 'I kept still until I soon found I had nothing in particular to keep still about.'"

—J. B. Chapman
February 1933

THE SECRET OF THE CALLED

"To simply say, 'I have received a call to preach,' may . . . start the church machinery so that a place for service is opened, but it does not express that awful session with God when the soul and heart, mind and spirit were taken apart, lay on the altar, shattered and torn, stripped of all self, and well-nigh separated from all normal human living. Nor does it express the new man that emerges from that session with God with a new vision, a new way to heaven for him, a new claim of God forced on all his abilities and powers. It does not speak his new alliance with God nor the closeness of the Spirit's presence. These are things that cannot be told so that the other fellow will understand. It is a secret so deep in the heart that words are wholly inadequate for its expression."

—Paul S. Hill
February 1933

LETTER TO EDITOR

"You can count on me for a lifetime subscription (*Preacher's Magazine*). The inspiration I received from the May issue was worth the price of a ten-year's subscription."

—Rev. J. B. Roote
Livingston, Kentucky

OUR TIME OF TESTING

by Stacey Harrison

*Second-place Winner, 1982 Guideposts
Youth Writing Contest*

The results of the vote were read by the secretary of the church board. Looking immediately at my mom, I saw her head drop to her chest. I remember a lot of ringing in my ears after the announcement, and to this day I don't remember how I got from my pew to the parsonage. I only remember my parents standing at the back of the sanctuary, shaking hands and smiling as they had done every Sunday for over six years. We were voted out, or as Dad put it, "We just didn't get enough votes to stay." Out—by only three votes.

At the parsonage, my sister and two brothers and I sat at the dining room table waiting . . . waiting. . . . It seemed like an eternity before my parents came in. We kids searched their faces for a clue as to what our future would hold now. First, we just looked at each other in shock and disbelief. Then, Mom put her face in her hands and cried.

After the vote, we had been told that we had to be out of the parsonage in three months. Mom and Dad began sending resumes out across the districts in our denomination, but there just didn't seem to be any place for us to serve. The board members did allow us to stay in the parsonage three months longer.

I had always loved and feared God. It was the way I was taught in our family. We are very close and really do enjoy being with each other. Many times I had seen my parents call on the sick, comfort the bereaved, and leave us in order to carry out their pastoral duties. I just could not understand how these same people could vote against my father. When they needed him, he was there. When they were out of work, he was

there. How could a loving God allow this to happen to us? I started blaming God. I got very angry at Him.

The whole school knew about our situation. Everybody knows everything in a small town. My senior year, my last year at high school, was coming up in the autumn. It was to be my greatest year. All of a sudden my whole world seemed to be falling to pieces. I decided that I hated school, church, people, and God. I decided to live my life all by myself, not really trusting anyone.

June came and we still had no assignment. Some members of the church were going on a trip and told my parents we could live in their mobile home. With only two bedrooms, it was rather uncomfortable for a family of six. Fortunately, Mom had a job, but she came home from work tired and depressed. Dad spent the entire day looking for work. Weekends he'd travel miles to preach at one of the churches in our district.

Never once did I hear my father blame anyone for our circumstances. He never changed in his attitude toward people or God. I would tell him, "Dad, you were the one who built the new \$80,000 parsonage for less than half that much. You did so much of the work yourself. You were the one who organized and remodeled the old church building. You were the one who helped the church raise the money and pay the bills . . . you . . . you." I would always end up crying and getting mad at him.

Even when he finally got some construction work and started a grading business on the side, I was angry at him because he graded the property for the new house for the associate minister

the church had called. I felt that the people there had no right asking my father to do something for them for free when they had done what they'd done to him. How could my father be so good? Especially when his daughter would rather have blown up the church than see it prosper.

We were barely making it on Mom's salary and things were not getting much better, so when school was out my older sister went to live with some friends from the church and I went to stay with my Grandfather Smith. He is the neatest grandfather in the whole world. He was a boy-preacher from Osage Okla., and preached for over 40 years. During my stay, he taught me many things.

Most of all, he talked about my attitude. He said that God knows what we go through and how it hurts, but He is more concerned about our attitudes. Our attitudes will either make or break us. If we didn't have the valleys and the trials then there would be no victories. No obstacles to work through. No life. No action. Grandfather made me see that my own father could love and hold no grudges because of Jesus Christ.

My grandfather really made me start changing my thoughts about people and things. He made me see that God didn't hate my father. Rather, He loved him and was teaching him things that would be a blessing to him and others later on.

During the months I was with Grandfather, I noticed he was losing weight and getting paler. Grandmother finally got him to see a doctor. The news was bad. He had inoperable and incurable cancer of the blood and bone marrow. I had to return home to my parents. A



Stacey Harrison

builder had let my parents rent one of his homes at half-price until we could find a house.

Grandfather was given four days to live. Again, I watched my parents closely. Never once did they panic. Oh, how I wished I could have that kind of control and confidence. Dad would always say, "Stacey, when you are going

through the hard places and it looks as though you have been given a bad deal, remember . . . there is always someone out there hurting more than you are."

It was amazing how God looked after us. When Mom didn't have the gas money to drive to see Grandfather, or we didn't know where the money would come from to pay for groceries, God would use someone to supply our needs. Dad's car quit running, and one of the members of the church found out and fixed it for free. Help was always sent just before it was too late. I had never seen this happen before.

Uncle Carl, who isn't even a Christian, called Mom and asked her if she believed what she had heard preached all her life. Mom said she did. Uncle Carl said, "Okay, I'm calling for the elders of the church to lay hands on Dad for his healing." Within 24 hours, over 40 people had gathered in that hospital room in Northridge, Calif. They sang songs, prayed, and had the faith to believe that my grandfather could be healed. That same night he sat up and even walked down the hospital corridor, looking for something to eat. The following Sunday, he was released from the hospital, the cancer in remission.

That day the entire family sat at Grandfather's feet and listened to one of the greatest sermons I have ever heard. As I sat and looked into my parents' faces, so serene and trusting, I thought: Even if I never have a home of my own or any sort of material wealth, I am really blessed. Being with my family and knowing that I am loved by God makes me wealthy indeed. I wouldn't trade my experiences with anyone. They are mine to keep, to remember and to learn from. I can learn to forgive and to keep going even when I don't feel like it.

This past year, my senior year, has been one of the greatest years of my life. I have learned something that isn't taught in textbooks. I have seen faith work. My attitude has become new. I know that I will face many more problems ahead, but now I have some real experiences to look back on and remember. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible. . . ." (Mark 9:23).

My parents are still without a church assignment. Our house is gone, our regular income is gone, our security in terms of material things is gone. But we are a family united and confident in God's Word and His truth. We are ready for the future, wherever He leads. 

WITNESS

by Milton Agnew

The assurance of "witness" is one of the magnificent blessings enjoyed by the child of God. Consider the dark halls of uncertainty, even despair, through which men must travel. David declared, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art *with* me."

Consider the daily challenges of life on every level. To this Jesus proclaims: "Lo, I am *with* you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Consider the aloneness of the unattached, the separated, the aged or the ill. "But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one *with* another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

But consider also the Lord's loneliness, His desire for fellowship, for communion, His seeking the warmth of friendship. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup *with* him, and he *with* me." Indeed, Jesus called the Twelve unto Him "that they might be *with* him."

The "Witness" of man with God, God with man, man with man is unique to the Christian faith. It satisfies one of the most compelling human needs. In its full and

satisfying reality it can be found in this life only in Christ.

But there is an even closer "witness" than that. A. T. Robertson in considering John 1:1-2: "the Word was with God" says, "though existing eternally with God the Logos was in perfect fellowship with God. *Pros* (a less common Greek term for "with") with the accusative presents a plane of equality and intimacy, face to face with each other." He continues, "In 1 John 2:1 we have a like use of *pros*: 'We have a Paraclete *with* the Father.'"

Note that in considering the marriage relationship, Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:14-15 uses the same pattern of intimacy to warn, "For what fellowship hath light *with* darkness?"

But the point of dramatic interest to us here is Paul's use of this same grammatical form in 2 Corinthians 5:8 where he declares that "to be absent from the body" is suddenly, at the very moment of death, "to be present *with* the Lord." Consider the intimacy, the closeness, even the sense of equality, since we are joint-heirs with Christ, since we too are "sons of God." It will far exceed the "witness" that we have with Him here.

It must have been in this realization that the blind Fanny Crosby wrote the striking words: "And I shall see Him—face to face!" 

Case Studies for Analysis and Reflection

THE DEATH OF FANNY GRIMES

When Rick Noble had to go into the city anyhow, he determined to stop and see Fanny Grimes at the hospital. She had been there off and on for the past two years. Rick wasn't comfortable about visiting in the hospital, but he reckoned few people from Lynn got into town who would go by to see her. The Grimeses lived on the outskirts of Lynn, and they also stayed on the edge of the congregation. Fanny and George had always been kind of independent folk; and while Rick had known them over a long period of time, he did not see them often. The Grimeses had owned a hardware store in Lynn, and George still worked for Lonnie Beane who bought him out five years ago. Since Fanny's illness, though, George worked only on Wednesdays and Saturdays. He was almost fully retired, probably 65 or so. Fanny must have been a couple of years younger.

After he made the business calls, Rick Noble parked and asked information services for her room number—502. Fanny looked pale, with machines and tubes, medicines and charts around her. She still greeted him with the usual, "Rick Noble! How's the family?" Rick tried to focus attention on her face, to pretend not noticing all the things in the room. "Fine. Gladys wanted to come with me, but I had some business to do. We're all fine. How are you feeling?"

"Oh, all right. Little dull pain here and there. They take good care of me here, though."

"Same kidney acting up?" asked Rick.

"I think it's worse than normal. They say some fluid gets around in my body and makes me feel worse than I have been. Did you see George outside?"

No, I didn't," Rick said. "Is he staying in town?"

A nurse whisked in, apologized for the interruption and asked Rick to step outside a few minutes. "Is he one of your sons?" she asked Fanny.

