

THE **PREACHER'S** **JMC** MAGAZINE



Family Violence

- Growing Roosters and Sinful Silence
page 6
- Sexual and Family Violence
page 8
- 50 Hours for the Poor
page 16
- Adding to the Church Daily
page 51

CHARACTER

We are blind until we see
That in the Universal Plan
Nothing is worth the making
If it does not make the man.

Why build these cities glorious
If man unbuilted goes?
In vain we build the world
Unless the builder also grows.

—Edwin Markham

A PASTOR'S PRAYER FOR ADEQUACY

by Doug Samples

Pastor, Trinity Church of the Nazarene, Fresno, Calif.

It's Tuesday, Lord! Here I am at the library, trying to study and prepare the message for this coming Sunday. I enjoy coming here. It's quiet and conducive to study. Most of all, I am away from the demands of the office and the ringing of the telephone! I can come here, surround myself with my Bible, my books and commentaries, and a pad of paper, and begin to flesh out the sermon that You have planned for Sunday.

But Lord, I just glanced up from notes long enough to take a good look at what all I had brought with me today.

My calendar reminds me that my lunch break will be spent with my church treasurer, making sure that we can pay all the first of the month's bills.

My yellow "Strive for Five" enrollment sheet reminds me of the Sunday School class on church membership I "get" to teach this quarter.

The hymnal I brought calls me to set aside some time to plan out an order of service that will help our people worship on Sunday.

A flier we put together and distributed to the community announces a film series we are showing. (I hope we have a good attendance for this Sunday night's film!)

There is a photocopied page out of *Leadership 100* about an idea that I want to pass on to our children's director. It might help us organize this growing area of our church.

Note cards remind me that I need to write a letter to the girl from our church who just left to attend college.

I have a list of three or four families who have missed church the last couple of Sundays. I need to visit them tonight. Also, there are two "Friendship in Worship" cards from families who visited with us on Sunday!

Besides all of this, hiding in the bottom of my briefcase are the plans for our board retreat coming up next month. I should have worked on that last week, but I couldn't get to it!

Lord, I came here today to study—to focus my mind and my heart on You and the message that You want me to preach. But all around me, I have reminders of all the "other" responsibilities that go along with being a pastor. Don't get me wrong, Lord! I'm not complaining! I love doing the work that You have called me to do. I love preaching. I even love getting ready to preach—most of the time! I enjoy putting a good worship service together. I receive a lot of good "strokes" when I spend time with my people as their shepherd. And I'm excited about the coming board retreat!

I guess the reason for my prayer today comes from once again recognizing how very inadequate I feel to accomplish all the tasks of ministry that need to be taken care of. If this was something I had thought up on my own, there would be days when I would bail out without caring where I landed!

But since You have called me, I can remind You how very much I need You to make me adequate. Help me, Lord, as I attempt to be Your servant and my people's leader!

Amen.

P.S. Help me to get home before my two boys go to bed!

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IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURE ARTICLES

- 1 A PASTOR'S PRAYER FOR ADEQUACY..... *Doug Samples*

EDITORIAL

- 4 HEALTH AND HEALING *Wayne E. Caldwell*

CHURCH AND SOCIETY

- 6 CROWING ROOSTERS AND SINFUL SILENCE *Wesley Tracy*
8 A TIME TO SPEAK *Vernon L. Wexford and Marjorie Hess Galway*
12 VICTIM! *Nina Beegle*
13 PASTORAL CARE OF BATTERED WOMEN: A Summary Review *Nina Beegle*
16 50 HOURS FOR THE POOR *Tom Nees*

BIBLICAL STUDIES

- 18 HERMENEUTICAL INTEGRITY AND THE HOLINESS BIBLICAL SCHOLAR..... *Alex R. G. Deasley*
22 CHARISMATA IN FIRST CORINTHIANS *Clayton Bonar*

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

- 25 A TELEVISION MINISTRY FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH *Larry L. Cox*
26 PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION: An Extended Book Review *Dale E. Jones*
29 COMMON SENSE AND THE PASTORAL VOTE *Jim Cummins*
30 THE CHURCH'S OTHER AMBASSADOR *Patricia Wood*

