

THE

preacher's magazine

OCTOBER '77

PREACHING CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

inside...

"SAW WOOD AND SAY NOTHING"
The Editor

A PLEA FOR EXPOSITORY PREACHING
J. Kenneth Grider

"THE CHURCH IS OUR PASTOR"
Neil E. Hightower

COPING WITH GRIEF
Brian L. Farmer

MINISTERING TO THE AGED
Allan W. Miller

LET US CELEBRATE COMMUNION
Jerry Hull



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CONTENTS

- 1 "Saw Wood and Say Nothing" *Editorial*
- 3 A Plea for Expository Preaching *J. Kenneth Grider*
- 6 The Prophet's Echo *Richard Baker*
- 7 "The Church Is Our Pastor" *Neil E. Hightower*
- 9 Coping with Grief *Brian L. Farmer*
- 11 Ministering to the Aged *Allan W. Miller*
- 13 Set a Chair for Jesus *Ron Combs*
- 14 "Learn to Relax—Whatever That Means" . . . *Lenny Wisehan*
- 15 Let Us Celebrate Communion *Jerry Hull*
- 16 A Box of Candy Made the Difference *Practical Points*
- 17 Development of Self-worth in Children . . *Ruth Ann Polster*
- 20 If I Were a Young Pastor *Harold B. Graves*
- 21 We Choose to Care (Ideas That Work) . . . *Earl P. Roberts*
- 22 The Starting Point *C. Neil Strain*
- 23 Seeds for Sermons *Mark E. Moon*
- 26 Gleanings from the Greek *Ralph Earls*

DEPARTMENTS

Preacher's Wife, p. 17 □ In the Study, p. 23 □ Timely Outlines, p. 29 □ Bulletin Barrel, p. 30 □ Here and There Among Books, p. 31 □ Preacher's Exchange, p. 32 □ Among Ourselves, inside back cover

“Saw Wood and Say Nothing”



HIS 80-YEAR-OLD EYES PIERCED THROUGH every barrier that might hinder good judgment and common sense, and they looked deeply into mine. I am not sure what he saw. Youth, yes, he saw that. I was the youngest pastor he had ever known, and for that matter, the youngest the church had ever had. He may have seen fear, uncertainty, insecurity, and even some resentment. He had listened as I related to him a story of twisted facts, unfair tactics, and cruel treatment by a clique of members who had recently transferred their membership to our church. Now they were “making trouble.” What course of action should I follow?

“Saw wood and say nothing,” was his quaint but wise advice.

Since then I have had many years to think about those words and weigh them again in relation to such problems. Today they still make sense. They are wise words of counsel.

“Saw wood and say nothing” was an old Texan’s way of saying, “Go right on doing your work in this great white harvest field where you are so desperately needed. Don’t waste one minute trying to defend yourself against unfair criticism. Such talk usually runs its course and defeats itself. Your attempt to answer it would only keep the fire smoldering longer. Let it die!”

He was right, of course. The young pastor understood the message, short and quaint though it was. And it worked out beautifully. God used the situation to accomplish some things He wanted to do, not the least of which was to teach me about patience, faith, and forgiveness.

The old man was right, because what he said was essentially the same message God gave Moses when there was no way for Israel to turn. An angry Pharaoh with a mighty army was approaching, bent on their destruction. The path ahead led toward the edge of the great Red Sea. There was no way around it, no bridges and no ferryboats across it. The sea was too wide to swim across and too deep to wade. It is

understandable that Moses would wonder, "Now what do I do in a situation like this?" Fortunately, he prayed.

God's answer was, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord" (Exod. 14:13). You see, What do I DO now? is not quite the correct question we should be asking. It presupposes that we must *do* something. The future of the church depends upon *our action*. It is all up to us!

Of course, there are times when action is necessary. May it please God we will know when such is the case, and know what course we must then take. But there are other times when we must have serenity of faith and trust in God, times when we must stand still and let Him take the action. There are times to "saw wood and say nothing."

For Moses and the people of Israel, "standing still" for a while and letting God take charge proved beneficial in every way possible. For that moment and for all the future, it was best. God performed one of His miracles (aren't they always exciting to watch!) and the sea rolled back. Israel walked across on dry ground. Then another miracle happened. God waited until the timing was perfect (just as He always does), and the army of Pharaoh was halfway across the dry seabed in hot pursuit. Then the parted waters came back together, and the enemy was completely destroyed.

Can you imagine the rejoicing that night when Israel camped on the other side of the sea? Can you visualize the boon to their faith in Jehovah, not only for that day, but every day of their lives as they remembered that demonstration of His power?

When we learn to stand still—to "saw wood and say nothing"—we are always the stronger for it, and so are the members of our congregations. And most important, God gets glory and honor to His name.

The pastor "sawing wood and saying nothing" is learning to put his trust in God. He is learning what genuine commitment means. He is practicing what he preaches when his text is, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5). He is building his character with the virtues of patience. He is cleansing his spirit of resentment and replacing it with forgiveness. He is stronger and better for having had the experience.

The flock fortunate enough to have a pastor like this is spared the unpleasant experience of watching a man of God stoop to engage in petty conflict, which is beneath the dignity of his office and not worthy of a Spirit-filled preacher of the Word. Such a flock is given the priceless privilege of watching an example. They have heard sermons, and now they are seeing one.

Best of all, this is pleasing to our Heavenly Father. A preacher's Christlike behavior brings a smile of favor to the face of God. He sees His child growing taller and stronger. He moves on the scene to perform a miracle appropriate for the occasion, and there is joy in heaven.

Oh, yes, there is a time to speak out, a time to cry aloud, and a time to raise your voice in contention of moral principles. Make no mistake about that. But there is also a time to go right on doing your task, leaving the action to the Lord's good pleasure.

There is a time to "saw wood and say nothing."

The preacher's function is like that of the moon. The light that comes from him is borrowed light

A Plea for Expository Preaching

WHEN THE PEOPLE of your congregation, "loving the habitation of God's house and the place where his honor dwelleth," "sit erect to Almighty God" and to you as God's spokesman, what do you say to them?

When they go to the trouble to ready the children and themselves, and drive perhaps a distance, what do you say to them?

When they come often with their world tumbled in on them, finding it hard to sing the Lord's song in such a strange time, what do you say to them?

When evil in myriad dread shapes has visited them, and they come hoping to find a balm in Gilead, what do you say to them? Do you have any "oil of joy" with which to salve their wounds?

When everything is going right with them, and they are able to cope, and a child is about to be graduated or married, or the husband has been promoted, and they feel more like the runner who has just broken the four-minute mile, what do you say to them?

When they are in between that morning or that evening, not knowing which

direction their lives are to take, what do you say to them?

In these critical times of the mid-1970s, when we are entering upon the last quarter of this burgeoning twentieth century, when walking on the moon is almost old hat, and when we are probing Mars and wondering what other probes we should next put our ingenuity into, what do you say to the people who make up the community of faith?

In these times when so many of the old landmarks of the spirit are being threatened, and this ruthless challenge of unfaith has had such success in the society as a whole, and new moral theories seem to be so respectable to so many, what kinds of sounds ought to come from your trumpet?

In our time of TV and radio and the *Chicago Daily News* and political speeches and all the rest, 10,000 tom-toms are competing for the attention of your people. If your bugle is muted, you won't get their attention. And if you win their attention, but your bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle or for anything else?

Perhaps, as the people come with heavy hearts and with happy hearts, and sit erect to God and to you, you are to speak to them the kind of sure word that they need to hear.

The place where that sure word is found, of course, is in Scripture—most especially in the mighty acts of God in Christ. And it is ours to herald those mighty acts in Christ, through which God offers His grace to people in a world like ours. And it is my contention that we can do this best, not by topical hom-



by
J. Kenneth Grider

Professor of Theology,
Nazarene Theological
Seminary,
Kansas City

ilies that we invent and that might be only incidentally based on Scripture, nor even with textual sermons that still might not be sufficiently led along by Scripture, but, in the main, with expository sermons.

Most of us know what expository preaching is. It is using a scripture passage of two or three verses or more—up to an entire Bible book—and lifting from that passage the sermon's theme and the main headings under which that theme is treated.

It is different from textual preaching only in that it treats a more lengthy passage of Scripture.

It is different from topical preaching in that, not only is a text taken as the basis of a theme, but all the main emphases made in the sermon are based on the context of the area of Scripture where the text is found. In a topical sermon, the points may be simply one's own inventions. And the presumptuous sermonizer might then seek to show that his inventions have biblical support from random areas of the Bible.

Expository preaching, as I see the matter, is a more desirable type than are either of the other two types.

This type is more desirable, ordinarily, than the textual type. This is, in part, because the longer passage of Scripture being used helps to prevent the sermon's theme and main points from being taken out of context and therefore from misrepresenting what the Scriptures teach. While a textual sermon is not nearly as likely to be inauthentic, in this way, as a topical sermon, it is still much more susceptible than is an expository sermon.

This type of sermon is ordinarily more desirable than the topical for several reasons that will become obvious as I discuss the matter further.

Expository preaching owns up to the preacher's finiteness. After all, he is only a creature—Spirit-guided, but a creature—and cannot presume to know precisely what the people should hear. He needs to go to Scripture and expose to his congregation what its meaning for them is. If he preaches topically, he is in charge all the way along. If he exposes the meaning of one area of Scripture, the passage leads him along in the

things he is saying. Most people want to hear an authoritative word, and most of them understand Scripture to be authoritative. So they will appreciate expository sermons.

The preacher's function is like that of the moon in relation to the sun: the light that comes from him is borrowed light, and he only reflects this borrowed light.

He is not the discoverer of the recipe, as Colonel Sanders was, but only makes use of the recipe.

He is not the Shakespeare who writes the play, but the college professor who explains what the passages in the play mean.

He is not the Bach who writes the music, but the organist who renders it faithfully, contributing, admittedly and importantly, of his own conception of Bach's message by means of his own understanding of Christian faith and his own existential (including emotional) involvement in Christian faith. Nor is he the Charles Wesley, but the Beverly Shea who does not write the song itself but sings it with his own contribution as a vocalist.

He is not the Rembrandt nor the Da-Vinci nor the Norman Rockwell, but the museum guide who is a professional in his work and conducts guided tours telling the public what the work of the masters means.

If the minister invents his own themes and the main headings of his message, as in topical preaching, thinking that his own word is good enough, it is as if a museum guide would decide that he can paint as well as the masters, do numerous paintings himself, place these on the museum's walls instead, and show the public his own paintings. The reason for their coming to the museum—to see the work of the masters and to have them explained—would have been thwarted.

If Beverly Shea were only a vocalist and not a hymn writer, and would junk all the works of the great hymn writers and sing second-rate numbers of his own, it would be like what happens when a preacher thinks that he can invent the message he is to bring. If he is a good speech maker as Beverly Shea is a good vocalist, the people would perhaps not

be entirely put out with him. But the more discerning ones, at least, would probably be disappointed in his ministry to them.