"No, he's a friend from Lynn, member of our church."

"I'll see you, Fanny. I'd better get on home," Rick said as he retreated toward the door.

"I wish you'd see George a minute, if you can spare the time," she called as he backed out. "And thanks for taking the time to come by."

"I sure hope you feel better soon," Rick waved goodbye; "I will look and see if he's outside."

George was sitting in the waiting room. Rick greeted him. "George, hi. I had to be in town anyhow, and I've been wanting to see you."

George motioned Rick to a chair. "Things aren't going so well."

"Fanny doesn't look good . . . all that equipment and the tubes don't help," Rick said.

"That's the dialysis machine. We have one at home. It's never even been used. I bought it for \$9,500 just last month. It takes the fluid out of her body, and they said we needed one. Then this . . ." George's voice trailed off.

"What. It didn't work?"

"I don't know. Never got to see. I called the City Equipment Company and they won't even buy it back. No, she just took a turn for the worse, and they said she better stay awhile here. Now Dr. Knowland says the fluid has gotten into her lungs, and she'll just have to stay here as long as she keeps breathing. He uses all kinds of fancy words, but it amounts to my decision. Do I take her home to die, or do I keep her here and let her just die slowly . . . maybe next week or maybe next month?" George lit one cigarette from another.

"If I take her home, it'll all be on me. It'll be quick and pretty sure to happen in a few days. If she stays here, the hospital will be taking care of her. She's got the pain, and it won't get any better in that department."

Rick offered George a cup of coffee. They found a little room next to the instant coffee dispenser.

"Fannie and I have been married almost 35 years—it'll be that on March 21. These last years have really been hard ones. You know she's been pretty sick for almost three years. Every two weeks, then every week, I had to bring her in to see Dr. Knowland. That was when things were going good. At bad times she had to stay here . . ."

"The nurse mentioned a son. I didn't know you had children." Rick ventured, and he had known the Grimeses a long time.

"Yes, Tom and Bill . . . two boys . . . but they've been gone a long time now. Tom and his family live in Utah, a long piece from here. Bill never married. He works for Uncle Sam. We haven't seen either one for years. Tom writes every so often, or his wife, Hazel, does. Bill just sends us something every Christmas. You know, we've been together—Fanny and me—every Christmas was special. We took our trips after that buying rush. Told everybody we were doing inventory. Went all the way to the Gulf Coast one year. Now this . . . what should I do? Take her on home? Leave her here?"

"What do the doctors advise, George?" Rick stole a glance at his watch.

"They won't tell me. They say it's up to me. That machine at home won't help now, though. It's never even been used! And the company won't take it back. How do

you like that? If I take her home, she'll die quick. If she stays here it won't change much. Just take longer probably. I sure wish somebody would just come out and tell me one way or the other. What would you do if it was Gladys?"

"I don't know, George, I really don't."

"It wouldn't be so bad if there was some chance of her getting better. I don't know even if they've told her how bad it is. She acts like we will be going home soon, like the times before. Now it won't help though. Should I tell her?"

"George, you have been really close for a long time. You must know best what to do."

"It's a lot on my mind. I never had to make a choice like this before. Wish I had somebody to share it with. Doctors use fancy words, but I just know it amounts to my decision. What should I do?"

For Reflection

1. What are the central issues in this case?
2. Weigh carefully the comments of Fanny. What is her

question? What would she like to say to George? to Rick? Does she know she is going to die?

3. What decision does George have to make? Why is it so hard for him?

4. Why is our culture so prejudiced toward "antiseptic" death?

5. How would you rate the ministry effectiveness of Rick Noble? How could a church prepare laypersons for this type of ministry?

6. In what ways do your theological beliefs inform your solution to the problem of this case?

This case was prepared by Professor Louis Weeks of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation.

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A MASTER'S DEGREE

You are being appreciatively received in your new congregation. Your skills in counseling and teaching are being sought by increasing numbers of people. The senior pastor has several times mentioned how grateful he is for your presence on the staff and for your expertise in areas where he was formerly much overburdened. This work is absorbing a great deal of your time, evenings as well as days. Unexpectedly your wife

announces that she has decided to return to school to finish her degree and get an M.A. in special education. She has already applied for admission and been accepted. When you ask how your two preschool children are to be cared for, she says that she assumes that you will share housework and child care responsibilities with her, since you can't afford the expense of household help or baby-sitters.

A) How would you respond to your wife's announcement?

B) Your objective or purpose?

C) Your rationale or underlying theory?

Case number 484 from the "Readiness for Ministry Project."

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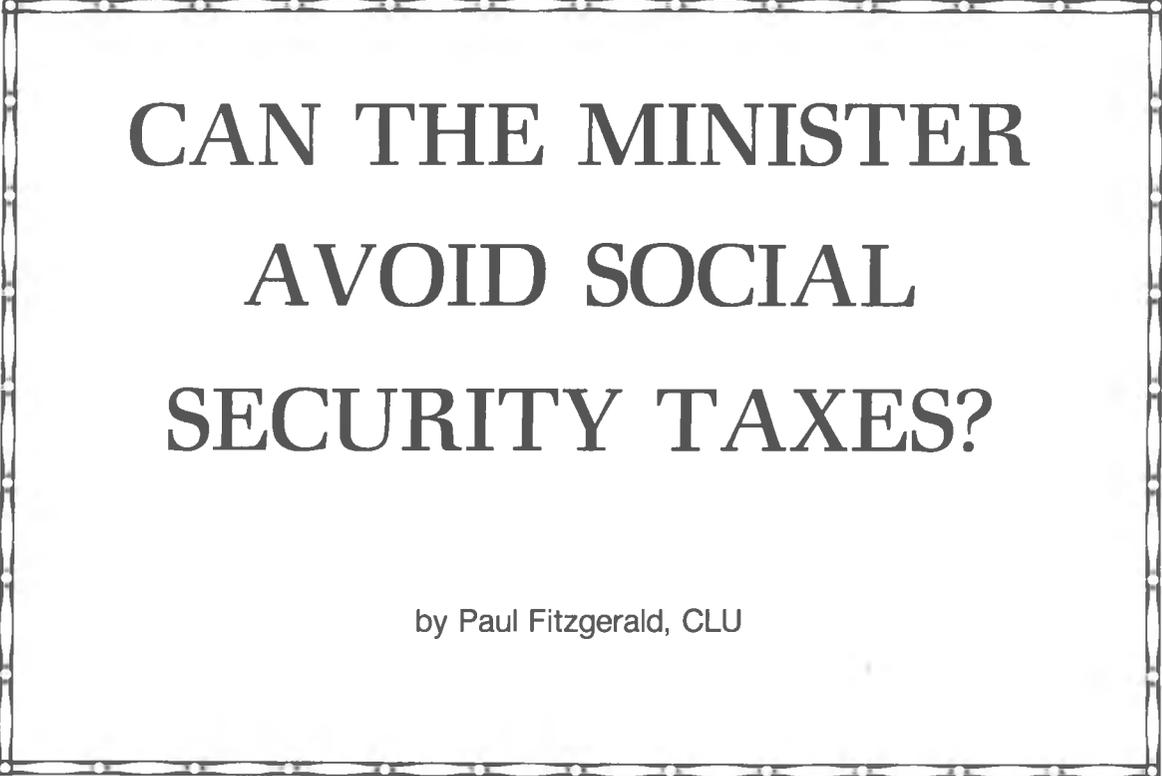
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CAN THE MINISTER AVOID SOCIAL SECURITY TAXES?

by Paul Fitzgerald, CLU

Recently an organization offering financial advice to ministers has claimed the discovery of a way for ministers to stop paying Social Security taxes while not losing the benefits of Social Security. This is quite a claim and sounds to some like a dream come true! Unfortunately, the desire to avoid paying the tax may blind some to the problems of accepting such a scheme.

THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In 1955 ministers of the gospel first became eligible to participate in Social Security on a voluntary basis under the Self-Employment Contribution Act. Previously, they were specifically prohibited from participation under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). That exemption was probably based on the fact that FICA requires one-half the tax to be paid by the employer, and

this would have meant "taxing churches." By using the self-employment tax system, the issue of taxation for churches was avoided, and therefore ministers were able to "Elect into the coverage. In 1968, it became virtually mandatory for all ministers to participate on Social Security under the self-employment tax system.

THE ONLY WAY OUT

Current tax laws do, however, provide an exemption from Social Security for a minister of the gospel *under certain limited conditions*. The election must be made within the first two years in which \$400 or more was received as compensation for services as a minister. The exemption must be claimed by filing Form 4361 which requires that you sign a statement certifying that "... because of my religious principles, I am conscientiously

opposed to the acceptance of the benefits of any public insurance . . ." The objection must be based on religious principles and on receipt of benefits; not an objection to paying the taxes. Unfortunately, some ministers have been led to sign this form even though they did not have this conscientious objection to the *receipt of benefits*. Such ministers must face the ethical question of whether to continue the exemption on an erroneous basis or to rectify the mistake.

THE QUESTIONABLE NEW DISCOVERY

The essence of the acclaimed "new discovery" by a certain organization is that an exemption is supposedly available even after the expiration of the time limit for the Form 4361 exemption. The concept appears to be based on the idea that the church has an automatic exemption from FICA taxes for lay employees (unless it has signed a waiver to participate under the FICA program). Therefore, if the minister could find a way to be considered a "lay employee" rather than a "minister of the gospel," he would be exempt from self-employment tax and FICA taxes. The group promises that, for a fee equal to one-half the Social Security tax saved, they will provide the appropriate corporate resolutions, as well as defend the individual in the event of his prosecution. In the haste of promoting such a program, several problems have been overlooked.