WORSHIP

- 32 CHILDREN'S CHURCH: What It Is, What It Is Not, What It Could Be..... *Ron Jackson*

WESLEYANA

- 36 FOUR LESSONS ON MONEY FROM ONE OF THE WORLD'S
RICHEST PREACHERS *Charles Edward White*

THE MINISTER'S MATE

- 40 SAYING GOOD-BYE: Variations on a Theme..... *Gwen Rodgers, Sharon R. Harvey, and Betty B.
Robertson*

THE MINISTER'S FINANCES

- 42 MOVING EXPENSES

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS

- 43 FROM SLAVERY TO SONSHIP *Roger Hahn*
46 HOW FAR IS IT FROM BETHLEHEM TO CALVARY? *D. Martin Butler*

EPIPHANY

- 48 COME WORSHIP THE KING *Becky V. Tinnon*
- 49 TO FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS *Michael S. Tinnon*
- 50 NO CROSS, NO GLORY *Michael S. Tinnon*

CHURCH GROWTH

- 51 ADDING TO THE CHURCH DAILY *Charles D. Crow*

REGULAR FEATURES

| | | | |
|--|-----|----------------------------|----|
| Suitable for Framing | IFC | Sermon Outlines | 60 |
| Preacher's Exchange | 24 | Sermon Illustrations | 62 |
| Monday Morning Devotions | 54 | The Ark Rocker | 64 |
| Today's Books for Today's Preacher | 58 | | |

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Wesley Tracy
Editor

Mark D. Marvin
Assistant Editor

Consultant Editors

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

Wilbur Brannon
*Director of Pastoral
Ministries
Church of the Nazarene*

Wayne E. Caldwell
*General Editor
The Wesleyan Church*

Contributing Editors

Eugene L. Stowe
William M. Greathouse
Jerald D. Johnson
John A. Knight
Raymond W. Hurn
*General Superintendents
Church of the Nazarene*

O. D. Emery
Earle L. Wilson
Lee M. Haines
H. C. Wilson
*General Superintendents
The Wesleyan Church*

Jack C. Rea
Jack L. Wilcuts
Maurice Roberts
Roberts Hess
*Superintendents
Evangelical
Friends Church*

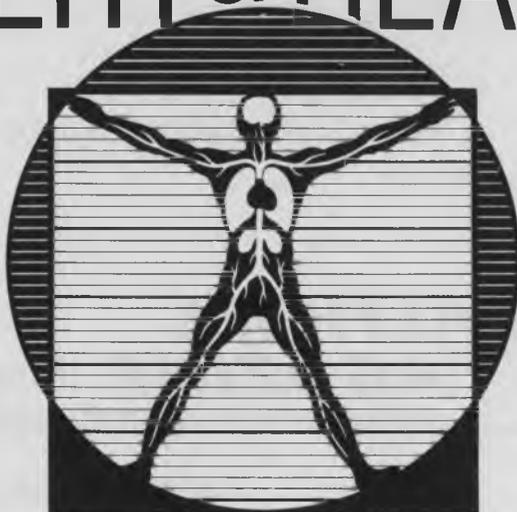
Robert Kline
*General Superintendent
Churches of Christ in
Christian Union*

R. Donald Shafer
*General Conference
Secretary
Brethren in Christ
Church*

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Authors should address all articles and correspondence to Editor, Preacher's Magazine, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes should accompany all manuscripts.

HEALTH & HEALING



A GUEST EDITORIAL

by Wayne E. Caldwell

General Editor, The Wesleyan Church

Why do you visit the sick? "To let them know we care." "Because Christ told us to." "To cheer them up." "To make time go faster." "To pray for them." "We show God's love to them." "To help them spiritually."

A group of church folks were organized to visit the sick, and gave those answers when asked that question. All those answers have some validity, but they all miss the mark. None of them get to the heart of the matter.

We visit the sick to help them get well! Why do most people miss the point? Because almost everyone thinks healing is completely physical—that it's just a matter of doctors and therapists using the right medicines, doing the right surgeries, or using the right techniques. Many Christians, and too many ministers, have concluded they are only cheerleaders for the medical team. There's little they can do but pray for the sick. Healing and wellness is physical, and that's up to the doctors.