Along with this plea for expository preaching, I would suggest several cautions. One is that we are not to suppose that if we use a rather lengthy passage, and get our theme and main headings from it, we are sure to present an authentic, biblical, correctly doctrinal sermon.

The theme, e.g., which we might think we have to be the gravitating interest of the passage might not be that at all. We might simply want to preach on a given theme and think that is what a given passage of Scripture has to do with.

Also, one or more of our main headings, in an expository sermon, might not be actually supportable by a given passage of Scripture within the area which we are exposing the meaning of.

Again, we might have a pet peeve, or a hobby that we like to emphasize, or a specific thing we want to say to one or more persons in the congregation, arising out of a problem, and we might twist a phrase or clause or sentence in our passage so that we will be allowed, artificially, to discourse on a particular subject.

Because of this kind of danger, we need to come to the passage we are using, read it over and over, study commentaries on it, check the meaning of its key words, and thereby seek to get on the inside of what its meaning really is.

If we do this, we will be showing a proper respect for Scripture.

If we do this, we might find that the theme and its main divisions that really are in the passage will indeed minister to the needs of the people in our congregation. We might think we know what the needs are when we do not. There might be hidden needs that no one has expressed. Scripture, if we let it lead the

way, will apply to needs both hidden and open. Besides, people can tell when we have twisted Scripture so as to support a point we wish to make. And we might do more harm than good by our contriving to refer to it from Scripture.

Another caution I would suggest to the minister who decides to preach expository sermons is that he take seriously the need to do the hard work necessary to produce a good sermon.

To use a good method and neglect to dig hard for the gold would be similar to a singer's learning his voice lessons well and then being careless in the selection of the song he is to sing. It would be like a carpenter using the best tools available but building a house with rotten wood.

Another caution I would suggest is not simply to preach the Bible, but to preach the Christ of the Bible, and God the Father's offer of grace through Christ.

Some people refer to the Bible and use it as though it were the thing we really have to do with, in a final way. It is a book, a collection of 66 different writings within a book, authoritative for our doctrine and our practice of the Christian life. Yet it is, indeed, a book. It is not a person. It is not God himself. While one theologian, Emil Brunner, cautioned that it is not the Protestant's paper pope, I would caution that it is not our paper God.

I do not mean to be saying that sermons that are not expository in nature are altogether inappropriate. I do not mean to say that it is impossible to declare God's Word and will by use of the other methods. I am meaning to say that if the expository type of sermon is used, the preacher is more likely to present a truly biblical, doctrinally sound, hearer-related, and hearer-accepted message—one that speaks to the human needs the preacher knows about and the ones he does not know about.

My devotional life is troubled when my life is hurried.

—From the diary of J. G. Morrison

The Prophet's Echo

By Richard Baker*

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK! "Hello, I am a Bible student from the Kingdom Hall. I have here our pamphlets, the *Watchtower* and the *Awake*; they have some very interesting articles. I'd like to show them to you."

"Well, I am sorry, but I don't have any time now; I am very busy."

Is that the truth? Why not just come out and say, "I don't care about you enough to give the gospel to you, so just peddle your papers somewhere else."

Hear the words of the prophet: *When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand* (Ezek. 33:8).

Pretty heavy, isn't it? We, the saved, the righteous, are responsible to turn the wicked from his way. Jesus said to go to all nations. I have found to get to all nations I must first go through the door of my house. So I ask you, Is it reasonable that I should push that one away who is standing at my door? It isn't enough to say they have a Bible, they know the truth. If that were so, I wouldn't be a Christian today, because I had a Bible, I went to church. I can't tell you how many times I heard the gospel before I believed. That is one reason I will preach to all men as many times as necessary to win them. Another reason is, our *Manual* says in its General Rules, "We are

to press upon the attention of the unsaved the claims of the gospel and seek to encompass their salvation." I take this to include those caught up in the delusion of a false religion.

I suppose one reason we are so quick to close the door on them is we think we don't know how to answer them. Shame on us! We have the Bible to show them what God says. And certainly all Christians have their own testimony that no one can dispute—whether they agree or not. Then, too, we have the Holy Spirit to help and guide us, and also prepare their hearts.

For those of you who see these people as souls in need of salvation, I ask you to reach out in love to the person. Don't be like I was and go after them with a meat cleaver to get them saved. Only the gospel of Christ can win them. We wouldn't think of catching a butterfly with an ax, so why should we try to save souls with one? To catch these souls, we need to use the net of love, thrown out with compassion and concern for the one we seek to catch.

It is my prayer that you will see this English-speaking mission field before one of your loved ones falls prey to the Watchtower slaves. I will present the whole gospel to the whole world, especially when the world knocks at my door. I will not have their blood required at my hand, but I will deliver my soul. I will warn them.

If Margie, my sister, knocks on your door, do me a favor and warn her. I still love her.

*Senior student, Nazarene Bible College.

If Thielicke is correct, and a "theological thought can breathe only in an atmosphere of dialogue with God," then the church is our pastor

"The Church Is Our Pastor"

THAT INTRIGUING TITLE is a sentence in Helmut Thielicke's little booklet *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*. By it, the author is underscoring the fact that theology, and theologians, have a vital responsibility to work within the framework of truth, with the boundaries of Scripture and the church clearly in evidence. Theological truth will not hurt the Bible or the church. But pseudo-theology injures both.

The church does have a right to ask questions about our soundness in the faith. It has a right to ask pastors and teachers to produce credentials in harmony with the Scripture. Pastors rarely are experts in systematic theology, but their daily contact with believers makes them "the last word" in the eyes of their people when it comes to doctrine. That alone is sufficient reason for pastors to keep their theological understanding sharp and clear. It

also means that pastors must be equipped with theological principles, and the mandate of our educational institutions must encompass this end.

Another side of that mandate is that of imparting a *spirit* of fidelity and humility in the preachers we equip. One of the hazards of the study of theology is that of developing pride of knowledge, somewhat of a disdain of the ignorant, everyday believer in the local church. This is particularly a hazard of the developing and just-graduated student; but it may develop in the attitude of any serious student of doctrine whatever the age.

It is somewhat startling to find that untrained Christians often have a sixth sense for recognizing pseudo-sincerity and pseudo-learning in the theological teachings of their pastors and teachers. Thielicke calls this "the spiritual instinct of the children of God." By theologians (either pastoral or professional) this is often labelled as "heresy hunting." While the latter does exist, for the most part this spiritual instinct phenomenon represents a genuine and innate sensitivity to that which destroys faith.

Wherein, then, is the church our pastor in the realm of theology? It is our pastor because its call is to

by
Neil E. Hightower

Superintendent
Canada Central District
Church of the Nazarene



shepherd the pasture where the believer feeds. Not to protect the source of spiritual food is to betray a trust. The primary pasture is the Word of God. But there are secondary pastures to be protected, such as the reading habits of our people, and the speakers and singing groups to which they are exposed.

It is our pastor because it insists that theology must be *in touch with real life*, not theoretical life. It must answer questions that spring from common contemporary experience as well as the past, and as well as schoolroom theorizing. The New Testament's demonstration of concern for the living present is the towering example here.

The church is our pastor because it insists that theology must *speak*

to persons as well as to principle. Separated from the person dimension, it tends to either scholasticism or mysticism.

It is our pastor because it insists that theology must *nurture* devotion as well as dogmatics. Thielicke described this as "prayed dogmatics," and says "a theological thought can breathe only in the atmosphere of dialogue with God."¹

The church is our pastor because it insists that theology must *strengthen faith* and not become lost in speculative philosophy. Unlike Descartes who said, "I doubt in order to know," sound theology must say, "I believe in order to know."

1. Helmut Thielicke, *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*, trans. Charles L. Taylor (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962).

Objectives for the Minister

1. Brevity in announcements
2. Efficiency in work
3. Interest in the world
around us
4. Persuasiveness in promotion
5. Responsibility in business
6. Patience in poverty
7. Vision in planning
8. Charity in human relations
9. Preparation for preaching
10. Power in prayer
11. Compassion for the troubled
12. Zeal in evangelism
13. Loyalty to principle
14. Devotion to God

—Homer J. Adams

How accommodating are we in allowing people to express grief? How understanding are we of the gravity of this problem?

Coping with Grief

THEY THAT MOURN shall be comforted, given a grieving space.

It is two and one-half years since my father died. I had not realized it had been so long until I began to think about this article. The event still *feels* more recent.

Two days ago, I spoke to a woman widowed the night before. She bravely used the cliché "Life goes on." But for the bereaved person—especially the widow or widower—life does *not* go on in anything like the same way. Many say that even after decades have elapsed, the void is never fully filled. Gradually, adjustments are made and a new lifestyle emerges. People cope. Magnificently!

Immediately, however, there is a newly introduced fact of life—a complex of emotions known as grief—seeking expression and demanding much of the bereaved person's psychic energy. Grief may include elements of fear, anxiety, anger, self-

pity, guilt, and remorse. Time is needed to sift out these conflicting emotions before sorrowing persons can mourn properly and make peace with their dead. This *pure* grief, a serene and friendly emotion, able to illuminate what remains of life, is not achieved in a moment; and if a pastor is able in his counselling to help a bereaved person to give expression to the preceding facets of grief as they well up within him, then he will probably have helped greatly.

How accommodating are we in modern society in allowing people to express their grief? Remember, repressed painful emotions may lay in store for a great deal of mental trouble. Dr. Paul E. Johnson writes, "What is actually needed is an open expression of grief emotions in weeping or in extended conversation about the deceased to give vent to the repressed tensions."¹ We all expect grief to be about the strongest emotion we ever experience, but even being so forewarned about the matter, the actual experience can be overwhelming in its intensity.

"Why has no one told me these things?" C. S. Lewis confided to the diary he kept after his wife died. He wrote that grief was like fear; it gave the same fluttering in the stomach and the same restlessness. There was yawning and repeated swallowing and an invisible blanket between the world and self.²



by
Brian L. Farmer

Pastor
Church of the Nazarene
Paisley, Scotland

Others have told of disorientation in somewhat different, but no less turbulent, forms.

Some bereaved people speak of how in the period immediately following the loss of their loved one they lost their bearings. One woman whose husband had died of a heart attack four years previously said, "I felt I was in a dream—as though I was not really there. People were doing things which had nothing to do with me." Another widow, two and a half years after her husband's death, explained: "I felt very child-like—I wanted to be cherished and made a fuss of, to be praised for being good."

Sometimes there is a deep yearning and pining for the deceased; an agonized "willing" that the death should not be so. People have testified of how essential it is to have company at such a time. Nights are the worst. There are physical feelings of anxiety, tension, and fear. A Christian minister spoke of the passing of a friend. "I felt as though the middle of me had disappeared," he said, "Late at night I just shook and shook."