SOME OVERLOOKED PROBLEMS

First, there is no provision in the tax laws for a minister declaring that he is not a minister when he is performing ministerial duties. Even if such a provision could be made, should it be done? It is also very likely that a minister who takes this position would then be subject to income taxes on the value of the parsonage and utilities provided or cash housing allowance since he is "no longer a minister." Further, the suggestion that one can work a minimum number of quarters under Social

Security and then freeze all future benefits overlooks the fact that the significant disability benefits and the surviving widow's benefits are lost after a period of time through lack of participation in Social Security. Disability benefits and surviving widow's benefits are very significant items to be considered in the analysis. Some have estimated the widow's benefits to be the equivalent of \$300,000 of life insurance for many younger ministers!

THE CAUTIOUS LOOK

Ministers should carefully examine the basis of any such scheme contrived to avoid Social Security taxes. Ministers who are tempted by the organization's offer would do well to request, receive, and examine the specific references to tax laws and revenue rulings which are being used as the basis of such a "new discovery." These should be submitted to knowledgeable legal counsel for careful analysis before participating in any such scheme.

THE EVALUATION OF EXPERTS

At the present time, most experts in the tax field agree that ministers of the gospel, who have not previously filed Form 4361 during their first two years of ministry claiming the exemption based on their religious principles against receiving Social Security benefits, must simply pay Social Security taxes on their income as a minister.

THE WAY OF WISDOM

Fortunately, many congregations now reimburse the minister in full for the Social Security tax, over and above his salary. This is the best way for an individual minister to avoid paying Social Security taxes "out of his pocket." 

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

We Get Letters

(Continued from page 3)

reached me and Jesus Christ is my Friend and Teacher and Savior.

I attended Broadmoor Park Church of the Nazarene in high school. Rev. Hearne Spruce first brought me to the Lord, but I wandered off and hardened my heart and finally said there was no God.

The Holy Spirit is moving in prisons. Many churches are working with prisoners.

I am so afraid the Nazarene church will miss out on what is happening. God is raising up people out of prisons. It is the most amazing phenomenon you can imagine.

I am not thrilled to have come to this

end. I have 2 children, one age 21 and one age 5. They must pay for what I've done just as I will. My parents are 64 and 65 years old. They will both die while I am here. They must pay for this also. My brothers and sisters are suffering because of me. So what I have done is tragic in so many ways. But I am thrilled that Jesus is patient and kind and loves us even when we are total fools.

I am only one of a strange group of new disciples. Two years ago they tell me that 6 people attended Wednesday Bible study on this unit. Last Wednesday we had over 200 in the service.

God is working in prisons in a powerful way. I want the Nazarene church to be a part of this. I may not understand but I think I do. I feel that God will bless any church that joins in this new wave of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in pris-

ons. The Nazarene church has all the basic structure needed to create a prison ministry overnight.

A simple start can have a full-blown operation in five years or less and God needs the Nazarenes. I really get jealous at times because Pentecostals, Baptists, Church of Christ, and others do fantastic work in prisons. I want my church and my people to be a part of this.

If you are interested, please let me know. What I can do is very limited, but I can try. The Lord blesses us for trying. Brother Staples is such a fine man. He and I talked at Bethany. He is one of the reasons I am a Christian now. Seventeen years for this flower to bloom, but finally the Lord poured some rain on me and here I am.

In Christ,
Norman Shelton 

SERMON OUTLINES



FATHER'S DAY GIFTS THAT LAST

Each of us has a desire to find that one special gift for that one special person in our lives—our fathers. What shall it be? A shirt? A tie? Slacks? Belt? Socks?

I would like to suggest some gifts that cannot be purchased in a department store or gift shop. They cannot be ordered in response to a special TV advertisement or from a mail order house. There is no purchase time limit. These gifts cannot be stolen, destroyed, traded, worn out, or tarnished. They do not lose their value through age or use. They will never be outdated or old-fashioned.

I. What Can I Give My Dad, the Father? (Prov. 1:8)

- A. An obedient child
Obedient children are the crown of old age.
- B. A Christian child
It is a rare parent who is not proud of a godly, Christian child.
- C. An interceding child
No one loves your dad the way you love him. No one can pray for your dad as you can.

II. What Can I Give My Husband, the Father? (1 Pet. 3:1-6)

- A. A beautiful wife (vv. 3-4a)
Your exterior beauty can be copied by other people, but your interior beauty is uniquely yours.
You + God = Uniquely beautiful woman.
- B. A gentle and quiet spirit (v. 4b)
A spirit that holds an uncompromising standard of holiness of life.
- C. An interceding wife
No one loves your husband the way you do. No one can pray for your husband as you can.

III. What Can I Give My Son, the Father? (1 Kings 9:4-5b)

- A. A positive influence
Is your influence pointing your son to the Heavenly Father?
- B. A godly example
Words supported by actions produce a clear and concrete witness.

- C. An interceding parent
No one loves your son the way you love him. No one can pray for him as you can.

IV. What Did I Receive from My Creator, the Father? (Romans 6:23b)

- A. Life
- B. Intelligence
- C. Salvation
- D. Holy Spirit
- E. Eternal life
- F. An interceding Savior
No one loves you the way Jesus loves you. No one can pray for you as He does.

Will you give these gifts to the fathers in your life? Fathers, will you accept these gifts today?

—Charles A. Bledsoe

THINGS WE MUST DO

Text: Acts 9:6, "It shall be told thee *what thou must do.*"

Introduction: There are some imperatives; there are some compulsions; there are some demands involved in our relationship to God. When Saul, "trembling and astonished," asked of the Lord, "What wilt thou have me do?" the Lord answered, "It shall be told thee *what thou must do*" (Acts 9:6). There are some *musts* in salvation.

I. The must of salvation's CANDIDATE

- A. The must of *belief*.
 1. Belief in the God of salvation.
"He that cometh to God *must believe* that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).
 2. Belief in the Christ of salvation.
"Sirs, *what must I do* to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30-31).
- B. The must of *birth*. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).

II. The must of salvation's CONTINUANCE

- A. Conditions. Mark 2:22, "New wine *must be put* into new bottles" . . . i.e., a new surge of divine life comes through new persons.

- B. Compulsions. Luke 2:49, "Wist ye not that *I must be about* my Father's business?" or, Luke 4:43, "*I must preach* the kingdom of God to other cities also . . ."

- C. Completions. (World mission), "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also *I must bring . . .*" (John 10:16).

III. The must of salvation's CONSUMMATION

- A. Deut. 31:14, "Behold, thy days approach that *thou must die . . .*"
- B. 2 Cor. 5:10, "For we *must all appear* before the judgment seat of Christ . . ."

Conclusion: Indeed we must move from this world to another; from this life to another; from this beginning to that completion. We can so have related to Christ that the world to which we move is the good world; the life, everlasting life; the completion, just that, a finishing the course.

—J. Melton Thomas
Nampa, Idaho

THINGS WE OUGHT TO DO

Text: Acts 10:6, ". . . he shall tell thee *what thou oughtest to do.*"

Introduction: The sense of ought, of obligation, of duty is strong in the person sensitive to the Holy Spirit. In a sense it is strong within all men. One form of it is conscience, God's good gift to keep us in bounds. Here is a list of *what we ought to do*.

- I. **We ought to pray.** Luke 18:1, "He spake a parable unto them to this end, that *men ought always to pray*, and not to faint."
- II. **We ought to tithe.** Luke 11:42, ". . . ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs . . . *these ought ye to have done . . .*"
- III. **We ought to witness.** Luke 12:12, "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour *what ye ought to say.*"
- IV. **We ought to obey God.** Acts 5:29, "Then Peter and the other apostles

answered and said, *We ought to obey God rather than men.*"

V. The ought of personal relationship.

2 Cor. 2:7, "So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."

VI. The ought of bear and share.

Rom. 15:1, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak."

VII. The ought of walk.

1 John 2:6, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

VIII. The ought of talk.

Col. 4:6, "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

IX. Ought and love.

A. Generally, *each other*. 1 John 4:11, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

B. Specifically, *in family context*. Eph. 5:28, "So ought men to love their wives . . ."

Conclusion: Let us be sensitive to the conscience that probes us; the duty that drives us; the ought that impels us. Thus we shall come to be more like our Lord, whose voice the urgings of ought is.

—J. Melton Thomas

THINGS WE MAY DO

Text: Acts 8:37, "If thou believest . . . thou mayest . . ."

Introduction: Privilege comes to those who accept it. There is a great permissiveness in the Lord. It is not only *restraint*; it is also *release*. In the Lord is not only *demand*, but also *delight*. Thou mayest!

I. The may of promise. The text (Acts 8:37), "If thou believest . . . thou mayest."

II. The may of possession. Num. 32:32, "We will pass over armed before the Lord into the land of Canaan,

that the possession of our inheritance on this side Jordan *may be ours.*"

III. The may of providence.

Deut. 29:13, "That he may establish thee to day for a people unto himself, and that *he may be unto thee a God.*"

IV. The may of parentage.

Matt. 5:44-45, "Love your enemies . . . that *ye may be the children of your Father* which is in heaven . . ."

V. The may of perfection.

2 Tim. 3:17, "That *the man of God may be perfect*, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

VI. The may of inward presence.

John 17:26, "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I [*may be*] in them."

VII. The may of partnership.

John 17:11, "These are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that *they may be one*, as we are."

VIII. The may of protection.

Prov. 22:19, "That *thy trust may be in the Lord*, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee."

IX. The may of prudence.

1 Cor. 3:18, "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that *he may be wise.*"

X. The may of position.

John 14:3, "Where I am, *there ye may be also.*"

XI. The may of God's power.

2 Cor. 4:7, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of *the power may be of God*, and not of us."

XII. The may of performance.

2 Cor. 8:11, "As there was a readiness to will, so *there may be a performance* also out of that which ye have."

XIII. The may of plenty.

2 Cor. 8:14, "Now at this time *your abundance may be a supply* for their want."

Conclusion: The wonder of our affirmative God! He is the great Yea! He

grants us a freedom, a permission, a wide open door! He wants us to understand the latitudes of life in the Lord!

—J. Melton Thomas

THINGS WE ARE APPOINTED TO DO

Text: Acts 22:10, ". . . go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do."