Less than a century ago, the role of the church and Christians, even of the minister, was to stand by the bedside of an ill person and to wait helplessly until the person died. The only time people went to the hospital was to die or to wait until something happened. Few

thought a person would ever get well. But antiseptics, anesthesia, surgery, vaccines, X rays, penicillin, miracle drugs, and micro and laser surgery have made many cures possible. Because of this the human body, along with the physical universe, has been viewed as an intricate machine. This human machine can be healed by laboratory genius, scientific methods, and medical techniques.

Dr. Jerome Frank has observed that science is like the Pied Piper who lures humanity down the path of destruction by dazzling, endless goodies. Thus science has led the human family to look to it for comfort in life or death. But thereby we miss the interwoven essentials of the human person.

One young minister went to the hospital where a young man was all broken up by a motorcycle accident. His bones refused to heal. He was 300 miles from home. The boy was lonely, filled with fear, depressed. The young minister lamented, "If I could only do something for him physically." What the young minister did not see was that he was the very person who could have helped by reaching out to nurture the boy's broken spirit. It was

the fear, depression, and loneliness that crushed the boy as well as his broken bones. Rightfully, the boy was a whole person, a multidimensional, soul-body unity in which everything affected everything else.

Health professionals are realizing the vital role ministers, chaplains, and Christian family or friends can play in the healing process. A study made at the University of Virginia Medical Center randomly matched 44 orthopedic injury patients to either daily visits from a minister or no visits at all. The results were convincing. Patients visited by their ministers were discharged two days earlier and required 66 percent less pain medication and made 66 percent fewer calls on nursing time than those who had no visits.

Studies of the health of widows and widowers one year after the loss of their spouses show significantly more health problems and death among the survivors than among married people who did not lose spouses. In effect, research has verified that a person is not a machinelike being that can be fixed like a car or a washing machine. A person is an inseparable spiritual-physical unity. You can't rip a loved one out of a person's life without affecting the whole person—body, mind, heart, soul, spirit, strength. To help a person recover from such a shock and loss, we must minister to the whole person!

In a cardiac care research unit, patients were hooked to electrocardiographs, which constantly printed graphs of their heartbeats. Studies of the printouts found brief periods during which the diseased hearts were normal. Researchers found that those little islands of health happened when the nurses had touched, talked to, or listened to these patients. Nurses today know the art of the healing touch!

Marian Wilcox of Scottsdale, Pa., is a Christian nurse who has learned her role well with all kinds of patients. For a comatose patient, for example, she prays that God will help her speak kindly, touch gently, and give the best care she possibly can. For wherever the comatose patient is in subconsciousness, that person is one whom the Lord loves.

When Marian first worked in the neuro unit, she was shocked to hear what they called it in the hospital. She was revolted and sickened when she heard the term. But the label doesn't bother her anymore. She is sad to think people are there in the "vegetable garden" and unwell. But she has always loved working in her garden at home. Her plants don't talk. They don't walk or work. They can't express pain or pleasure. Yet God causes them to live, and He loves everything to

which He has given life. Then Marian says, "If 'vegetable garden' sounds demeaning, why not flower garden? God's flower garden!"

Norman Cousins, editor of *Saturday Review*, defeated what was called an incurable illness. He spent a couple of hours every afternoon watching and laughing at comedy films that he ordered sent to his hospital room. After each laughter session his blood sugar levels were more normal, and his whole attitude was better. Cousins totally regained his health and now lectures at the University of California, Los Angeles Medical School. Researchers at UCLA have found that laughter causes the body to produce certain healing, morphinelike chemicals. Wasn't it written 900 years before the Christian era that "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine" (Proverbs 17:22)?

In every group of people, many often-unspoken life problems silently take their spirit-breaking toll. Needing a spirit-raising ministry are people who suffer from illness and injury, grief, lack of purpose and meaning in life, loneliness, guilt, low self-esteem, fear, poverty, unemployment, hate, jealousy, greed, and many other things. Any one of these alone can break the spirit, but several of them together are deadening. They not only crush the spirit but also make the body vulnerable to breakdown and illness.