Dr. Colin Murray Parkes feels that the permanent breaking of close human attachment leaves the bereaved person with "a very strong urge to cry [out] . . . we suppress this urge and instead tend to sob."³

It is hard to imagine that the avoidance or even denial of emotion as powerful as grief would not be a contributing cause to a great deal of the physical and mental illness that occurs from time to time among bereaved people. To fail to find a way

to mourn, and so express grief may cause a person to put a lid on *all* feeling and become an unfeeling person.

In the slightly longer term, the bereaved may be afflicted by aimlessness and apathy. After all, in a close personal relationship, not only is one's personal life greatly sustained by the other, but the other's well-being becomes one significant reason for one's own life and work. Many middle-aged and elderly widows and widowers find it very difficult to find a new place for themselves.

Happily, however, there is blessedness to those that mourn, as our Lord made plain. Their comfort does not come by straining to repress their grief, but largely through the process of mourning itself, and, in the case of those who know Christ, through their hope of eternal life in heaven. The time comes when they reorganize their lives and begin to realize that there are certain things they have learned from their experience which may make them sadder people, but certainly more mature.

The foregoing issues do not represent novel insights. Indeed, many of them are perceived intuitively by the sympathetic pastor. But it does help to be reminded about how it is with people at a most painful period in their lives.

1. Paul E. Johnson, *Pastoral Ministration* (Weylyn, Herts., England: James Nisbet and Co. Ltd. 1955), p. 217.

2. F. Weldon, "Lessons for Living," *Radio Times* (London: B.B.C., 4-11, Dec., 1976), p. 86.

3. "The Long Valley—Bereavement and Its Aftermath," *Listener* (9, Dec., 1976), p. 737.



Elderly people respond to biblical truths presented clearly and forthrightly. They need our best efforts

Ministering to the Aged

By Allan W. Miller*

MINISTERING TO THE ELDERLY took on new meaning to me when the Lord showed me how to apply biblical truths more directly to their problems. Bible studies and messages came alive to these people when they began to see that the Book of God spoke to the situations.

Before this change came about in my ministry, I remember overhearing one lady in her upper eighties remark to another elderly friend, "That preacher doesn't preach very well." After the change in my ministry, this same lady—now in her nineties—became one of my most faithful listeners and friends.

Needs of the Elderly

Isolation from family is one of the most pressing problems. Two of 10 families put parents and other elderly relatives in care centers or rest homes to be relieved of the responsibilities of caring for them. This isolation results in deteriorating family ties. The prevailing attitude is "out of sight, out of mind."

Families mean so much to the elderly. Visits from families and friends can never come often enough to satisfy them. Yet meaningful visits can do much to alleviate the loneliness of the elderly.

When ministering to the elderly away from family and friends, the pastor demonstrates God's love and companionship. He helps them to

commit their loneliness to the Lord, and to allow Him to help them grow spiritually. There are many scriptures which relate to the comfort and strength God can give to the lonely.

Change of environment can be a traumatic experience for the elderly. One Christian man who had attended our services was taken to a convalescent care center for the aged after his wife was physically unable to care for him. He had provided a more than adequate home for his family as a craftsman in his trade. He was taken from his home in a blackout, waking up in a bed in the care center with restraining bindings on him. To find himself in this situation was almost too much for him. Helping him accept this new situation was a challenge.

Another change in environment that can be upsetting to the elderly is a change in rooms. Security is high on their list of values. Any change is upsetting to them. Focusing on God and His presence can help them in the midst of change. Helping them to realize that even at their age their faith and trust can grow, will help them bridge the gaps caused by change in environment.

Another test that the elderly face is the invasion of privacy. They have had the privacy of their own homes. Now they are thrown into a group situation where their privacy is invaded at all hours of the day and night. This encroachment on their privacy comes from those who are

*Nazarene elder, Oregon Pacific District.

losing control of their minds or who are not able to handle the pain they have. Loud shouts and groans are upsetting.

Invasion of privacy also comes from the elderly who explore in a childlike manner through the drawers and closets of others. To lose some cherished keepsake to such a person can cause distress.

Ministering to the elderly in this situation requires that we help them realize that the spiritual is more important than the material. We can also help them realize that God is giving another opportunity for their love to grow as they learn to love the unlovable.

There are a number of other problems facing the elderly. A lack of variety of meals to which they were accustomed in their own homes is hard to accept. Increasing physical incompetence is distressing, especially to one who has been so active in earlier years. Disappointments (from broken promises or visits which did not come as planned) are hard for the elderly to accept, however legitimate the reasons.

The Ministry of the Church

An active Home Department can take care of many of the above needs. Gifts of Christian literature, frequent visits, little remembrances, such as a fruit basket, and those little "specials" they like but do not get in the ordinary routine of the institution, can brighten their day.

Encouraging families of the church to take care of their aged according to God's plan is another ministry. The more I have been involved in working with the elderly in homes for the aged, the more I am convinced that God's concern for the elderly is important. They should be kept in the homes of the family just as long as their physical needs can be met without endangering the health of

members of the family. Children need the influence of their grandparents. They also need to see the love and concern that can be expressed by the family to the elderly.

Suggestions to the Pastor

For the pastor who has the opportunity for a direct ministry to the elderly in homes for the aged, here are some guidelines:

1. Prepare your messages with the above needs in mind, and apply scripture to these needs.

2. Salvation can be presented to the group, but individuals need to be dealt with privately. Often they have questions which can be answered better alone in their own rooms.

3. Build open relationships with the management of homes for the aged so that any problems that come to your attention through visits can be presented fairly.

4. In dealing with such problems as might arise, remember that the viewpoint of the elderly is only one side of the total picture. They tend to evaluate any situation according to the way their own individual needs are met.

5. Constantly keep in mind that the elderly are people who will respond to biblical truths presented clearly and forthrightly. They, too, need to grow spiritually in the new situations in which they find themselves.

Results of Ministering to Their Needs

Sometimes the Sunday afternoon service at the rest home is more a duty than a challenge. Since the change came in my ministry to the elderly, I now look forward to the services with them. Your ministry will grow when you begin to see their needs and apply biblical truths to such needs.

Set a Chair for Jesus

By Ron Combs*

Recently I had the pleasure of hearing Rev. Aleck Ulmet, superintendent of the Kentucky District, preach. He used an illustration from his early days in the located ministry.

One Sunday the Sunday school superintendent asked him to fill in for the junior boys' teacher. Just before the class, Rev. Ulmet went down to the classroom, closed the door, sat down, and prayed: "Jesus, You know how difficult this particular class is to work with. Help me!"

He could feel the Lord saying, "I will, if you'll just set a chair for Me."

So that is precisely what Rev. Ulmet proceeded to do. He pulled out a chair, and as the boys filed in, he told them that they had a guest, and no one was to sit in that chair. Soon he confessed that the chair was set for Jesus. What a change of attitude that came over the boys when it was pointed out that Jesus was present. The atmosphere was reverent, and the boys really concentrated on spiritual matters.

I feel that this little illustration points out two characteristic flaws in the Christian life of today. First, we call on Jesus to help us, but really don't expect it. It's like the church in a drought-stricken community who gathered to pray for rain. But only one little girl had the faith to bring an umbrella. Expect a miracle! God is *still* the most positive Power in all the universe.

Second, we do not respond as if we really felt Jesus was right there next to us—in the car going to work; helping push the grocery cart; sharing in our devotion time; going with us to visit that difficult client, neighbor, church member.

If we felt that Jesus was right there, it's likely that our whole spiritual attitude would change—just like those young boys. The truth is that Jesus *is* involved in all the above.

What an assurance that should bring. Begin to live as if Jesus were right there beside you. Because He is. The impact will bless your life.

*Pastor, Bethel Church of the Nazarene, Lexington, Ky.

Evangelistically Speaking—

"Learn to Relax— Whatever That Means"

(A tribute to the late Evangelist Paul Martin)

By Lenny Wisehart*

HE WAS A MAN OF GOD—a unique combination of the old and the new—and he gave, and he gave, and he gave. He was my friend.

Nine months ago the Iowa District was having its annual preachers' and wives' meeting. Paul and I were in area revival meetings and received invitations to attend the retreat. I told him I was planning on being an evangelist the rest of my life. Since he had been an evangelist for over 30 years, and I had just completed my first year, I was anxious for him to respond to a question that was heavy on my mind. I took out a sheet of paper and wrote this statement at the top:

**LENNY, WHATEVER YOU DO
BE SURE TO—**

(This is what he said)

1. Keep your commitment to Christ and to His call, clear—deep in your heart—precious—whatever happens. God has called. Jesus has saved. His Spirit is in you.

2. Remember that if people really get to know you, they will love you.

3. You are a guest of the preacher and his church. They treat you kindly, for they think you are a good man like their pastor. Be sure when you leave Monday, they will feel the same way about the ministry.

4. Write a little every week—prose or poetry or music. Listen, read regularly, keep open to new ideas, new ways to do your job.

5. Practice saying, "Thank you," often—for your room, for the food check, for the offering (it could have been less).

6. Really keep surprised with the joy of what happens—good and bad—and in God's economy there will be lots more good than bad.

7. Keep your personal problems to yourself. It may get sympathy to tell them, but just remember, there is no real joy in sympathy-seeking or -receiving.

8. Be careful about making, developing, or exploiting friends in local churches. You can't help but make a few friends, but use care.

9. Preach 20 minutes, exhort to the altar 20 minutes—not really, but take time in the invitation.

10. Learn to relax—whatever that means.

And so his list of suggestions concluded. I expressed my appreciation and he gave his typical grin. We shook hands and parted.

I'm proud to be an evangelist. I'm glad Paul Martin was such a credit to all we stand for. His words will continue to speak to me as long as I live—perhaps they have spoken to you today.

*Nazarene evangelist, Kansas City.

What mood should typify the Communion meal?
If giggles are inappropriate, perhaps
also are sober faces

Let Us Celebrate Communion

By Jerry Hull*

WE GOT A FUNNY STREAK and giggled while Communion was being served. Most kids sometimes laugh at inappropriate moments—but during Communion? Often guilt feelings emerge when recalling the incident. Laughter was inappropriate for even a group of eight- and nine-year-old boys.

Since boyhood I have participated in many additional Communion services—and conducted some. Often the general atmosphere has been characterized by awkwardness. All too regularly the Lord's Supper falls short of the genuine celebration it ought to be.

What mood should typify the diners at the Communion meal? If giggles are inappropriate, perhaps also are long, somber faces. A story of an anxious mother illustrates: During worship, laughter intermittently spurted through the youngster's pinched lips. The mother disciplined the lad. As he sobbed, his mommy said, "There, that's better."

Reckon the mother in the story stages many of our Communion meals? In a recent Communion service I recorded some descriptive words: Morbid, eerie, stilted, programmed, mournful, superficial, and impatient (let's be quickly done with this, so we can return to real life).