Introduction: We are constantly making appointments. With doctors; with dentists; with lawyers; with possible employers. As I check my schedule I find appointments made with congregations, years in advance. And with God, also, are things appointed to do.

I. We are appointed a fellowship.

Luke 10:1, "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them forth *two and two* before his face into every city and place, whether he himself would come."

A. An appointment to *share*, ". . . two and two."

B. An appointment to *prepare*, ". . . into every . . . place, whether he himself would come."

II. We are appointed a mission.

Luke 22:29, "And I appoint unto you a kingdom . . ."

A. Interesting: the appointment not to a kingdom; but a kingdom appointed to us.

B. The appointment *mission?* To take it! "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11:12).

III. We are appointed an accounting.

Heb. 9:27, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

A. Death, the *intermediary* accounting.

B. The judgment, the *final* accounting.

IV. We are appointed a release.

Ps. 102:20, "To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to *loose those that are appointed to death.*"

SERMON OUTLINES

Conclusion: Alan Seeger, the poet, proclaimed that he had a rendezvous with death, and he did. And this writer of one of the great poems of World War I kept that rendezvous at the very early age of 28. I do not know about his rendezvous with life; for there is that, too. But I know of one who did, even Jesus. He met death, and defeated death, and came forth to life. And He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

—J. Melton Thomas

HOW TO HAVE A GOOD DAY

Text: 1 Pet. 3:8-12

Introduction: The phrase "Have a Good Day" is more than a cliché. God wants us to have good days, "and see GOOD DAYS" (v. 10).

There Are Ten Things We Must Have for a Good Day:

I. We Must Have Christian Unity

"Finally, be ye all of one mind" (v. 8). 1 John 4:20. In major things—unity. In minor things—liberty. But, in all things—charity (divine love).

II. We Must Have Compassion

"Having compassion one of another" (v. 8). Compassion isn't just feeling badly, but feeling badly enough to do something about it.

III. We Must Have Brotherly Love

"... love as brethren" (v. 8). John 13:34-35. A simple test of our religion is whether it makes us love our neighbor.

IV. We Must Have a Tender Heart

"... be pitiful" (v. 8). "You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds" (v. 8, TLB).

V. We Must Be Courteous

"... be courteous" (v. 8). A plain command. Mind your manners at all times. There is no room for rudeness in the Christian life.

VI. We Shouldn't Render Evil for Evil

"Not rendering evil for evil, ... but contrariwise blessing" (v. 9). See *The Living Bible*.

VII. We Must Have Good Tongue Control

"For he that will love life, and SEE GOOD DAYS, let him refrain his tongue from evil" (v. 10). There is no revival where people are fault-finding, critical, gossipy, and shadders of the truth.

VIII. We Must Turn Away from Evil and Do Good

"Let him eschew evil, and do good" (v. 11).

Turn from all forms of evil, such as drugs, lottery, fortune-tellers, gambling, and false gifts said to be of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 10:31). Salvation isn't all negative—"and do good" (v. 11).

IX. We Must Be Peaceful

"He must seek peace and pursue it" (v. 11, NIV). See *Amplified Bible*. Be a peacemaker; like Christ. Make it your life-style.

X. We Must Live a Life Saturated with Prayer

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers" (v. 12).

A minister conducted a business meeting in a church where there was a matter of controversy. God gave him some scripture which he wrote on a card and referred to it occasionally. The meeting was harmonious. At the close, a layman asked, "Pastor, what were you reading on that card?" In reply, he read 1 Pet. 3:8-12. There is only one thing better than having this on a card and that is having it in our minds and hearts (Heb. 8:10). This is the glory of the gospel.

—Jack Seberry
New Port Richey, Florida

LIVING A DAY AT A TIME

Text: Deut. 33:25

Introduction: John Wesley wrote in his Bible, "Live Today." Trust in God today, cast all your cares and burdens upon the Lord today, be happy and kind today, keep so busy doing good today that you won't have time to grieve over the yesterdays nor worry about the tomorrows.

Four Observations Concerning This Promise:

I. It Is a Limited Promise

Not in resources but in application. Limited to days; not weeks, months, or years (Matt. 6:33-34).

II. It Is a Comprehensive Promise

"As thy days." It covers all kinds of days. Days of duty, sorrow, temptation, etc. God has promised strength for:

A. *The Day of Affliction.* A poet has said, "Through sorrow and pain, / Through loss or gain, / His grace is enough for me."

B. *The Day of Duty.* Jesus said, "To every man his work" (Mark 13:34). We are not all called to preach, but we are all called to be soul winners (Matt. 4:19; 1 Cor. 15:58).

C. *The Day of Sorrow.* Annie Johnson Flint wrote some encouraging lines, "God hath not promised skies always blue, / Flower-strewn pathways all our lives through; But God hath promised STRENGTH FOR THE DAY."

D. *The Day of Temptation.* Temptations are certain to ring your doorbell; but it's your own fault if you ask them in (1 Cor. 10:13).

E. *The Day of Death* (Heb. 9:27). Someone asked D. L. Moody if he had dying grace. He said, "Why, no. I have living grace, but when I come to die I shall have dying grace." And he did! Don't worry about the dark days and rough roads that may be ahead of you. Live for TODAY and when the trying hour comes, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass" (Deut. 33:25).

III. It Is a Long Promise

You can't outlive it. As long as there are days, there will be strength available from the Lord for them (Luke 22:32).

IV. It Is a Well-guaranteed Promise

Man didn't promise it, God did. While working as a clerk in a post office, I recall that at that time, the only check I was allowed to cash was a government check. Why? Some individual checks have been found not to be good. But when a check is issued by the government, the whole government is behind it. All heaven is behind God's promises, they will not fail.

A 91-year-old watercolor artist was dying. He said to those around him, "Bring my masterpiece, I want to see it." It was a picture of a shipwreck. He looked at it a long time and then said, "Now bring my paints and lift me up. I must brighten that black cloud. It used to seem right, but I must brighten it before I go." When it was done he died.

God can brighten the clouds of your darkest day. He can do more than that, He can drive the clouds away.

—Jack Seberry

ONE PERCENT FOR ONE PERSON?

Preaching Portion: Luke 15:1-10

Introduction: In spite of the fact that we have an abundance of directional markers along the roads, people today are lost.

Luke's "lost" stories are not so much maps as masterpieces. The lost coin and sheep stories have as their backdrop our Lord's habit of being found with "publicans and sinners." When antagonized for it He answered with these words, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep . . . doth not leave the ninety and nine . . . ?"

These parables tell us that:

I. Our God Is a Good God to Have in an Emergency

1. God is not like Pilate. He won't wash His hands of us. He feels responsible for us. He will be up in the middle of the night looking for lost people.

2. Though the word *sin* does not appear in the story, *lost* does. Sin is what happens to a man when he loses his sense of direction. No man likes to admit he's lost. It seems unmanly. It is so humiliating that men will do nearly anything to prove that they are not babies anymore, that they do not get lost now. But, God knows we are lost.

II. Our Lostness Causes Heaven a Lot of Commotion

1. That commotion, that concern is the special feature given to the parable of the lost coin. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house . . . diligently? . . ."

2. Note the intensity of God's interest

for the lost. Heaven is willing to let everything else go to get them back.

3. The important thing to God this minute, is to find the missing piece to the puzzle. Duped as we are by size, it is pretty hard for us to get a God of quantity out of our heads. Tiny Tim means more to Him than any mountain.

III. God Is Not Satisfied with a 1 Percent Loss Factor

1. Most businesses today have to have a margin of loss, a certain percentage of loss is anticipated—through breakage, theft, or whatever.

2. But, when it comes to people, God does not write any of us off as being an acceptable percentage of loss. The shepherd wanted 100 percent of his sheep, not 99 percent. The woman wanted 10 coins, not 9. The Father wanted both sons, not just one. Apparently, even more important to God than His creation is His second creation.

Conclusion: It is comforting to know that, despite the cold hard facts, we have not been abandoned to our own devices in this world. When the shepherd finds the sheep he "Lays it on his shoulders and rejoices." It was time for an affectionate hug instead of scolding. Rather than being greeted with a frowning Puritan face, the shepherd's eyes were wet with tears, not of reprimand but of joy. Yes, when we see God we shall see Him as He is, and these two stories indicate that we shall see Him smiling.

So, "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. . . ." It is heartening to know that God deals with us as persons, not percentages.

—Phil Metcalfe
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

SERMON ON THE MOUNT SERIES

Sermon I: The Joy of a Right Spirit (Matt. 5:1-6)

Sermon II: The Joy of a Pure Heart (Matt. 5:7-12)

Sermon III: How Salty and Bright! (Matt. 5:13-16)

Sermon IV: Love That Goes the Second Mile (Matt. 5:17-26, 38-48)

Sermon V: Either Say "Yes" or "No" (Matt. 5:33-37)

Sermon VI: What's So Bad About Adultery and Divorce? (Matt. 5:27-32)

Sermon VII: The Reward of Giving, Prayer, and Fasting (Matt. 6:1-18)

Sermon VIII: Treasures Here, and Later (Matt. 6:19-24)

Sermon IX: Clothed by Trust in God (Matt. 6:25-34)

Sermon X: The Attitude of Asking (Matt. 7:6-12)

Sermon XI: Why Do We Judge Others? (Matt. 7:1-5)

Sermon XII: You Can Tell by Tasting the Fruit (Matt. 7:15-23)

Sermon XIII: A Gate Is to Go Through (Matt. 7:13-14)

Sermon XIV: On Sand, or Rock (Matt. 7:24-29)

—Michael Hutchens
Middletown, Ohio



FISHING

(Continued from page 44)

kinds of difficulties. Some lived near the water and bore the smell of dead fish every day. They received the ridicule of some who made fun of their fishermen's clubs and the fact that they claimed to be fishermen, yet never fished

They wondered about those who felt it was of little use to attend the weekly meetings to talk about fishing. After all, were they not following the Master who said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men?"

Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who don't catch fish were really not fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be. Yet it did sound correct.



THE SHEPHERD MUST KNOW THE SHEEP

by Harry D. Russell

Professor of Communication, Mid-America Nazarene College

Ultimately, every preacher discovers the awesome effect his presentation procedures have on the emotions, and often, the behavior of people. Styles of idea organization, vocal tones, gestures, reasoning to human needs and motives, and a host of other speaker skills combine in the successful presentation to move people to action. In short, they seem to persuade. If people are so vulnerable to persuasion attempts, it seems important to discover how people are persuaded and what the preacher's responsibilities are in the process.

Hageman, in *Theology Today*, argues that we need to review our preaching. Many of us graduated from college in the '60s with little or no training in homiletics. Others of us have followed the same presentational procedures for many years and now feel that a little sensitive self-criticism might lead to improvement.¹

Thompson writes that the homiletic choice of the preacher will predispose the listener's response. The phrase, ". . . how about that wild party . . ." may prepare the listener to receive information that borders on gossip. Phrased differently, ". . . Belshazzar's impious feast was reckoned with . . ." the same information prepares the listener for a totally different response.²

The pulpit is a powerful forum from which scripture is interpreted for masses of people. The relation of text to sermon is not a matter decided by choosing only between expository or textual preaching. Assuming preaching to be biblical, there is another requisite of the sermon. It should take into account "the agenda of the text as well as the agenda of the congregation. Biblical preaching . . . occurs when listeners are enabled to see how their world, like the biblical world, is addressed by the Word of God . . ."³ The preacher's task is, at least, to create an interplay between the needs of the receiver and the imperatives of the scripture.

The best definition this author has found of persuasion was written by Larson. Persuasion is, he writes, "the co-creation of a state of identification or alignment between a source and a receiver that results from the use of symbols."⁴ Once we identify ourselves in any way with the message being sent, we in some degree, have co-created a state in which persuasion has occurred. Whether moved through divine inspiration because of the verbal message received or simply to experience a pleasant feeling because we like the symbolic message

of stained-glass windows, we have identified or aligned ourselves with a message. Both senders and receivers of the message, then, are partners in the process of persuasion.

While not all theorists agree as to the exact amounts, they mostly agree as to the basic ingredients that comprise persuasion.

1. A persuader attempts to cause a listener either to modify an attitude or to replace it with another one.
2. Two operations are involved: (a) the persuader must select an attitude to which the listener presently responds with strong behavior; (b) the persuader must demonstrate (to the listener's satisfaction) a relation between this highly valued attitude and the new one that, hopefully, the listener will come to embrace.

For example, the preacher may choose as an attitude to be changed, a parishioner's too casual attitude in personal devotions. For a presently held attitude of high value, he may choose one from among many to which most parishioners already respond strongly, e.g., parental responsibility in discipling children; parental responsibility to be a Christian influence; the need for Christians to rightly divide the "word of truth." Through preaching, the listener is helped to identify his attitudes in personal devotions with, say, his high value for parental responsibility in discipling children. In other words, the argument goes like this: "parents who rightly discipline their children do so by demonstrating a personal devotional life." The degree of identity the listener makes between the two attitudes (discipling of children and personal devotional life) will be an index of the persuasive effect. Furthermore, if a bond is made to more than one presently held value, the persuasive bond should be both stronger and more persistent.

While it is true that "from the abundance of the heart" we express our attitudes and values, it is also true that our physical behavior can indicate our attitudes and values. To complicate the matter further, a single attitude may be involved with more than one behavior. So on one occasion an attitude may drive behavior that we observe as spiritual. At another time, that same attitude may drive a behavior that we observe as being mostly social.

We have all formed positive or negative attitudes for people, places, events, and objects. Interesting—that groups of related attitudes cluster together as though

they were acquainted with each other. Interesting further—that various clusters of attitudes get together to form our values and value systems. These positive or negative attitudinal predispositions, *expressed by us in terms of both beliefs and behavior*, motivate us to satisfy any need we experience in relation to those persons, places, things, and events. By the time we see the person at a church function, we, unfortunately, observe belief clusters expressed as both verbal and physical behavior. That behavior is an attempt to satisfy a felt need. For example, the youth may choose a seat in the back of the sanctuary because he values his friends who also are sitting in the back of the sanctuary. He may also choose this behavior because he values his independence from authority figures. His choice may also be a response to a felt spiritual need. How various attitudes are combined in an individual parishioner to form the behavior expressed can probably not be known by the minister. What the minister can and should do is make an honest attempt to learn the major values held by the members of the congregation. Without making such an attempt, he is leading sheep he does not recognize. So how can we determine what is motivating the behavior?

Our motives, as one might guess, are not lumped into a single bin from which we can draw a choice behavior at will. Authors in the field seem to have their own inventory of motives neatly categorized into a prioritized scheme. Among emotionally healthy people, it seems there is a tendency to maintain consistent cognitions among diverse attitudes and to seek to satisfy one category of needs at a time. That is, we tend to satisfy enough of a perceived need in one category that we can give attention to other categories of needs, each in their order.

1st Category: These needs seem to center on finding enough food, shelter, clothing, and other goods and services that we can survive physically.⁵

2nd Category: These needs involve freedom from fear; to live where there is law and order; to have structure in our lives; perhaps simply to have locks on our doors if we wish.

3rd Category: These needs involve being appreciated, accepted, loved by someone, i.e., to be “just one of the gang.” A college professor returning home from a hard day of committees, counseling, and debates, and upon entering the house, announced, “I desperately need a hug.” He might operate most of the time at the last two levels of need, but for that moment, his need was at level three.

4th Category: Having satisfied the former three levels of needs, we can center our motives on thinking well of ourselves. A positive self-image is a critical prerequisite to being a happy individual. While we may not be the most talented person in the neighborhood, we certainly should view ourselves as being a good and vital one.

5th Category: As all other needs are moderately satisfied, we become increasingly altruistic. That is, we strive to reach our own highest potential often with an interest in others. With five categories of needs to be met, it follows that we do not all reach this high level where we each can address ourselves to our highest goals and purposes.

It is difficult to persuade a father regarding the higher abstract Christian values when he is struggling to provide food and clothing for his family and is out of work. Equally, a teenager may not “hear” our sermon about seeking the lost if his needs relate to being accepted by his circle of friends. It is not that he does not want to accept or believe our sermon. Rather, his need level filters the message in such a way that he probably does not receive it. But all is not lost. Aim the message (the same message) toward his need. The Salvation Army learned many years ago that you cannot talk with someone about Christ when he is desperately hungry and cold. A thought! Perhaps some of us are attracted to songs like “A tent or a cottage, why should I care” because it helps us cope with the needs in Category 1; while others, at level 3 or higher, prefer such songs as “Oh, to be like Thee, blessed Redeemer, this is my constant longing and prayer.”

To repeat, no single need must be completely satisfied before we move on to satisfy higher levels of needs. Moreover, not all of us experience the same intensity of any one need level. Some may so fear the loss of property or goods (level 1) that they seem motivated to gather ever more things about them. Others may demonstrate small concern for material goods but struggle with a desperately low opinion of themselves.

Such an understanding of human motives leaves us with a question. Given a congregation where each individual is coping with his own combination of needs and intensity of needs, how can one serve them all? There is a choice. You can dismiss the variety of human needs as unrelated to preaching, or you can commit yourself to finding a way of identifying as many need levels as possible and minister to them. What follows is a list of suggestions to be modified by you in any way that will help them serve your own purposes.

1. Study your people. Make a habit of noting both verbal and nonverbal behavior wherever interpersonal communication is observed. Note words, statements, choices, and judgments that may give you a clue to the level of need with which that person may be coping. Remember that, being dynamic creations of God, we may not long remain at the same need level. Moreover, each person may be coping with life on more than one need level at the same time. That should make mental record keeping interesting!

2. Identify your own objective in preaching to needs. Select sermons, key ideas, and purposes that focus on selected audience needs. Flesh out sermons with illustrations, statistics, quotations, restatements, and examples that illuminate and clarify the need-agenda of the audience.

3. Relate the ideas inherent in your sermon to the needs identified among the congregation. There is, however, little to be gained in directing a sermon toward needs if you perceive them but the audience does not. Stephen Toulmin, an author concerned with logic and reasoning, makes a statement of value here.⁶ Between the key ideas the speaker makes and the illustrations, etc., that he marshals in support of it, there is an uncertain chasm. That is, how does a listener know that your evidence points toward the conclusion you are making? The answer is that you must demonstrate the tie by explaining how your evidence relates to your own con-

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TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE FOR ALL IT'S WORTH

By Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart
(Zondervan, 1981, 237 pp., paperback,
\$6.95)

This book is terrific! It is authored by a New Testament professor and an Old Testament professor, both from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Massachusetts. A thorough job—complete with recommended Bible translations, biblical commentaries, indexed material. I found it stimulating in helping the earnest Bible student understand the Old and New Testaments better. The authors do not shy away from the more complicated sections of the Bible.

—J. Grant Swank, Jr.

SERMON STARTERS FOR 52 SUNDAYS

By Charles Koller (Baker Book House,
1981, paperback, \$6.95)

This book is helpful for at least four reasons: (1) strong biblical support in each outline; (2) the outlines are excellent for a through-the-Bible study; (3) as the title suggests, each outline is a starter; (4) each outline needs to be "fleshed out."

The outlines will not assist the preacher who is looking for a quick sermon outline. The author supplies a skeleton that must be carefully developed before the sermon can be preached. Many of the outlines could be developed into a series of sermons.

—Joseph D. Bischoe

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

By Gary R. Collins (Word, Inc., 1980, paperback, 477 pp., \$11.95)

In this comprehensive guide, evangelical psychologist Dr. Gary Collins offers professional counselors as well as pastors and concerned laypersons an overview of counseling principles and the basic problems people face. The book will prove most helpful to the pastor

who needs a good survey of the kinds of problems he will face in both formal and informal counseling situations.