Cousins said recently, "There is little doubt about the fact that fear is the great accelerator of disease." The other side of the coin is that hope, faith, confidence, and a will to live set the stage for health and healing. Paul Tournier writes that we must get the whole picture of a whole personal being. That which is spiritual within us must have meaningful relationships with our neighbor, with nature, with society, and with God.

Wholeness is the security that comes from realizing in every circumstance of life, not only that God has created each of us, but also that He wants us to experience His love for us here and hereafter. When we have that security, we can live in the freedom, dignity, and personal strength that God intends for us as His children. He cares for us, and we care for each other.

Sickness and suffering are not the things in life we crave. But in a broken world, suffering too often remains unavoidable. The Christian story of the suffering Savior insists that sufferers have not lost dignity and value. God is with them. Caring is a quiet and steady, but very powerful, witness to a Christian's stubborn love for another person and for God whose dominion, power, and majesty exceed the depth of any human need. 



Wayne E. Caldwell

CROWWIN



32 of them were themselves sexually abused as children. Did you know they had such problems to cope with and pray and cry about? What can you say to heal them? What is a pastor to do?

Twenty-five percent of our girls and 15 percent of our boys are being sexually abused. But many more are physically abused—beaten, neglected, punished too severely. Add to these numbers all the children who are regularly submitted to psychological abuse, and one is led to speculate that the number of children who are abused outnumber those who are free from it.

This brings up the topic of family violence in general. Spouse abuse abounds, usually in the form of battered wives. Our trauma and abuse centers overflow. You have to take a number and wait.

The most remarkable fact about violence is that the churches have been sinfully silent on the subject. Like Peter, we should be hearing the cock crow. Is not our silence as loud as his denial? Can it be that we “assume” that all our people know that child beating and wife battering is wicked and therefore we don’t need to say anything about it? Surely not.

Our churches have shown eagerness to come out against the kinds of sins that it is popular to be against. We smash pornography—and we should. We shout down abortionists—if we can. We

and if the 100 children I am watching form a typical American group, then 20 of these children endure sexual abuse. One out of every four girls in America and

one of every seven boys in our culture are having to cope with sexual abuse.

Most of the victims are abused at home by parents, relatives, or significant others they early learned to trust or are dependent on. Everything and anything goes on from the covert activities of the nice-guy, community-minded, good citizen who privately abuses a daughter, stepdaughter, or grandchild to the blatant abuse of the “child swapping” parties that made news a few years ago in a small Minnesota city. Pastor, do you think that the children in your Sunday School are exempt from this curse?

Consider this, too. If you preached to 100 adults last Sunday, and if they were a typical group of Americans, then

Today I stopped at the traffic light at 85th and Paseo. An old red brick elementary school dominates that intersection. I pass it twice a day going to and coming from work. Sometimes the playground is filled with children playing kickball, jump rope, and all the other things kids do to stretch a recess to the limit. Today it appears that about 100 children dot the asphalt playground. Usually I hardly notice them, let alone count them. But today I size up the clusters of gaming youngsters—about 100 kids.

Forcing their way into my thoughts like a bike gang intruding on a Sunday School picnic are the facts and figures from John Crewdon’s latest book *By Silence Betrayed*. If his scientific study is correct,

POSTERS AND SINFUL SILENCE

declare against alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs—and right we are. We loudly condemn “dirty dancin’” and lewd films—and we had better. We boycott stores, write senators, and give church funds to support organizations pledged to oppose such sins. But the church seems to have lost its voice when it comes to sins of family violence. We have 10 times more persons suffering from sexual abuse alone than we have alcoholics.

Read carefully Vernon L. Wexford's and Marjorie Hess Galway's article in this issue and help your church get its voice back. See also the articles “Victim!” and “Pastoral Care of Battered Women.”

Also in this issue, Tom Nees challenges us to give 50 hours (at least) to the poor and oppressed. What if all our pastors donated 50 hours of service to those community organizations that work with victims of family violence? What if every adult Sunday School class got involved in some way in aiding the abused? One result, I am quite sure, would be a distinct rise in the spiritual temperature of our churches.