Why do the distributed elements sometimes reduce an otherwise victorious mood of gathered believers to a dull ceremony? What role might the worship leader assume to assure that the drama of the meal is properly reenacted?

Two meals, as models, may assist the clergyman to analyze his style of leadership.

Sometimes a Communion meal is like eating dinner with a prissy aunt—stiff formality and precision seem necessary. Everyone feels a bit uncomfortable and cannot breathe easily until the whole affair is finished.

Perhaps the elements of a Boy Scout campfire meal might be instructive for leading an effective Communion service. A wise pastor will attempt to approximate this model. Boy Scouts (1) excitedly anticipate the meal; (2) almost push and crowd in order to satiate their hunger; (3) gratefully thank those who make the arrangements; (4) eat in a spirit of relaxed camaraderie; and (5) cherish vivid memories about both the adequacy of nourishment and pleasure of the meal.

Bread and wine depict sacrifice—indeed a gruesome death. However, Christ Jesus freely laid down His life (John 10:15, 18). He gladly did it for sinners. Respect and reverence do not prevent joyous, happy (maybe

*Professor, Trevecca Nazarene College, Nashville.

even noisy) celebrating. "Fifteen cheers for Jesus," replete with yell leaders, is hardly appropriate for one's order of worship. Sheer exultation sometimes might, however, cause a congregation to break into a spontaneous standing ovation for the Lord who has set them free.

The "breaking of bread" (cf. Acts 2:42, 46) and "the Lord's supper" (1 Cor. 11:20) are two New Testament ascriptions given this major sacrament. The meal proclaims the saving death of Christ. We do not exult death. We celebrate the significance of His unique death and its unitary association with Easter Sunday.

When inviting worshippers to the Communion table, make it meaning-

ful and significant. Help them experience oneness with all who have dined there throughout the Christian era. But also make the event exude with joy. Let the sacrament resound with a proclamation about a life-giving death. Communion should be a "happening."

Breezy nonchalance certainly has no place for the effective worship leader. The Eucharist is much more than eating at a favorite restaurant. The Lord's Supper literally celebrates life, provides spiritual nourishment, and proclaims hope. The Communion meal is designed for people who cry, bruise, and hurt—but also for those who rejoice, laugh, and giggle.

Come, let us CELEBRATE.

Practical Points

*that make
a difference*

A Box of Candy Made the Difference

Dear Son:

I sat at a table of ministers and laymen at a district gathering the other day. We were in the Holiday Inn dining room.

Our waitress was a tired woman of 50 who did her best to please us. Upon questioning, she said, "No one will remember St. Valentine's Day for me. My husband was an alcoholic. I raised my children myself and have spent all these years as a waitress."

Later, our district superintendent came back with a lovely box of candy and wished her God's blessings for the day. You should have seen her face! *She was loved!* Someone thought enough of her to meet her need. The candy meant very little, but the act meant everything to her.

Son, isn't that an example of Christian ethics in practice? I went to my room and said, "Thank God for the holiness people who really love enough to express themselves with personal concern for others."

There is one waitress in Little Rock, Ark., who will not forget a Nazarene leader who stopped to give and to share.

Love,
Dad

OCTOBER



FOR
PASTORS
and LOCAL
CHURCH
LEADERS

Compiled by the General Stewardship Commission

EARL C. WOLF, Executive Director
STEPHEN J. SORESENSEN, Office Editor

● General Superintendent Coulter

“Be Never Wanting There”



STAND UP FOR JESUS” is a grand old hymn which never fails to stir the emotions. Even preachers enthusiastically sing, “Where duty calls or danger, Be never wanting there.” We must face the fact that there are times when the thought of facing “duty” or “danger” dampens our enthusiasm and brings on a cold chill.

If we listen to some “experts” these days, we get the impression that Christian life and service is one exciting and thrilling experience after another. But in real life it is not always the case. Church members are not always enthusiastic or excited or supportive in their words and actions. Any conscientious minister who has tried to meet the needs of people and churches has found that he must face danger head on, and do his duty whether it is exciting or not.

There are issues and causes and needs in the church which will never be met unless the church has leaders who are “never wanting” when “duty” or “danger” calls.

One of these areas relates to the pastor’s responsibility for financing the program of the church. The General Rules of the Church of the Nazarene are clear and precise in requiring that Nazarenes shall give evidence of their commitment to God by “contributing to the support of the ministry and the church and its work in tithes and offerings.”

The pastor must have the courage and the grace to preach stewardship clearly and scripturally, and to set a good example in his own giving habits. He must be enough of a churchman to resist any pressures for expanded staff, equipment, or special projects that would make it impossible to fulfill the financial assignments and budgets set by the District Assembly or general church. I have seen ministers simply quake with fear at the thought of going to the people to challenge them to meet the financial commitments of the church.

In the history of our church there have been times of great outpourings of the Spirit when people have been challenged to give sacrificially. We all agree that it may not be healthy to continually promote “special offerings.” However, Nazarenes respond to a challenge, and perhaps they would be less likely to respond to the multitudinous financial appeals for “missionary work,” “radio ministry,” etc., of independent groups if they were kept committed and challenged by our own needs.

Here is another area which not only requires courage but good sense,

diplomacy, and love; namely, the area of the ethical requirements of holiness. In the Nineteenth General Assembly, the Church of the Nazarene demonstrated its maturity and courage by revising and relating the General and Special Rules of the church to basic scriptural principles.

What profitable preaching material for a series of sermons is found in these *Manual* articles! With the overwhelming wave of permissiveness, immorality, and perversion abroad in our society, our people need to be taught and fortified by these pertinent scriptural principles. I believe twentieth-century Nazarenes can be challenged to live, act, and behave as spiritual men and women in ways that become holiness.

In recent years I have been blessed by the response of our people to the appeal of the "open altar" at the time of the pastoral prayer. Burdens are lifted, expressions of gratitude are offered. Often sins are forgiven and hearts cleansed in these times of waiting before God.

However, I am concerned that the "altar call" which has been such a vital part of our evangelistic program shall not be discarded. It takes courage to plead, to literally "become a beggar," and to press the claims of Christ upon the sinner and the unsanctified. Some are more gifted in this area than others, but no true minister of Christ can afford to evade this responsibility that is inherent in gospel preaching.

*Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there.*

*Every church
should keep one handy!*

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4. The General Budget is almost paid already! My dad believes that this money is important and that God wants us to care and love enough to give so that we will be giving sacrificially. You know, he says it pays to plan early—then you will not be caught at the last minute with your General Budget wanting.

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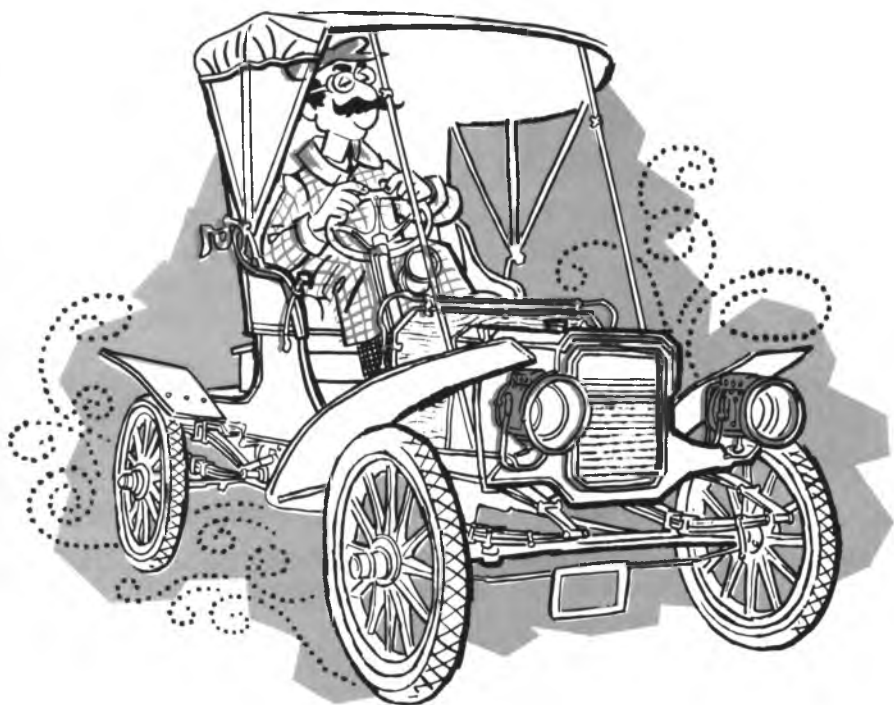
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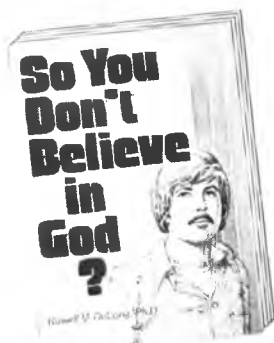
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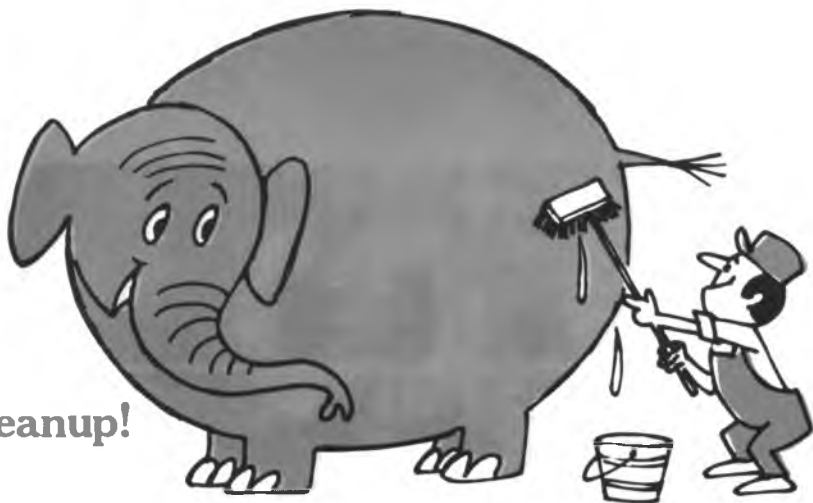
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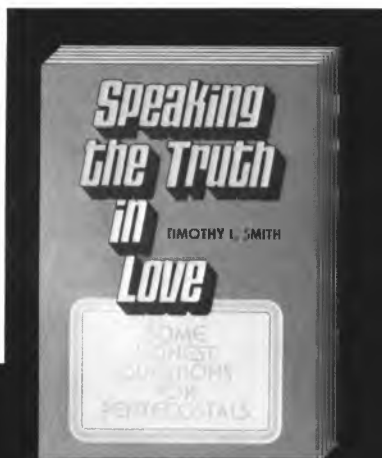
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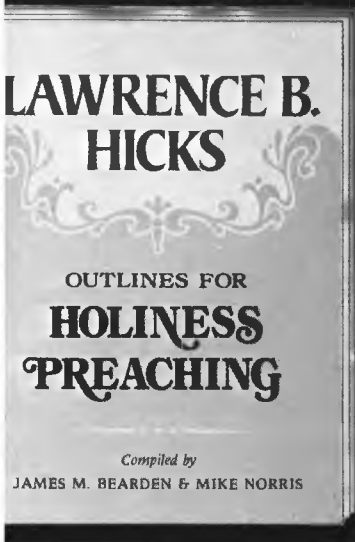
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Development of Self-worth in Children

(Part 2)

THE FOLLOWING is continued from the article on the importance of individual self-worth:

11. *Guard against giving the child a "poor" image*

Not all families have the same financial security. Prosperity is more than money. It is an attitude. Our son said he was glad that even though there was never a lot of money as he was growing up, he had been spared the "poor" image. He believed he would have rebelled at this. It was an unconscious attitude on our part, but we never talked of being poor. Proverbs says, "Poverty tends to stealing." Talk of lack multiplies lack. Children are apt to love a God they can respect. Let it be evident that your God supplies your needs, and include your children in the visibleness of this miracle.