Collins writes clearly and simply, avoiding unnecessary technical and highly professional language. At the same time he does a good job of covering the territory.

The first section of the book deals with "introductory issues" such as "The Church and Counseling," "The Care of Counseling" (including the goals of counseling, characteristics of effective counseling, techniques, process of counseling, etc.), and "The Counselor and Counseling."

The remaining 27 chapters deal with personal problems and are divided into five sections. They are "Personal Issues" (anxiety, loneliness, depression, anger, guilt), "Singleness-Marriage Issues" (singleness, choosing a mate, preparing for marriage, marital problems, divorce and remarriage), "Developmental Family Issues" (child-rearing, adolescence and youth, vocational counseling, middle age, the later years), "Sex and Interpersonal Issues" (sex apart from marriage, sex within marriage, homosexuality, interpersonal relations, inferiority and self-esteem), and "Other Issues" (finance problems, drugs and alcohol, sickness, grief, spiritual problems, life traumas).

In the chapter on depression Collins begins with a brief presentation of the problem, then moves to "the Bible and depression" followed by "the causes of depression," "the effects of depression," "counseling and depression," and "preventing depression." This basic outline is followed in each of the chapters related to a specific problem area.

Most pastors would find *Christian Counseling* useful in three ways:

1. It could be read straight through for a good review of counseling principles and the personal problems people face.

2. It could be used as an information source when preaching or teaching on a particular problem. Each chapter presents a biblical perspective on the

problem, and the footnotes are filled with numerous scriptural references.

3. It could be consulted when counseling in specific problem areas. In addition to gaining a good overall view of the particular area, the reading list and footnotes at the end of each chapter suggest helpful and available resources for further personal study or for recommendation to a counselee desiring to read about the problem being faced.

—Don W. Dunnington

JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH

By Dan G. Kent (*Layman's Bible Book Commentary*, Broadman Press, 1980, \$4.75, 154 pp.)

In keeping with the purpose of the *Layman's Bible Book Commentary* series, Mr. Kent has endeavored to keep his writing in a conversational style; however, at times this is accomplished at the expense of proper grammatical form. The introductory sections give the standard background materials without the confusion of minute details; however, the materials given are based upon summaries of scholarly arguments of the introductory matters. The format of the commentary materials of the texts are clearly outlined so that the major emphasis of each passage is brought to light on the terms of the book itself in its historical setting. Enough detail is given for substance but not so much that boredom sets in.

In particular, Kent uses the concept of a Deuteronomic theology of history in order to address the nature of God in the Old Testament. God is the God of history who acts in history to carry out His purposes. In this context sin leads to punishment, which leads to obedience and deliverance. Throughout the narrative of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, the faithfulness of God is found in dynamic tension with the obedience of the people. This is spelled out in terms of the possession of the land in Joshua, the formation of the tribal league in Judges, and the true people of God in Ruth.

Mr. Kent tends to highlight the major personalities of the book or passage with which he is dealing in order to demonstrate the activity of God through them on the historical level. The author enhances popular interest by mentioning some of the struggles of the individual(s) that come either directly from the text or which may be implied from the text. Also, he does not leave the definitions of technical Old Testament terms undefined. He defines such concepts as tribal league, judge, sin, punishment, forgiveness, deliverance cycle, and others in a clear and precise manner.

In addition, the author does not avoid issues that arise, particularly when "New Testament eyes" gaze judgmentally at Old Testament events. One of the major strengths of the commentary is that the author dialogues with issues such as "holy war," "blood revenge," and other matters on their own terms. He underlines the "grace side" of seemingly unethical practices to demonstrate that the Old Testament does indeed place emphasis on the sanctity of life, the suppression of violence, and so forth. The bottom line is the faithfulness of God in His promises in dialogue with the *complete* obedience of man which that faithfulness demands in terms of love and gratitude.

This particular commentary is well-suited as a text for an adult Sunday School class or Bible study. Also, it provides basic supplementary reading material for a college survey course and for those students who are studying Joshua, Judges, and Ruth in English as their second language, because of the clarity of the format and the language as well as the even flow of style.

—Tammie Crews

LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

By William Barclay (Westminster, 1982, 128 pp., paperback, \$5.95)

The message of the Revelation calls out to the reader for understanding—

there is a feeling that something extremely pertinent is being conveyed between its alpha and omega. Yet the literal and symbolic are so intertwined that the reader is left with countless paths of understanding to walk (or stumble) down.

The aim of *Letters to the Seven Churches* is to help solve the riddles of the Revelation through the use of proper hermeneutical techniques. William Barclay, the beloved and world-renowned master teacher and expositor, demonstrates that the Revelation can become not only intelligible but highly relevant when the help of the available background material is used to build a foundation for understanding.

This book concentrates on the early chapters of the Revelation, 1:1—3:22. Barclay's method is to spend two chapters on each of the seven churches addressed in this section. One chapter provides the necessary background information about the ancient city itself, and the following chapter brings to light the message of John to the church in that particular city. Barclay then shows how that message still has direct meaning today.

Thus, this book does not purport to be the final authority on the whole of the Revelation. But it does provide a necessary foundation for a proper interpretation of John's book. Barclay's fresh insights and lucid writing style make this a highly enjoyable book for the layperson to read. Yet his exegetical expertise, especially in the areas of background information and Greek vocabulary and grammar, make this book a welcome tool for the scholar. As a devotional guide or a study aid, *Letters to the Seven Churches* will find a receptive audience.

—Randy Cloud

YOUR PARTICULAR GRIEF

By Wayne E. Oates (Westminster Press, 1982, hardback, \$8.95)

The author in writing *Your Particular Grief* explains and deals with just about every type of grief situation known to man.

In this well written book it is very evident that much time was spent researching the many kinds of grief that people experience, from preparing for the death of the terminally ill to the person who dies suddenly by heart attack, auto accident, suicide, or even homicide, and how to face these various types of grief. Also included is a section dealing with a person missing in action in wartime.

The book would be especially helpful for a minister or counselor who would designate the chapters or portions of chapters dealing with the particular griefs of the counselees.

I feel chapter six is perhaps the most helpful in the book. To hand the book to a person who is going through this difficult period and expect him to read the entire book, however, is more apt to add to his problem than to help.

—Russell J. Long, Sr.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By Charles C. Ryrie (Moody Press, paperback, 117 pp., \$3.95)

This is a terrific book. It is written by a seminary prof and deals with the evangelical perspective concerning social responsibility.

I think he is "right on" when he deals with the theological liberal in contrast with the theological conservative relative to this theme. He points out how the liberal carves his social responsibility primarily from his own humanitarian perspective, whereas the conservative seeks to move on biblical grounds. It is stirring reading for every seminary student, pastor, and conscientious layperson.

I was surprised to find that I was gripped by the book, for I thought at first opening, "Well, here goes another manual on social duty, just like all the others."

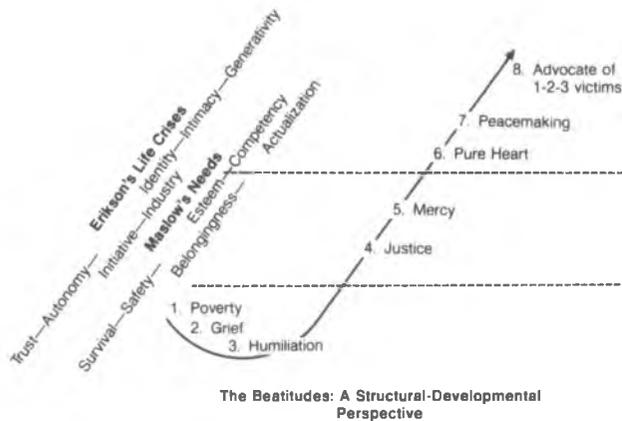
But it is not like the others!

—J. Grant Swank 

Pain: Catalyst . . .

(Continued from page 27)

that the Beatitudes, like the epigenetic stages of Erikson's "life crises," or the "seasons" of Levinson, or the "hierarchy of human needs" of Maslow, unfold in a telescoping "prepotency," come within reach only when the previous one is controlled. And like Piaget's structural stages, they are hierarchically integrated—all previous masteries remain accessible and undergird the highest functioning stage:



Poverty, grief, and humiliation may be literal and inescapable. Sometimes they are inward attitudes of negative self-worth. When they have been transformed by God's grace, they may finally be inner marks of a transparent spirit; the grace-transformed person has allowed the void to be transformed by the Holy.

I was present when the "Christ's Community" pastor preached from the Beatitudes. Of these first three, he said, "It isn't surprising that you rarely see these people in church. They are too preoccupied with their own emergencies: their poverty, their grief, and their own humiliation. But God has extended to them 'carte blanche' the Kingdom, His comfort, and a guarantee of inheriting the Creation." He went on to note that the remaining five beatitudes have implied or explicit contingencies. Each demands action: the pursuit of righteousness, the practice of mercy on other persons, the quest for a pure heart, the rigorous and dangerous work of arbitrating for peace, and the absolute risk of being defender and apostle of the true holiness. Eventually—given life's common doses of catastrophe and the uncommon transformations of God's grace—any of us may be expected to traverse the path from poverty to advocacy.

A negative trajectory is all that remains to those who grovel in the void and establish no transforming contact with the Holy. In an egocentric arena where it is "every person for himself," the path through the void tends to traverse through poverty, grief, humiliation, despair, cynicism, sarcasm, violence, arrogance, exploitation, conspiracy, and eventually to anarchy and to terror. The incarnation and the atonement were God's interventions aimed specifically at transforming the damning effects of the Void into the crowning redeemed sheaves of the Holy: our Tragedy is made into God's Comedy.

Our Ministry: The Transformation of Tragedy

A veteran pastor told me his miracle formula for church growth. "I search the admissions roster at the hospital every day," he told me. I look for people in trouble who have no pastor. I have literally filled up every church I have served by ministering to people in pain. I have led whole families to Jesus in the months after officiating at the funeral of a mem-

ber of the family." But such ministry will seem repugnant to pastors who have glossed over and anesthetized the pain in their lives.