What if every pastor preached against family violence? Or taught a class on the causes and cures for it? What if we made it clear to society and to our members that no abuse (physical, sexual, or psychological) is acceptable? What if we took a “no excuses, no exceptions” approach to the problem?

What if we cared enough to confront? What if we simply refused to keep on nervously looking the other way, hoping things will get better on their own? Maybe we could all but eliminate cases like the one pictured in the following true parable.

In a church I attended for more than a decade there was a man who had two sons just one year apart in age. And lo, it was very important to his ego and his desire for acceptance, to be regarded as one who took religion very seriously. Therefore, it came to pass that when his two little boys snickered in church, or made any other inappropriate noises that have a way of emerging from little boys, that the self-righteous, sanctimonious father would slap their little faces nearly off—using loud flat-palm slaps. Once or twice he knocked them right out of the pew. Sometimes he would shake them so severely that their elbows, shoulder blades, and saddle oxfords would hammer like drumsticks on the mellifluous oak pews. Sometimes he would drag them out to the church parking lot to thrash them more thoroughly. Truly he disturbed more worshipers dishing out punishment than the boys did with their careless acts of mischievousness. Truly he dared to discipline and in the name of reverence, worship, and God. Verily, the boys were beaten and publicly humiliated week after week,

month after month, year after year.

Some of us members of the church were rather disturbed by these goings-on—but not enough to do anything about it. “That’s a family affair,” we would say; “what can you do?” Some haughtily murmured, “It takes all kinds.” Others asked, “Why don’t *they* do something about it?” But no one really knew who “*they*” were, so nothing was said or done—as far as this scribe knows. So week after week, month after month, the brothers were beaten and publicly humiliated—in the house of God!

The parable is about over now. The boys are now both over 18 and more or less on their own. Of course they never come to church. After all, who would, of their own free will, go back to a place where week after week, month after month, year after year you were beaten and publicly humiliated?

From time to time the father, older but no wiser, requests prayer for his “lost” boys. Sometimes he makes his requests with tears and testimony through his tears—nearly always defensive testimony like, “The Lord knows I raised those boys right, but . . .”

I used to pray for those boys. But I don’t pray for them very much anymore. You see, every time I close my eyes and try to pray for them, I hear the cock crow.

—Wesley Tracy 

A TIME TO SPEAK

Facing the Reality of Sexual and Family Violence

by Vernon L. Wexford and Marjorie Hess Galway

If the preacher of Ecclesiastes was right and “there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven” (3:1)¹ then surely the “time to keep silence” (v. 7) has faded like an August rose and “the time to speak” (v. 7) is as overripe as a September peach when it comes to the problems of sexual and family violence. These sins flourish in our times like ragweed on the sunny side of the barn.

More and more cases of physical, financial, and psychological abuse of elderly persons by their adult children are finding their way into televised newscasts. More than a million cases of “elder abuse” were exposed last year. What newspaper does not have daily stories of children beaten, burned, imprisoned, starved, or killed by parents? What city, what church, what pastor does not have to face the emergencies of battered wives—and sometimes abused husbands?

We live in a culture that views justice as violence. In our televised stories the audience feels cheated unless the bad guy is bombed by the “Equalizer,” blasted by Dirty Harry, or at least has his skull fractured by a rogue cop dishing out “real justice.” Violence has become our culturally acceptable way of dealing out justice—whether the offense is drug dealing or spilling a glass of milk.

Sexual violence is painting its own sordid portrait of our society and of our family life. Only 11 percent of the women who are raped in America are violated by strangers. Half of the reported rapes are committed by family

members of the victim.² In one study, 44 percent of the women interviewed had had to cope with rape or attempted rape. The same study reveals that in the case of women under 20, the rape rate increased from 11 percent in 1931 to 36 percent in 1976.³ Further, Russell’s study cited earlier indicates that 50 percent of male students in high school and college regard coercive sex as “acceptable behavior.”⁴