12. *A child needs constant praise and appreciation*

A plant flourishes by watering, feeding, and care. A child needs constant praise. Approval is like a dose of vitamins. It's a shot which blasts loose limitations and inferiority. A child will do most anything to keep

the approval of a parent who has never withheld it. Approval allows a child to come to the peak of performance. Lack of approval makes him feel inferior and inadequate. If you wait for your child to satisfy you before you compliment, you will never have the opportunity. Start with anything good about him. Soon you will see many good things to praise him for.

13. *Develop a feeling that you need him and like to be with him*

The greatest compliment either of our children has paid us is when they have said, "I really like being with you," or "You are fun to be with."

On the other hand, children need to know you need them too. It doesn't hurt to let your child know you have a problem and need him to help solve it. We often asked our children to pray for us. We are saying, "I trust your prayers for me."

Everyone needs to be needed. Ask their advice about important decisions. Make major decisions a family affair, knowing that the head of the house will accumulate the facts and make the final decision.

14. *Keep a healthy image of yourself*

A child feels insecure to hear either parent cut himself down. To speak of yourself as unlearned, ignorant, ugly, fat, poor, or disliked is to tell a child he's inherited an inferior parent. We determined that our children would feel it was special to live in a preacher's home. We stacked up opportunities and never acknowledged limitations. Guard against saying, "Be good because you're a preacher's child." I learned by trial and error that I had a secret feeling I wanted good performances from my children so it wouldn't make me look bad. When I acknowledged it, it released my children. Once a child knows he bears his own responsibility for his actions, he's not so enamored to do the opposite. Children spot phonies quickly.

15. *Avoid judging people*

All children will receive a share of cruelty from other children, teachers, or classmates. If they contribute to these, they need to hear of the hard and fast "Sowing and Reaping Law." They won't be quick to return evil or to instigate it if they know they will receive it back in due measure. My daughter used to almost bite her tongue, saying, "No, I better not say that or someone will say it about me."

When a child is hurt unjustly, check your judgment of the individual responsible. Here are some suggestions:

. . . Your teacher probably had a very hard day. Perhaps she had a quarrel at home.

. . . Maybe someone's sick. Let's pray for her.

. . . Maybe your friend is jealous of you because he needs someone to love him like you do. Let's pray for him.

. . . Maybe someone has made your friend inferior so he must try to hurt

someone who's not. Let's pray he won't feel like that.

If you take your child's hurt personally, you have compounded his problem. The Bible says, "Bless and curse not." "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." The younger that children learn these principles the better.

16. *Develop a healthy attitude toward the opposite sex*

Mothers who tell their children sex is dirty and the opposite sex cannot be trusted are sowing serious seeds of maladjustment. Being interested in the opposite sex at a proper age is natural. Marriage is certainly a natural function of life. The inhibitions of married people are usually carry-overs of early training. Your children need frank, honest answers about life, dating, marriage. Don't press more on them than they are ready for, but their questions indicate what they are ready to hear.

Probably no natural appetite has been so abused nor caused as much grief as our relationship with the opposite sex. Mothers, don't dominate your children—your boys especially. Fathers, take an active interest in your child's development. A weak father can produce very confused children. The family is God's institution. Prepare your child to accept it as normal, manly, womanly, to become totally one with their married mate when the hour arrives. Until then balance it with purity and a normal awakening of their own God-given appetites.

17. *Say, "I am sorry"*

Never become too right, too exact, too stubborn, or too brittle to say, "I am sorry." Every parent makes mistakes. Since these mistakes are apparent to our children anyway, we might as well say so. God gives grace to the humble but resists the proud. The Spirit can only bear witness to

truth. When our actions betray our words, there's no use to pretend. If you reacted contrary to principle, say so. He will love you for it and will have a living example of the way he is to react when he's wrong.

18. *Proper priority on beauty*

Every child wants to be beautiful. Every child is beautiful. Some children have more outward beauty than others. If you are blessed with an outwardly beautiful child, you will need to help him develop proper priorities. Many youth are unbalanced people because their priority was their outward appearance. A beautiful child often becomes a status symbol for a parent. If the inward beauty of the child is not the main emphasis, he will be disliked. People will be jealous of him, and he will not have enough inner security to hold him up. Beauty with inward love is a wonderful combination, but outward beauty without love is a snare.

If a child is not as outwardly attractive as others, work on his abilities as his crowning asset. There are beautiful features about him that can be acknowledged. Sometimes parents take crooked teeth for granted, not knowing that later a child can actually refuse to smile because he's embarrassed. Both of our children had braces. Both have thanked us repeatedly for this care. Overfeeding a child creates weight problems. Too much sugar creates a sweet craze which exists through life. Whatever your child's gifts, he should be told he is beautiful, to produce more beauty, both inwardly and outwardly.

19. *Don't compare your child with other children*

No two children are alike, so we cannot and should not expect the same performance. Often we hear, "Mom liked my brother [or my sister] best." "I was never as good at

sports as my brother, so Dad never paid much attention to me." "I wasn't as smart as the rest of the kids." "I was the black sheep of the family." "My mother never thought I could do anything right."

We ministered to two sisters. One was very beautiful, the other average. One said she suffered rejection constantly because her family said her sister got all the looks. It became a deep scar. Each tried to be more beautiful, smarter, more popular.

Another pressed her first child so much to make him excel that he became ingrown in his personality. Children must be allowed to be themselves, be accepted and loved for what they are. God has made each of us unique, and we please Him when we accept and appreciate that uniqueness in our children or anyone else.

20. *Pray with your child and apply the Scriptures to his life*

Every problem of your child has a scriptural answer. The sooner he realizes the naturalness of God's power to answer his prayers, the sooner he will respond to a good God. Never put God in the punishment role for something the child has done wrong. If he sees you pray and get answers, he will assume that's the normal way to go. Apply the Bible to his needs. Paul said to Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures." Jesus reasoned the Scriptures at 12 years of age. The Scriptures are never forgotten. They may submerge for a while, but they will surface again.

Whatever the age of your child, it is never too late to improve his self-image. If you've already impaired it, ask God to forgive you and begin to change now. Your child is a divine trust.

If you wish the entire 20 steps in the child self-image, this is available on tape for a special series price. Write to Ruth Ann Polston, Box 4000, Waterloo, Ia., and ask for the Self-image Series.

If I Were a Young Pastor*

If I were a young pastor going to my first church, there are some things I would plan to do:

1. I would plan to spend time every day reading my Bible—not just looking for a sermon, but letting God speak to my own heart. I would likewise spend much time praying for my own relationships, and for the families of my church.

2. I would set a time schedule—a time to get to the office. No one will see that I get there on time—but I must. I would spend my mornings preparing sermons, writing letters (appreciation notes, etc.), and my afternoons calling. I would set goals for the number of calls I was going to make each week. Lots of times I would not feel like going—but I would go anyway.

3. I would love my people—share with them in time of sickness, trouble, and sorrow. I have learned if I do this, they will overlook lots of faults in me.

4. I would understand that not all the people will agree with me all the time—and understand that this is not bad. I would understand that because they did not agree with me did not mean they were not my friends.

5. I would treat my people in such a way that no one around the church could tell who my best friends were. I would give a little special treatment to the children and to the older people, especially those who are shut in. Back to the business of best

friends—there will always be those you enjoy more than others, and perhaps fellowship with a little more, but when at church make it so no one can really tell.

6. If someone should treat me cool, I'd show them a little extra attention, for they may feel neglected. I'd go the second mile to keep friendship with all the people, for I will need them all.

7. I'd take things to my board. I'd be careful about what I bought without the board's approval. I'd find out their policy and stick with it. I'd have their approval on any major change I tried to make.

8. When I felt alone and down, discouraged about the whole thing, I'd get on my knees around my altar and remind God that He was in charge—that this thing was too big for me, and that, after all, I was just the office boy and He'd have to help me with it—and I know He would.

9. I'd be very careful what I told others. People love that pastor they can confide in—and this we have to learn.

10. I'd understand that there are lots of things I don't know, and when I have been at it a long, long time, that will still be so. I'd never hesitate to admit that I did not have all the answers.

*From a letter from Rev. Harold B. Graves (superintendent, San Antonio District, Church of the Nazarene) to his son, Rev. Harold B. Graves, Jr., who had just moved to his first church as a new young pastor.

We Choose to Care

By Earl P. Robertson*

The motto of our church is "We Choose to Care." We choose to become involved and concerned with each other's needs and problems and the lives of those around us.

We have a flyer which is used in calling and ministering, entitled *We Choose to Care*. The message in this brochure says:

As a church we have made some choices. We choose to be a church that cares—when sorrow comes, when sickness comes, when loneliness comes.

We choose to care—by offering friendship, by reaching out in love, by being concerned.

We choose to meet the needs of our neighbors—by seeking to discover needs, by seeking to find a way to do something about it.

We choose to offer an acceptable love to you—in your deepest need, and to accept you in Christian love, just as you are.

In a world which competes for the minds of your children, we choose to care by giving them a solid foundation upon which to build.

In a society which tends to under-

mine the values of the home, we choose to care by strengthening those values.

In a world which has lost its sense of direction, we choose to care by pointing you to the One who said, "I am the Way."

In a society where truth is a changing thing, we choose to care by pointing you to the Changeless One who said, "I am the Truth."

When the eternal questions of meaningless existence keep recurring: Why am I here? What is life about? Where am I going? we choose to care by directing you to Him who said, "I am the Life."

Nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus Christ said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." He came to die for us that we might be forgiven of our sins and have eternal life. The Bible says that God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son so that anyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. This is the reason for our existence as a church—to spread the good news that God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. He gives purpose and meaning, a quality of life. As a church we are a group of interested persons—interested in you and your family. If we can be of any assistance, please let us know—for we choose to care.

What about those in your congregation and in your neighborhood—the problem people, the unlovable, the obnoxious, the needy, the loner? Do they know you and your church family care?

A recent poll produced the following conclusions as to why teenagers get out of hand:

1. Parents are not strict enough.
2. Parents do not provide proper homelife.
3. Parents have too many outside interests.
4. Parents are too indulgent—give them too much money and too many privileges.
5. Both parents work, even when the mother is badly needed at home.

THE STARTING POINT

In-depth Pruning

Rev. Kenneth Mills, Peabody, Mass., shared this thought with me some time ago, and I pass it on for your further digestion: We usually associate pruning, as Jesus mentions in John 15, with the removal of old, bad, ugly things that get in the way. Mills adds: "... yes, but it can also include a cutting away of the honest, healthy wood which might be sapping the strength that the branch needs to bear fruit. It is when *everything* that is not needful for fruit bearing is cut away that we can expect that full, rich fruit!"

Andrew Murray, in his book *The True Vine*, carries this thought to this conclusion: "All that is to be left of us is just enough to receive the power of the life-giving sap of the Holy Spirit."

The "Servant Sermon"

Mark 10:44 is a verse that bothers us, for it reads: "And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all." Have you interpreted that for your people—in a sermon and by example?

This is what Clyde Fant said about this verse: "The great sermon is the servant sermon. If the preacher would preach a great sermon, let him preach one that serves. Christ understood human ego drive and did not deny it. But he showed it the proper channel. When we lose our lives for his sake and the sake

of the gospel, we find it. But the preacher who seeks to elevate himself for the sake of his own life loses everything" (Clyde E. Fant, *Preaching for Today*, 1975, p. 67).

What Is God's View?

In Num. 13:30-33 (RSV),* we have two contrasting reports concerning the Promised Land. Caleb gives his report in positive, challenging tones, "Let us go up at once, and occupy it; for we are well able to overcome it."

Then the other spies report, and near the end of that report are seven words that stand out as an epithet to weak faith, "... and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers."

It's what we are in our own estimation that spells victory or defeat. Their dismal view of themselves cast a drapery across the entrance to the Promised Land. It blurred all the possibilities of God.

One question they apparently did not ask was, "What is God's view?" And the word that echoes back to us always is, "The Lord is with us . . ." (Num. 14:9).

How to Develop Interest in Preaching

Clyde Fant, in his book *Preaching for Today*, gives us this bit of caution and challenge: "If the preacher seems not to understand either the real life of real people or the word of God for that existence, he is disqualified from proclamation of the gospel. But if he has known suffering, happiness, frustration, satisfaction—of whatever sort—and if he can bring the word of God to bear on these and other real conditions of human existence, he will be heard, and gladly heard. . . . When the preacher speaks of those things that he and his people have in common, interest always results" (pp. 64-65).

A Word From Fosdick Echoes

Not everything that Fosdick said or wrote excites me. But this is hard to improve on, and it was written in 1928: "Start with a life issue, a real problem, personal or social, perplexing the mind

*From the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, copyrighted 1946 and 1952.



by
C. Neil Strait

Pastor, First
Church of the Nazarene
Lansing, Mich.

or disturbing the conscience; face that problem fairly, deal with it honestly, and throw such light on it from the Spirit of Christ, that people will be able to think

more clearly and live more nobly because of that sermon."

That's a good word for preachers in 1977—or any year.

IN THE STUDY

Seeds for Sermons

MAJOR THOUGHTS FROM THE MINOR PROPHETS

We invite you to begin reading the minor prophets. These next 12 weeks we will study one of the prophets' writings each week. Every Minor Prophet has a major message!

October 2

WHEN GOD GOES HOME AND WE ARE ALONE

TEXT: "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early" (Hos. 5:15).

INTRODUCTION: Nowhere is there a greater message of the love of God for a wayward people than in Hosea. Dr. Ralph Earle,

in his book *Meet the Minor Prophets*, gives a fine description of Hosea and his unfaithful bride. God uses it to picture His love for His unfaithful Bride—the backslider. The darkness of God's withdrawal backdrops the light of His love.

I. GOD WILL GO HOME AND LEAVE US ALONE (5:5)

If we slam the door of mercy in the face of God often enough, He will leave us alone. Paul wrote to the Ephesian Christians: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit." God withdrew because Israel persisted in

A. Lack of knowledge (4:6). A man who asked help of me soon retorted, "Don't give me none of that Jesus stuff!"

B. Breaking the great commandment of loving God (5:3-4)

C. Pride (5:5)

D. Removing bounds (5:10). The taking away of safeguard standards or boundaries. No wonder God withdrew!

II. IF HE HAS GONE, THEN WE MUST GO (6:1-3)

Our text verse and these three verses emphasize the fact that if we have willfully shunned God and want to find Him, we must willfully seek Him. Isaiah said: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found" (55:6). As in the story of the prodigal son, we must do the returning.

III. IT IS TIME TO SEEK THE LORD (10:12)

Evangelist Finney, preaching from this verse, said that we break up the



by
Mark E. Moore

Pastor
Church of the Nazarene
Sylvania, Ohio

fallow ground by: payment of neglected debts; putting aside evil habits; righting of old wrongs; and forgiveness of old injuries. Whatever it is that is keeping us from God, we realize, "Ye have eaten the fruit of lies" (10:13). Be honest with yourself. Seek the Lord now.

CONCLUSION: Charlotte Elliott, when dealt with about a personal religion, resented it. Later she came back to the evangelist and said, "You speak of coming to Jesus, but how? I'm not fit to come." He replied, "Come just as you are." She did and later wrote the hymn "Just as I Am."

October 9

THE OUTPOURED SPIRIT

TEXT: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28).

INTRODUCTION: Our scripture setting (Joel 2:28-32) in the Hebrew Bible is set apart as chapter 3. This five-verse chapter is well known because Peter quoted it on the Day of Pentecost. In it are many messages. Here is one that has challenged me.

I. LET ME HAVE A RIGHT SPIRIT

This promise of the outpouring of God's Spirit is a continuing promise. When we receive of God's Holy Spirit, we have

A. Life—when one has died, we say the spirit has departed. Even so in Christ we have life—abundant life.

B. Lift—The spirit of our life is either uplifting or depressing. One, commenting on Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower on the night before the launching of D day invasion of Europe, said the general had an informality and friendliness as he walked among the hundreds of paratroopers that put them at ease. They felt strengthened for the big hop and the big jump. Christ had a lifting spirit as He walked among men. Blind men believed they could see; lame men believed they could walk; deaf men believed they

could hear; prostitutes believed they could be pure. Everywhere, young and old believed they could be better than they were. Such was the spirit of Christ. My first need is such a Christlike spirit.

II. LET ME DREAM; LET ME HAVE A VISION

This is no nightmare. This is no LSD visionary trip. This the promise of God that by His Spirit we can see what needs to be done. Many a person pondering a problem has finally said, "I see it now! I can do it!" Christ had a vision: He said, "I will build my church." In His Spirit, we too can have that vision: revival, growth, expansion, etc.

III. TELL ME YOUR DREAM AND I'LL TELL YOU MINE

In the spirit of Christ, let us prophesy. Let us share our dreams and say to one another, "I believe it can be done." Enthusiasm is contagious. How quickly our church would fail if our leaders had visions, dreams, and goals, but did not share them with us.

CONCLUSION: As Spirit-filled Christians, we not only see people and problems as they are, but we see what can be and proclaim a better tomorrow.

October 16

SEVEN SEARCHING QUESTIONS AND ONE ANSWER

SCRIPTURE: Amos 3:1-8

TEXT: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (3:3).

INTRODUCTION: There are many significant sevens in the Scriptures—from the seven days of creation to the seven beatitudes of Revelation. Here is a short but significant volley of seven questions. To each is the obvious answer: Of course not!

I. LISTEN TO THE QUESTION

Do things happen without a cause? Will a lion roar, a bird be caught, a warning trumpet be blown for no reason at all? Can we walk together if you go your way and I go mine? After six obvious answers God gives the climax question, "Shall there be evil in a city, and the

Lord hath not done it?" (3:6b). Adam Clarke stresses that this is natural evil coming on the people as corrective punishment because of their moral evil. The question is, Can God be just without judgment?

II. HERE IS THE LORD'S ANSWER

I will warn first, but I will punish. I have warned you (v. 8), I must punish you (v. 2). Adam Clark's comments on our text verse are: "While ye loved and served me, I dwelt in you, and walked among you. Now, ye are become alienated from me, your nature and mine are totally opposite. I am holy, ye are unholy. We are no longer agreed, and can no longer walk together." Just the removal of God's protective hand on our lives often releases judgmental forces to chastise us.

III. WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?

Often when one is rushed to the hospital with a heart attack, the doctor will later tell of the warning the heart and body had been trying to give that person. Likewise we receive warning about our heart's condition before God. Dr. R. V. DeLong, in one of his great radio sermons years ago, said: "There are no moral accidents. There may be moral wrecks—but none are accidental. The word 'moral' implies choice. What happens to you morally is the result of your premeditated choices."

CONCLUSION: The beautiful hymn "In the Garden" carries the phrase: "And He walks with me . . ." As Adam and Eve "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day" (Gen. 3:8), I too hear His voice saying, Let us walk together in holy agreement. We need each other.

October 23

THERE SHALL BE HOLINESS

TEXT: "But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions" (Obad. 17).

INTRODUCTION: We have heard of the tombstone epitaph: "As I am now, you

soon will be. Make ready then, to follow me." To which one added: "To follow you I'm not content, Until I know which way you went." When someone says they are living on the mountain, I, like Obadiah, want to know which mountain. The mount of pride—Esau; or the mount of holiness—Zion. Obadiah contrasts life on these two mounts.

I. LIVING ON MOUNT ESAU (vv. 8-9)

Living on Mount Esau is the frustrated life of living under the condemnation of "you should have." It is the defeated life of wrong choices. Again God through Obadiah uses one of His significant sevens. In vv. 12-14 is the sevenfold message "thou shouldst not" or "neither shouldst thou." You should not have forgotten your brother was still your brother, and you should not have treated him as you did. The reference is back to Num. 20:14ff. when Edom refused Israel passage through their land. Heb. 12:14, 16 refers to Esau as: "Follow peace . . . lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau." Anyone who rejoices over a brother's sufferings will finally bring suffering to himself—in the family, in the church. Living on the mount of pride is always deceitful (v. 3).