It is not surprising to note that Jesus incarnated not only our humanity but this trajectory that begins with the descent into the void. He "became poor," entered into our suffering and death, suffering humiliation and shame for us—all well-known theological facts. What is less easy to comprehend is that Jesus saw His ministry as the proclamation of liberating (perhaps even "prevenient"?) grace:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19, NIV).

In our well-appointed churches the "gospel" we offer to the broken, the ethnic minority, the fatherless, the abandoned, the widow is more often characterized by our pursuit of righteousness and justice than by our willingness to become the advocate and defender of the abused and the humiliated. Imagine what evangelism might look like if we were to begin where Jesus began. What, then, might we discover to be the first doctrine of Christian holiness? Does "doing justice," "loving mercy," and "walking humbly with God" consist of rescue, forgiveness, and radical advocacy of the poor, the bereaved, and the humiliated? Jesus seems to have made such a summons explicit for those on whom He breathed that new-creation breath—the Holy Spirit:

"Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven" (John 20:21-23, NIV).

We tend to be more skilled at refusing to forgive the poor, the mourning, and the humiliated. One pastor recently brought a 17-year-old young woman to the platform in a Sunday evening service and announced her illegitimate pregnancy and demanded that she apologize to the congregation. Matthew's picture of Jesus makes such public humiliation distinctly pagan. He cites Isaiah's picture of the redeeming servant of God:

"Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will proclaim justice to the nations.
He will not quarrel or cry out;
no one will hear his voice in the streets.
A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
till he leads justice to victory.

In his name the nations will put their hope" (Matt. 12:18-21, NIV).

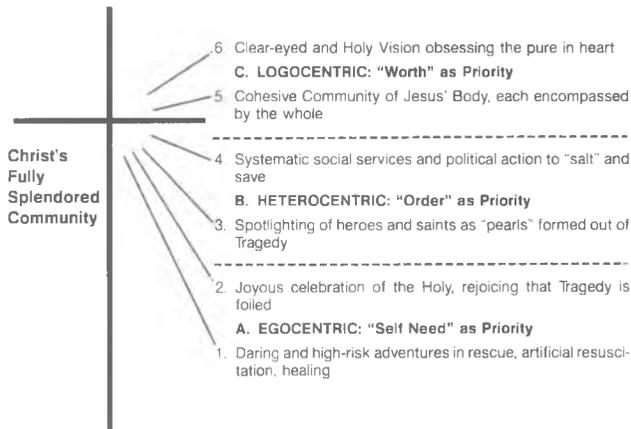
So, what might a congregation be doing if it were, indeed, Christ's redeeming community, the arena of grace where Comedy triumphs over Tragedy, where void is transformed by the Holy?

It is clear that Christ's fully enabled Body will nourish not only the transformations of deep Tragedy, but also will sustain all of the members through all of life's variations and minor voids. The full-spectrum needs of people at various stages or seasons of their faith journey will be abundantly met by the many-splendored grace refracted through diverse persons whose gifts and grace-transformed experiences meet other pilgrims at junction points on their journeys.

I was deeply moved by Charles Hampden-Turner's obser-

vation that the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "did not withdraw to the contemplation of good within an academy of rich young men as the social system collapsed." Instead, King worked personally through to the top of the hierarchy of moral perspectives, deliberately to descend to its lowest point and to facilitate renewal, repair, and transformation at every level. He publicly claimed the rights of his people to safety (1) and to simple, human pleasures (2). He inflamed a sense of offended justice by setting up brilliant televised moral pageants in which "black people were conventionally good and peaceful and white racists were stereotypically brutal" (3). He motivated civil rights legislation (4), and forged a social movement (5), all the while inspired by a personal vision of dignity and worth for his people (6).⁴

Surely we can catch the view of a holy community in which a fuller spectrum of splendor reenacts the transforming words and works of Jesus of Nazareth as He is incarnate in His Body in the present world.



Holy Community: Transformation from One Degree to Another⁵

Should we see the clear connection between suffering and Christian holiness, we might rush to high-risk adventures in caring and evangelism. And if that radical kind of evangelism were to be motivated by the highest vision implanted in pure hearts by the Holy One, we might be free at last to pull out all the stops on church program and activity. Our congregations, instead of being isomorphic communities of homogenous socioeconomic types, would flower in heterogenous and spontaneous diversity to the glory of God.

NOTES

1. See my "Human Development and Christian Holiness," *Asbury Seminary*, April 1975. Reprints \$1.00 from the author, SPO 004, Wilmore, KY 40390.
2. *Preacher's Magazine*, December-January-February, 1978-79, pp. 17 ff.
3. James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment* (Harper and Row, 1981).
4. See Charles Hampden-Turner, *Maps of the Mind* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), p. 139.
5. See 2 Cor. 3:12-18; note that the source of the "glory" comes from looking into the face of Jesus.

THE SHEPHERD

(Continued from page 57)

clusions. Reason with them. At some point in the sermon it is good to say, in effect, "The reason this sermon is for you is because . . ." Completed in less direct terms,

this sentence becomes what Toulmin calls a *warrant*. It is warranted that the audience believe what you are saying. Furthermore, you have made your sermon personal to the people.

4. Help them transfer the conclusions of your sermon into practical life values. These values replace older motives inappropriate to successful Christian living. Always leave them with something specific they can do to improve their condition.

The preacher has a scripted role to play out in ministering to every level of human need. He cannot help being a factor of change in the lives of many people. So, as he nurtures the awe of his own divine calling, he must be active in discharging the awesome tasks subsumed to that calling.

NOTES

1. Howard G. Hageman, "Preaching Is Alive and Well," *Theology Today* 27 (January 1981): 493.
2. William D. Thompson, "Text and Sermon," *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 35 (January 1981): 32.
3. Editorial, *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 35 (January 1981): 3.
4. Charles U. Larson, *Persuasion Reception and Responsibility* (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1979), 7.
5. Adapted from A. H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).
6. Adapted from Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969). See Chapter 3.

A SKELETAL WARM-UP

(Continued from page 12)

When Jesus heard of John's death, He withdrew to a lonely place (Matt. 14:13). Jesus cares about His men and He always knows where we are.

I feel a skeletal warm-up. Let Herodias call for our heads. Let Salome do her death dance. Let Herod make his dastardly decision. Let churches and boards misunderstand our best efforts. Let recalls come and go. Let sacrifice be expended. I feel a fire burning inside to be a mouthpiece for Him, to call an inadequate world to an adequate Christ.

I believe that God is able to save to the uttermost all those who come to him in penitence and childlike trust. I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sin and rose again from the dead to become the first fruits of them that sleep. I believe in the power of prayer and the gift of the Holy Spirit. I believe in life everlasting. I believe that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of Our Lord and his Christ. I am still supremely confident that the Church belongs to God, not to any of us, and that he will guide those of us who are in it. I have failed him many times, but he has yet to fail me.⁴

Let us endure until the end.

NOTES

1. Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., "Toward a Holiness Beyond the Glorious," *Christianity Today* (February 8, 1980).
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*

OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES



by Harvey E. Finley

Yahveh Sebaoth, “Yahveh of Hosts”

Yahveh Sebaoth is translated “Lord of hosts” in KJV, NKJV, RSV, NEB, and NASB; “Jehovah of hosts” in ASV; and “Lord Almighty” in NIV. The Septuagint rendering is *kuriou sabaoth*, “Lord of hosts”—*kuriou*, a translation for *Yahveh*; and *sabaoth*, a transliteration for *Sebaoth*.¹

The title *Yahveh Sebaoth* occurs more than 300 times throughout the Old Testament with a concentration of occurrences in the prophetic books. Recent studies wherein certain scholars have used both biblical and nonbiblical evidence draw attention to the early origin of this title and to two periods of time when it was used for its significant “theological” connotations or affirmations.

Origin in El Worship.—A plausible explanation for the origin of *Yahveh Sebaoth* derives from the understanding that the divine name *Yahveh* goes back to the time of the El-compound names for God.² Recent studies on the divine names of the Old Testament set forth the view that the name *Yahveh*, though relegated to relative obscurity, was nevertheless a valid divine name during the patriarchal times. Further, there is basis to suggest that the original

appellation for *El* would have been: “*El* is the One Who Creates the (Heavenly) Armies.” In the course of time the name *Yahveh* replaced the older El-compounds as the primary name for God.³ Although there was considerable new revelation given to Moses concerning *Yahveh*, this did not mean the discarding of previous revelation. Rather it meant incorporating the newer into the older, more general revelation. There is therefore consideration for suggesting that, in the appropriation of affirmations from the *El* worship or theology, the appellation “*El* who creates the (heavenly) hosts” became “He creates the (heavenly) hosts”—that is, *Yahveh Sebaoth*.⁴

God of War, Mighty in Battle, Strong to Deliver.—The early time for the use of *Yahveh Sebaoth* was during the days of Samuel, Saul, and David—many of these occurrences in connection with the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was designated as that of *Yahveh Sebaoth*.⁵ It is evident that the Israelites understood that *Yahveh*, whose Ark it was, was a mighty warrior who would fight for them and assure them victory over their enemies—in this instance the Philistines. The understanding that *Yah-*

veh was one who fought for them and who was strong to deliver goes back to the time of the Exodus and the deliverance at the Red Sea; *Yahveh* is extolled as “a man of war” (Exodus 15:3). Further, at the time Joshua stood viewing Jericho contemplating strategy for capturing it, the captain of the *saba’ Yahveh*, “host of *Yahveh*,” appeared to him assuring him that the divine, heavenly or angelic hosts would be fighting for him and Israel. David at a later time, in confronting Goliath, affirmed he was coming in the name of “*Yahveh* of Hosts” (1 Samuel 17:45), indicating thereby his strong belief that *Yahveh Sebaoth* is mighty and strong to deliver in his behalf.