THE CHURCH’S COMPLICITY

Some thinkers believe that the church’s strange silence on these matters is traceable to a stubborn tradition in Judeo-Christian thought that grievously subordinates women to the point of inhuman indignity. Lois Gehr Livezey declares that the problems of family and sexual violence are at least as old as Lot’s offer of his daughters to the degenerate men of Sodom.⁵ You remember the story: two “angels” came to Lot’s house. Soon a swarm of Sodomites demanded that the visitors be turned over to them for sexual experimentation. Lot, dear righteous Lot, tried to spare his “divine” messengers and appease the perverted mob by offering them his virgin daughters. Lot’s behavior was outrageous even in light of the rite of hospitality that in those times required a man to protect his guest even at the sacrifice of his own life. But Lot did not offer to sacrifice himself—he preferred to sacrifice his daughters!

Livezey also indicts John Calvin, who advised a battered wife not to oppose but to endure the violence and



CLERGY QUIZ

A young woman has five suitors, each with a different occupation. Marrying a man in which of the following occupations would put our bride-to-be to the greatest risk of becoming a battered wife?

- A. Clergyman
- B. Lawyer
- C. Physician
- D. Salesman
- E. Banker

(Answer on next page.)

pursue the Christian duty of pleasing her violent husband. Livezey also points at Augustine, who somehow connected even rape with God's will. The Christian women who were raped by barbarian soldiers when Rome fell were, by their humiliation, saved from the temptation to develop a "proud and contemptuous bearing."⁶ This is not unlike the view espoused by a well-known evangelical in a 1970 conference in Kansas City. He declared that in his "chain of command" theory even a father who is sexually abusing his daughter is still God's agent. He cited a "real life" case in which a girl sexually abused by her father in her early teens, in God's wise providence, benefited from the experience in the end. For when she was a 19-year-old she did not have the fierce sexual temptations that other young women her age had to endure!

SPEAK AND ACT NOW

What should Christians say and do about the crisis in sexual and family violence?

1. Denominational leaders, agencies, and editors can call attention to the problems, needs, and potential solutions. Most Christians might say with arms akimbo, "Everyone knows the Church is against sexual and family violence!" Maybe, but we still must say it. The fact that church members are not immune to these problems demands that we articulate true Christian standards on these matters. Too often denominational agencies speak out against only the "sins" it is popular to oppose.

2. Local churches need to awaken to the symptoms, the problems, and to responsible ways of dealing with family and sexual violence. In too many cases when someone sexually abuses children in a church group he (or she) knows that little or nothing will be done even if he (or she) is caught. Far too frequently the local church leaders will quietly dismiss the abuser, sending him on his way to molest other children. Fear of embarrassment, fear of bad publicity, fear that attendance and finances will dwindle, shove too many local church leaders to shun prosecution, or treatment of the offenders. Local church leaders must be helped to see that such a response is to commit the sin of putting the welfare of the church as institution above the church as persons.

Local churches can also help in the area of prevention. Through the many and varied teaching ministries of the parish the church has the opportunity to educate for prevention, rehabilitation, and care-giving.

3. Pastors have opportunities through preaching, teaching, and parish publications to break the silence about family and sexual violence. Pastors, also, should critically evaluate their own beliefs and their counseling purposes and practices. How many pastors, when dealing with cases of child abuse, wife battering, or even sexual abuse, are slaves to the notion that the marriage must be saved and the family kept together at all costs? Does this not make the pastor guilty of the idolatry of seeking the welfare of the church as an institution at the expense of the church as persons? And, if the Bible

Continued on p. 11



CLERGY QUIZ

According to a recent study, our bride-to-be stands the greatest chance of becoming a battered wife if she marries the:

A. Clergyman.

Only policemen, military men, and professional athletes, according to the study, have a higher incidence of wife-beating than clergy.

HELP FOR THE BATTERED WOMAN

By Lydia Savina (South Plainfield, N.J.: Bridge Publishing Co., 1987), 421 pages, paper, \$9.95 (PA088-270-6063)

Help for the Battered Woman is a practical, informative resource book. Dr. Savina defines a battered woman as one who has received at least two or three deliberate, severe physical assaults from her spouse or boyfriend. A woman might find herself being abused by a man once or twice. However, if the abuse continues and the woman stays in the relationship, she is well on the road toward becoming a battered woman. She is controlled by her husband's violence or by his potential for violence.