II. LIVING ON MOUNT ZION (v. 17)

Only when we move from Mount Esau to Mount Zion do we find deliverance from a life of "You should have." Here we enjoy the "peace with all men, and holiness" of Heb. 12:14. Though the enemy may fight and our brother fail to help, still we have peace, for we are free from the shadow of defeated living—"You should have." On Mount Zion we have deliverance from the mountain of carnal pride. We live victoriously on the mount of holiness—a life guided by His holy will.

III. POSSESS YOUR POSSESSIONS (v. 17)

When a will has been probated, then you have a right to claim your inherited possessions (Heb. 9:16-17). Holiness is your possession. You have every right to claim it! Come down from the mount of pride. Pass through the valley of self-surrender. Take residence on the mount of holiness. Possess your possession.

CONCLUSION: Lelia N. Morris said it well

in her hymn "Sanctifying Power." "This God's will for you and me, / That we sanctified should be, / Dwelling in this land of plenteousness. / Fling your doubts and fears aside, / Boldly cross the Jordan's tide, / And your heritage in Christ possess."

October 30

JONAH'S TALK ON LYING VANITIES

TEXT: "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy" (Jon. 2:8).

INTRODUCTION: In the February, 1977, issue of *Readers' Digest*, there was an article giving strong evidence that there were trade routes from the great shipping city of Tarshish to North America. A deciphered inscription rock found in Rhode Island said: "Voyagers from Tarshish this stone proclaims."

Jonah's attempted trip to Tarshish is the setting for today's message.

I. GOD SAID GO (1:1)

It is a lying vanity to try to live as God's people without accepting the responsibilities of such. What the story of the Good Samaritan is to the New Testament, this story of Jonah is to the Old Testament. It is the testimony that there are those who are willing to be Christian if it doesn't make any demands on them. The picture of the priest, the Levite, and Jonah are one and the same. I love the Lord (1:9), but I can't be bothered helping one who has a need—one who has done nothing for me. As long as God hears me when I call on Him for help and doesn't call on me to help Him, I count Him my Lord.

II. JONAH SAID NO

It is a lying vanity to try to live as God's people and not maintain a spiritual life. There is no deeper revelation of man's true self than how he prays. Had Jonah prayed in 1:2, he would not have needed the prayer of 2:1. By observing what he is now doing, we read between the lines to what he had not been doing. It is a lying vanity to

A. Think we don't need to pray (2:2)

B. Think we don't need to look to God's house (2:4)

C. Think we can forget God and not faint in our soul (2:7)

D. Claim to be a follower of the Lord without sacrifice (2:9)

III. JONAH HAD WOE

Jonah's life was filled with woe as long as he forsook God's mercy. Jonah testifies four times to God's mercy, each by the phrase "the Lord prepared":

A. Prepared a plan to save me (1:17)

B. Prepared a plant to shade me (4:6)

C. Prepared a worm to waken me (4:7)

D. Prepared a wind to whisper to me (4:8)

Only by forsaking lying vanities did He find God's saving plan for himself and see it for others.

CONCLUSION: J. W. Van De Venter wished to be an artist, and for five years rejected God's call on his life to preach. Years later, recalling that day, he said: "At last the pivotal hour of my life came and I surrendered all." He penned the hymn "I Surrender All."

Lying vanities or God's mercy—the choice is yours.

By
Ralph Earle

Professor of New Testament
Nazaren Theological
Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.



Gleanings
from the Greek

2 Corinthians 11

"Would to God" (11:1)

This phrase translates one word in the Greek, *ophelon*—"2 aor. of *opheilo*, without the augment . . . used to express a fruitless with . . . *would that*" (A-S, p.

330). This is an example of the fondness of the KJV translators for using God's name where it is not in the Greek (cf. "God forbid" 15 times). The correct translation is simply "I wish" (RSV,¹ NASB²), or "I hope" (NIV).³

"Foolishness" or "Folly"? (11:1)

Aside from Mark 7:22, the Greek word *aphrosynē* is found only in this chapter (vv. 1, 17, 21). It comes from *aphrōn*, which means "senseless, foolish." Probably "foolishness" is more contemporary than "folly." In Mark the NIV uses "folly" because a bad moral connotation is clearly suggested by the context.

"Imperative" or "Indicative"? (11:1)

The last clause of this verse is in the form of an imperative in the KJV and RSV, indicative in the NASB and NIV. Once more we have a second person plural (*anēchesthe*) which can be taken either way. It is difficult here to decide between the two.

"Espoused" or "Betrothed"? (11:2)

The verb is *harmozō* (only here in NT). It comes from *harmos*, "a joining," the origin of our word "harmony." Today we espouse a cause, not a wife. So "betroth" (NASB) is better. The idea here is that of joining one person to another in marriage—where there should be harmony!

"Simplicity and Purity" (11:3)

The KJV has only "simplicity," but the NASB adds "and purity" (cf. RSV, NIV). Why?

The answer is that the added words are found in the oldest Greek manuscripts—Papyrus 46 (third cent.), Vaticanus and Sinaiticus (fourth cent.), and Bezae (fifth cent.)—as well as in the best minuscule manuscripts of the Middle Ages (33, 81, 88).

"Might"? (11:4)

The KJV has: "Ye might . . . bear

with." But the Greek is *anēchesthe* again, probably better translated as a statement, "you bear" (NASB; cf. RSV, NIV).

"Very Chiefest" or "Super"? (11:5)

Paul takes his stand as not being a whit behind the "very chiefest" apostles. The Greek adverb *hyperlian* is found only here and in 13:11, in a parallel context. It is compounded of *hyper*, "above," and *lian*, "very, exceedingly." So it means "over much; pre-eminently" (Thayer, p. 641). Arndt and Gingrich suggest the translation "super-apostles" for the combination expression here, and this was adopted in the NIV.

To whom is Paul referring? Arndt and Gingrich write: "These are either the original apostles . . . or, perhaps with more probability, the opponents of Paul in Corinth" (p. 849).

Plummer agrees with this. He says: "It is improbable that St. Paul would use such an expression as *hoi hyperlian apostoloi* of any of the Twelve." He adds that "there is little doubt that the phrase . . . is a sarcastic description of the Judaizing leaders, who claimed to be acting with the authority of the Twelve against one who had no such authority" (p. 298).

"Rude" or "Unskilled"? (11:6)

The noun *idiotes* (only here and in Acts 4:13; 1 Cor. 14:16, 23-24) comes from the adjective *idios*, "one's own"—that is, what is private and personal. So the noun means first "a private person" and then "one without professional knowledge, unskilled" (A-S, p. 213). The last definition fits well (cf. NASB). The NIV has here: "I may not be a trained speaker, but I do have knowledge." The current use of "rude" (KJV) does not fit.

"Offence" or "Sin"? (11:7)

The Greek word here is *hamartia*, which simply means "sin" and is translated that way 173 out of the 174 times it occurs in the NT. Why the KJV translators chose to render it "offence" in just this one place is a mystery.

"Freely" or "Free of Charge"? (11:7)

Dorean is the accusative of *dorea*, "a gift," as an adverb. So it means "as a gift, without payment, gratis" (AG, p.

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209). "Free of charge" (NIV) communicates this more accurately than "freely" (KJV). Today preaching "freely" means speaking "with freedom" which is something else.

"Chargeable" or "A Burden"? (11:9)

Katanarkaō is a rare verb in Greek literature, but is found here and in 12:13-14, where it is translated "be burdensome." That is probably the meaning here. Literally it means "to grow numb," and so metaphorically "to be inactive, be burdensome" (A-S, p. 236). Etymologically it is unrelated to the adjective *abares* (only here in NT), which in the last part of this verse is translated "kept from being burdensome." The NASB and NIV have in the first instance, "I was not a burden to anyone," and in the second place, "I [have] kept myself from being a burden to you."

"False Apostle" (11:13)

This is one word in Greek, *pseudapostolos* (only here in NT). Paul first calls his opponents in Corinth "super-apostles" (v. 5). Then he becomes more specific and calls them "false apostles," because they were not sent by Christ, as they claimed to be.

"Transform" or "Masquerade"? (11:13-15)

Elsewhere in the KJV "transform" is found only once, Rom. 12:2, where it translates the verb *metamorphoō*, which means "change form." But the verb here is *metaschēmatisō*, which means "change appearance." This is conveyed better by "disguised" (NASB) or "masquerade" (NIV).

"Fool" (11:16, 19)

Besides half a dozen other places the adjective *aphrōn* is found twice in v. 16 and once in 19, plus 12:6, 11. It is usually treated as a substantive, "fool." Hart says that the term expresses "want of mental sanity and sobriety, a reckless and inconsiderate habit of mind" (quoted in A-S, p. 72).

Bertram writes (TDNT, 9:231): "In 2 C. 11 and 12 *aphrōn* and *aphrosynē* are used in self-criticism. The apostle's *aphrosynē* is that in the difficult conflicts with the church or congregation he

apparently or provisionally sets himself on the carnal plane of self-boasting rather than on the spiritual plane. This is what Paul has in view when he speaks of his *aphrosynē* in 2 C. 11:1. In the situation at Corinth foolish boasting . . . before God and men has become necessary for him, 11:16f."

"Suffer" or "Put Up With"? (11:19-20)

This is again the verb *anechō* (see vv. 1 and 4, where it is three times correctly translated "bear with," as in (NASB). In v. 20, "suffer" (KJV) can be very misleading, suggesting that the readers are undergoing suffering. This is not the idea. The NIV helpfully has "put up with" in all four verses. That is the way we would say it today.

"Fool Again" (11:23)

In parentheses we have the statement: "I speak as a fool." This is not *aphrōn*, but *paraphronōn*, participial form of the compound verb *paraphroneō* (only here in NT), which means "to be beside oneself, be deranged" (A-S, p. 343). The sentence may be translated "I speak as if insane" (NASB), or "I am out of my mind to talk like this" (NIV).

"Peril" or "Danger"? (11:26)

The word *kindynos* occurs only in Rom. 8:35 (once) and eight times in this verse. It means "danger" or "risk" (AG, p. 433).

"Painfulness" or "Hardship"? (11:27)

Mochthos (found also in 1 Thess. 2:9; 2 Thess. 3:8) means "toil, labour, hardship, distress" (A-S, p. 297). Comparing *kopos* ("weariness") with this, Thayer says that *kopos* gives prominence to the fatigue and *mochthos* to the hardship (p. 355).

"Watchings" or "Sleeplessness"? (11:27)

Agrypnia occurs only here and in 6:5 (see discussion there). Its primary meaning is sleeplessness (cf. NASB, NIV).

"Fasting" or "Without Food"? (11:27)

Nesteria, usually indicating fasting, probably means lack of available food

here and in 6:6 (see comments there). It is properly translated "without food" (NASB, NIV).

"Basket" (11:33)

Sagarnē literally means "a plaited rope," and so a basket made of ropes. The word is found only here in the NT.