Sovereign Lord over All.—The later time of frequent use of *Yahveh Sebaoth* was from the eighth century B.C. into the post-exilic period. Isaiah used it almost as frequently as his own personal title, *Yahveh Qedosh Yisrael*, “*Yahveh the Holy One of Israel*.”

To be sure, the connotations inherent in the name *Yahveh* applied in the prophets’ use of *Yahveh Sebaoth*. But the question is: What did the prophets intend to affirm in a specific way in their use of this title?

INWARD HAPPINESS

It struck me as incomprehensible that I should be allowed to lead such a happy life, while I saw so many people around me wrestling with care and suffering . . . I could not help thinking continually of others who were denied that happiness by

their material circumstances or their health. Then, one brilliant summer morning . . . there came to me, as I awoke, the thought that I must not accept this happiness as a matter of course, but must give something in return for it . . . living till I was thirty

for science and art, in order to devote myself from that time forward to the direct service of humanity . . . In addition to the outward, I now had inward happiness.

—Dr. Schweitzer
(from *Pulpit Digest*)



NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

HEBREWS

Consider (3:1)

The verb *katanoeo* is compounded of *nous*, "mind," and *kata*, which literally means "down" but in compounds also has the intensive or perfective force. So the idea is: "Put your mind down on" or "note carefully, thoroughly." Behm says that it is "closely related to *noeo*, whose literal meaning is intensified, "to direct one's whole mind to an object" (TDNT, 4:973), or "to consider reflectively" (p. 974). He also writes: "In Hebrews *katanoeo* is one of the verbal concepts which, used imperatively, impress upon the readers the duties involved in being a Christian: 3:1 f . . . the duty of looking to the Mediator of salvation, of concentration upon His exemplary moral conduct" (p. 975). B. F. Westcott says that the verb "expresses attention and continuous observation and regard" (*Hebrews*, p. 74). So it may be translated "consider" (KJV, NASB) or, more forcefully, "fix your thoughts on" (NIV).

Profession (3:1)

The noun is *homologia*. It comes from the verb *homologeō*, which means "confess" and is so rendered 17 times in KJV, as against "profess" 3 times. The noun is used in Hebrews 3 times (cf. 4:14; 10:23) out of the 6 times it occurs in the NT (see 2 Cor. 9:13; 1 Tim. 6:12, 13). Lexicons and commentaries agree that the correct translation is "confession" (NASB, cf. NIV).

Rejoicing (3:6)

The noun is *kauchēma*. It literally means "a boast," but also "a ground or matter of glorying" (Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, p. 243). Westcott comments: "The Christian hope is one of courageous exultation" (p. 78).

Provocation (3:8, 15)

Arndt and Gingrich say that the noun (not found elsewhere in NT) *parapikrasmos* means: "embitterment, then revolt, rebellion against God." They translate the phrase as "in the rebellion" (p. 621). This was adopted in the NIV.

Rest (3:11)

The noun *katapausis* is found eight times in Hebrews, twice in this chapter (vv. 11, 18), and six times in chapter 4 (vv. 1, 3, 5, 10, 11). Elsewhere it occurs only in Acts 7:49. Likewise the verb *katapauō* is found only in Acts 14:18 and three times in Hebrews 4 (vv. 4, 8, 10). It is here in Hebrews that we find the greatest emphasis on "rest" in the New Testament.

The verb is compounded of *pauō*, "cease," and *kata* (intensive or perfective). It suggests an entire cessation of nervous activity or struggle. The same is true of the noun. God has a beautiful, quiet rest for His people to enjoy.

Jesus (4:8)

It is true that the Greek does have *iesous*, "Jesus." But this is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Yahoshua*, "Joshua." In this place the obvious reference is to the OT "Joshua"; so that familiar name should be used. The KJV here is misleading to the casual or uninformed reader.

Rest (4:9)

Here we find a different Greek word, *sabbatismos* (only here in NT). It means "a keeping sabbath," and so "a Sabbath-rest" (NIV; cf. NASB). The term is used for the deeper rest that the Christian should enjoy.

Westcott says that *sabbatismos* indicates "a rest which closes the manifold forms of earthy preparation and work

. . . : not an isolated sabbath but a sabbath life." He adds: "The change of term from *katapausis* is significant" (p. 98).

Labour (4:11)

The KJV says, "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest." To say the least, this is an odd combination of ideas.

The Greek verb translated "labour" is *spoudazo*, which means literally "to make haste," and so, "to be zealous or eager, to give diligence" (Abbott-Smith, p. 414). It occurs 11 times in the New Testament and is translated "labour" only here (in KJV). A much better translation is "be diligent" (NASB) or "make every effort" (NIV).

Quick . . . Powerful (4:12)

The first Greek word is *zōn*, the present participle of the verb *zao*, "to live, be alive." So it simply means "living" (NASB, NIV). The KJV uses the obsolete "quick" for "alive" four times in the New Testament.

The Greek for the second word is the adjective *energes* (cf. "energetic"). It comes from *en* and *ergon*, "work," and so literally means "at work," or "active" (NASB, NIV).

Naked (4:13)

It is true that the adjective *gymnos* literally means "naked." But Abbott-Smith notes metaphorically it is used for things "exposed" (p. 96). So a better translation is "open" (NASB) or "uncovered" (NIV).

Opened (4:13)

The Greek has *tetrachelismena*, the perfect passive participle of the verb *tetrachelizo* (only here in NT). It is evidently used metaphorically here in the sense of "laid open" (Abbott-Smith, p. 449) or "laid bare" (NASB, NIV). 



THE ARK ROCKER

CRISIS MONGERING

Well, I've got a grumpy congregation on my hands and it's all Bucksworth's fault. He breezed into town last week—big publicity blitz, TV spots, interviews on the local Christian radio station, autograph party down at the bookstore. Flakked like a Hollywood celebrity he was. Of course, he came to give his testimony "to the glory of God."

You know his story, of course. His autobiography has sold more than a million copies. Incurable dandruff, so his wife left him for the lead singer in an Episcopalian gospel quartet. Became addicted to Public Television, had to cancel his membership in the Qumquat of the Month Club and was actually *forced* to trade down when he got his new car this year. Sad case, really.

The evening his pedigreed female schnauzer gave birth to a litter of mongrels he went into deep depression. But as he turned aimlessly to Channel 206—"Beaming You to Glory"—he caught the Rev. Benny Ventus's telecast, and it changed his life. Seems Ventus's theme that evening was "Riches in Your Itches." Now Bucksworth saw the purpose of his dandruff. Henceforth, he vowed, he would use his head to better purpose. He would tell of his tragedy and how he had come to terms with it and now had unspeakable peace even when it looked like his navy blue three-piece had got caught in a blizzard.

So he came to town and told his story and has left my flock disgruntled. They wonder whether God has really ever done *anything* for them. Their lives seem so tame and ordinary after listening to Bucksworth. And what they had thought were remarkable providences in their lives up to this time seem now as nothing in the light of the Bucksworth story.

But even worse, they're struggling with what they are sure is spiritual shallowness. Bucksworth told them so, in fact. "I tell you," he said at one point, "until you've been through an experience like mine and have come to understand things as I have, you cannot really know authentic peace and the true meaning of life. You will not be able to integrate your life around its true center." And even if he had not said it that bluntly, he hinted at it or implied it half a dozen times in the course of the evening. The point was clear. Tragedy brings spiritual insight of superior quality.

I want to say to my people, "Don't forget, it was weakness that got Bucksworth in trouble to begin with." But that wouldn't be fair and maybe not even true. Another thing I want to say is, "Why not thank the Lord for normality? It has trouble enough of its own, if that is what you need to keep you going. You are already rea-

sonably integrated. That is why your life is unspectacular." Now, I do believe we forget to give thanks for the blessings of the routine. But I also realize that we live in a world populated for the most part by other folks, so that I am not the sole bit of traffic on life's sea. Integrated people do get shoved off course by things not of their making. So I do not want to make every trauma a consequence of some weakness on the part of its victim.

But I would like to help that majority of my people whose lives are ordinary or normal to give thanks for the grace of God which preserves them from personal tragedy. And more, I want to help them see that in enjoying a reasonably happy married life, they have probably known marvelous integrating grace and divine healing and simply did not realize it; in not suffering emotional collapse they have possessed the treasured blessing of wholeness all along; in enjoying at least a moderate amount of creature comfort, they have known the hand of God supplying their needs, even though they may not have given much thought to it. I want them to rejoice with the Bucksworths of this world but not to feel deprived (some even feel guilty!) because they lack his insight.

It may be, of course, that neither I nor they will ever really be able to know the kind of joy Bucksworth knows, and folks like him tend to remind us of that and to insist that we can never understand them until we have walked in their Hush Puppies.

Maybe so. But it doesn't take a chicken to candle the eggs. We do know some things about human nature. We seldom understand even ourselves very well, however. That's why it is critical for us to know our Maker/Understander—to keep our insights properly limited and qualified. And it is critical for Bucksworth, too. After all, since he has not been the victim of a normal life, he does not understand *us*. But I hope we are gracious enough not to make a point of telling him that, and I certainly hope we are sufficiently gracious not to claim superior spiritual insight.

"Normal" doesn't sell well these days. But rather than acting as if its alleged "colorlessness" were sufficient reason to feel deprived, I hope I can help my folks to see that normality in its infinite variety is a priceless treasure; that it, as well as a life of tragedy, may be profoundly blessed by divine grace. And I hope to help them learn to give thanks without feeling as though in their ordinary lives they have been gypped.

The Ark Locker

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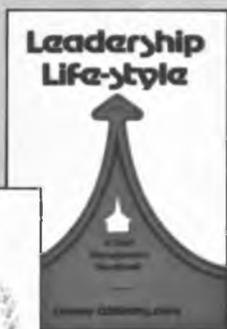
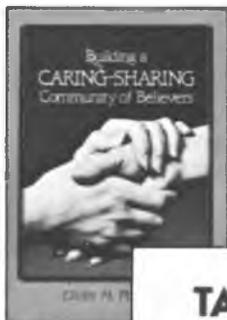
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