*Outlines for a
Sermon Series from*

Ephesians

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5

I. THE ETHIC OF IMITATION (5:1-6)

- A. Warns against a life of selfish indulgence
 - 1. No hint of immorality
 - 2. No hint of obscene talk
 - 3. Avoid partnership with those who take sin lightly
- B. Reasons for these warnings
 - 1. No inheritance in the kingdom
 - 2. Expose themselves to the wrath of God
- C. Challenges us to pattern our lives after Christ
 - 1. Be imitators of God
 - 2. A life of self-denial

II. OUR WALK IN THE WORLD (5:15-20)

- A. We are not walking the way a Christian should walk
 - 1. Not walking carefully
 - 2. Not seizing every opportunity
 - 3. Not clear about the will of God
 - 4. Not grateful
- B. Our failures can cause us to walk in spiritual depression
- C. We need to realize there is Someone who can help
 - 1. Abandon ourselves to the indwelling Spirit

- 2. Abide in the indwelling Spirit
- 3. Appropriate the indwelling Spirit

III. WIVES AND HUSBANDS (5:21-33)

- A. Wives
 - 1. Be responsible for right attitudes
 - 2. Recognize that authority to rule is laid upon the husband
- B. Husbands
 - 1. Sacrificial love
 - 2. Sanctifying love
 - 3. Caring love
 - 4. Unbreakable love
- C. The whole relationship is in the Lord

RON FRY

Ephesians

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 6

I. CHILDREN AND PARENTS (6:1-4)

- A. The obligations of children to parents
 - 1. Obedience
 - 2. Honor
- B. The obligations of parents to children
 - 1. Negative—not to irritate
 - 2. Positive—discipline and instruction

II. STAND YOUR GROUND (6:10-20)

- A. We are no match for our adversary
- B. Be strong in the Lord
 - 1. Put on the whole armor of God
 - 2. Hold your position in Christ
 - 3. Pray in the Spirit

III. OUR GREATEST WEAPON (6:18-20)

- A. The supreme need of every Christian is holy boldness
- B. Prayer builds confidence
 - 1. Characteristics of effective prayer
 - a. Constant
 - b. Intense
 - c. Unselfish
 - 2. The power of prayer

RON FRY

True Christian Worship

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 13—15

Floyd Filson, in his book *Jesus Christ the Risen Lord*, makes a good observation when he says, "True worship, Paul implies, is never the unaided action of man, even the devout man. It is rather the attitude and expression which the Holy Spirit prompts and guides . . . The Spirit is the key person in true Christian worship."

I. The true Christian in every worship service *ought to pray*. "So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind" (14:15, NIV).*

II. The true Christian in every worship service *ought to sing*. "I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind" (14:15b).

III. The true Christian in every worship service *ought to praise God*. "If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who

*All scripture from *The New International Version*, copyright, 1973, by New York Bible Society International. Used by permission.

do not understand say 'Amen' to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying?" (14:16).

IV. The true Christian in every worship service *ought to speak*, that is, take his part in participation in the service. "Everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort" (14:3). "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men" (12:4-6).

V. The true Christian in every worship service *ought to be united with fellow believers*. "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (12:27). "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all of its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ" (12:12).

VI. The true Christian in every worship service *ought to worship in love*. "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal" (13:1). "Follow the way of love" (14:1).

DERL G. KEEFER

BULLETIN



BARREL

YOU AND YOUR PASTOR

1. Give your pastor time to recharge. He has great and many responsibilities, and the drain of life is heavy on him. He needs time for rest and meditation.

2. He needs time with his family. A renowned psychologist said, "An ordained minister is first a husband, then a father, and a pastor, in that order."

3. Be open with your pastor. If you don't like something he said or did, be man enough to go to him and talk with him about it. He will appreciate it more than if you buzz behind his back.

4. Let your pastor be one with you. Let him be a part of the family of your

church. Don't set him up on a pedestal. He doesn't belong there.

5. Remember that your pastor is a human being also. He will make mistakes and he will need your love. He is not God.

6. Your pastor is a leader and not a one-man show to entertain you.

7. Invite the pastor and his family to your home for a simple meal. A cursory "Come and see us sometime" won't work. It doesn't mean anything. Get right to the calendar and make a specific date. The best way for him to get to know you is to break bread with you.

8. Contrary to what people may think, your pastor and his family cannot remain physically strong on spiritual grace alone. He needs money on which to live—the same as you.

9. Don't cut yourself off from the church because you don't agree with everything he says or does. You only

hurt yourself. You are worshipping God, not the pastor.

10. Let your pastor be himself. Nothing is more frustrating to a pastor than to be molded into something you want him to be.

—Selected

* * *

‘Tis better to walk by FAITH than sight

In this path of yours and mine;
And the pitch-black night,
When there’s no outer light,
Is the time for FAITH to shine.

THE TIME IS SHORT

The time is short!
If thou wouldst work for God—
It must be now!
If thou wouldst win the garland
for thy brow,
Redeem the time.

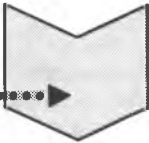
With His reward
He comes; He tarries not—
His day is near.
When men least look for Him,
Will He be here.
Prepare for Him!

—Horatius Bonar



HERE AND THERE

AMONG BOOKS



Conducted by the Editor

All books reviewed may be ordered from
your Publishing House

**More than Man: A Study
in Christology**

By Russell F. Aldwinckle (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976. 311 pp., \$8.95.)

In a fairly technical, but incisive, examination modern models of Christological thinking are examined against the background of the essential understanding of classical models. Anyone who will work through this book will have a sharper understanding of the nature of Christ and His inevitable impact upon the life-style of the believer.

MORRIS A. WEIGELT

**William Barclay:
A Spiritual Autobiography**

(William Eerdmans, 1975. 122 pp., \$5.95.)

This autobiography introduces the reader to many aspects of the life and work of William Barclay, no doubt the

most widely-read Bible commentator of our century. It was written during Barclay’s last and twenty-seventh year at the divinity school of Glasgow University in Scotland.

He tells about his exceptional parents, his many teachers, and several of his colleagues at the University’s Trinity College.

You appreciate Barclay for the realistic way he describes himself. He admits to authoring about 50 books, including a commentary that has sold over a million copies, but says, “I have an essentially second-class mind.” He also says, “I never had an original idea in my life. In all the books I have written I have explained and expounded other men’s ideas.” He underestimates himself here, but one loves him for it. At the same time, he says he knows he has the ability to write plainly so that the readers get the meaning.

While he says, “For many years I have

been stone deaf," he is thankful for a good hearing aid, and that it can be turned off whenever the occasion demands it. It must be a pretty good one, for his lifelong hobby has been conducting choirs.

We evangelicals will tend to get after him for what he says in the chapter about his beliefs. He believes that man is the product of "a process of evolution." Well known is the fact that he does not believe in the virgin birth of Christ.

In keeping with liberalism, he believes profoundly in "the love of God" and "that real prayer is simply being in the presence of God." And he says, "I am a convinced universalist." He believes in "Jesus" and in "life after death," in "marriage," and "the family," and in "preaching."

You do not need to have been one of his students, as I was, to enjoy and profit the most by its warmth and its wisdom. Keep a cool head, or you will often find yourself in ecstasy, and weeping, as I did.

J. KENNETH GRIDER

Preachers' Exchange



WANTED: Copy of *Beautiful Girlhood*, by E. E. Shelhamer. Mrs. Frank L. Dabney, 1125 7th St. E., Whitefish, Mont. 59937.

WANTED: *David Brainerd's Journal*. Rev. Dean E. Schmitt, 7625 Powers Court, Utica, Mich. 48087.

FOR SALE: Set of Charles Simeon's *Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible*, excellent condition (21 vols.) \$45.00. Raymond V. Gardner, 1583 Amesbury Rd., Toledo, Ohio 43612.

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● The Priestly Pastor

The "preliminaries," the prayer, the worship, the sermon—all are necessary parts of the complete pastoral function.

● Wesley's Class Meetings: The Genius of Christian Intimacy

In the light of present emphases on "body life" and "koinonia," Wesley's genius for Christian intimacy was never more relevant.

● Growing Pains

Some churches are either unwilling or unable to pay the price of growth.



AMONG OURSELVES

Let's face it. Some things a pastor needs to know cannot be taught in any college, Bible school, seminary, or combination of these. The books do not set forth all the answers. When should the pastor place a firm hand on the old ship of Zion, and when should he allow time for new directions to become clear? When should he speak, and when should he remain silent? What should he do in a specific situation, in a certain church, at a given time; and what should he not do? There is no source book with all the answers, unless you consult *The Book*—the one Source Book of them all, the Bible! And even then there is much left to your interpretation and application of its eternal principles. So let us learn how to relax (p. 14), when to "saw wood and say nothing" (p. 1), how to care for those who are coping with grief (p. 9), why we must pay the price of biblical, expository preaching (p. 2), and above all, how to make sure that whatever else we accomplish, we "set a chair for Jesus" (p. 13). With Christ at the center of things, all other interests fall into place and the answers become clear.

Yours for souls,

Share the LIGHT of Christmas



THE FIRST CHRISTMAS GIFT **New!**

Musical Drama for Young Children. This Christmas story written by VETERIA and DERRELL BILLINGSLEY is both flexible and easily learned. Involves 12-14 boys and girls ages 4-7 in pantomime parts with an adult narrator. May be as simple or elaborate as desired. Props enhance presentation but are not essential. Performance time approximately 30 minutes.

MC-33 75c

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM BUILDING No. 30 **New!**

More excellent resource material for Christmas program planning by GRACE RAMQUIST. Thirty-two pages of poems, songs, readings, and exercises to help celebrate our Saviour's birth. Material for children, teens, and adults not duplicated in other Builders. Need ideas? Here they are!

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A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Children's Cantata. Contains nine original, singable tunes by JOE E. PARKS for children's voices. Employs solos, rounds with optional flute, tonebells, Autoharp, and percussion accompaniment. Delightfully presented in uncomplicated language. Performance time approximately 35 minutes.

MC-249 Choral Book \$1.25

MY CHRISTMAS GIFT

A Christmas Musical. OTIS SKILLINGS expresses the all encompassing thought that true joy comes when bringing Christ our greatest gift—ourselves. Written for the choir that is interested in a musical presentation with a contemporary flair. Includes narration. Performance time approximately 40 minutes.

MC-31	Choral Book	\$1.9
L-7111	Stereo Album	\$5.9
L-7111C	Book/Record Combination	\$6.9
MU-7111	Accompaniment Tape	\$25.0
MC-31SF	Service Folder	100 for \$3.5

REJOICE, O EARTH

A Christmas Cantata. A motivating musical by JOE E. PARKS focusing attention on that unforgettable, historic night of Christ's coming to earth. All original music for soloists and choir. Not difficult but effective in presentation. Performance time approximately 30 minutes

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MC-29SF	Service Folders	100 for \$3.5

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