Most pastors would be shocked by the amount of spouse abuse occurring under their noses. Fine men, "good men," who have physical and emotional power over their wives, misuse that power all too often. Surveys show that violence occurs in about 28% of all marriages. Most researchers and law enforcement officials agree that this figure is misleadingly low. They maintain that the actual figure is closer to 50%. Wife abuse has been identified as one of the two most underreported crimes in the United States—second only to incest. Not only does very little of it get reported to the police, but it also goes unshared with the victims' ministers. Many pastors think that wife beating happens "out there," when it actually exists in our own congregations.

The author relates what it was like to be an abused and battered wife during her nine-year marriage. Family members, friends, and even her minister pointed out that her husband was remorselessly abusing her. They repeatedly warned her that hers was not a "normal" marriage, and that if she did not take action against the abuse, she would

lose her sanity, if not her life. They were also concerned about the safety and mental health of her children. Yet she was deaf to their warnings, and blind to the reality of her situation. Like most battered women, she felt she deserved the abuse. Over the years, her husband had verbally abused her to the point that she felt she was a "zero." Once a music-loving, outgoing, enthusiastic young girl, she was at 30 a passive, frightened, "old woman." Eventually, she was forced to leave her husband because of his repeated and sincere threats against her life.

The author discusses the battered woman syndrome, with its patterns of escalating violence, psychological enslavement, social isolation, and economic control. She also points out personality patterns common to abusers, as well as patterns common to their relationships.

Part II of the book, "Help" (chaps. 19—56), is a resource guide for abused women, covering a variety of topics. All of these chapters are based not only on the author's research and her work with abused women and their abusers but also on her own experience in dealing with police officers, court officials, and mental health professionals.

Part III of the book is especially for the Christian. Each of these three chapters is biblically based and addresses the many spiritual questions and needs of battered women of the faith.

This book belongs in every pastor's library. Not only is it informative, but it would also be a good book to give to a battered woman.

—Mary Margaret Reed 



A TIME TO SPEAK

Continued from p. 9

teaches anything, does it not teach that the welfare of persons is more important than the welfare of institutions?

4. Christian colleges and seminaries need to make sure that courses (and other educational experiences) that deal with family and sexual violence get out of the sociology department and into theological education. Livezey suggests field education assignments in shelters for abused and battered persons become a regular part of the curriculum.

5. Local churches, groups of churches, and denominational agencies need to explore ways to cooperate with community organizations that provide care for victims and perpetrators of family and sexual violence. Such cooperation is increasing, and more should be done.

Let us not be guilty of the complicity of silence. Let us

look calmly and clear-eyed into the twin horrors of sexual and family violence. Let us talk about these scourges plainly, rationally, and compassionately. Let us *listen* to the victims—we must listen carefully, for most of them are afraid to speak. Listening to their stories can help us know about these problems and knowing about them helps remove the secrecy that protects the offenders and can help victims back to the road to wholeness. To remain silent is to betray ourselves and our Lord. 

NOTES

1. Scripture references in this article are from the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*.
2. See Diane Russell's study, *Sexual Exploitation: Rape, Child Sexual Abuse, and Workplace Harassment* (Sage Publications, 1984).
3. Cited by Lois Gehr Livezey in "Sexual and Family Violence: A Growing Issue for the Churches" in *The Christian Century* (October 28, 1987), 940.
4. *Ibid.*, 939.
5. *Ibid.*, 938.
6. Whitney J. Oates, ed., *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine* (New York: Random House, 1948), 2:35. Cited by Livezey, 938.

SEXUAL ABUSE: LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

By Margaret O. Hyde (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 107 pages, hardback, \$8.95 (PA066-432-7257)

This is a simple book—that is, the author speaks of complexities in a very understandable way. This is a book that a pastor could pass along to parents or even to some children and teens when appropriate. Any person with fifth grade reading skills could read this book with profit. Hyde has written a number of successful books for and in behalf of the most vulnerable persons in our society—children.

The significance of the title comes through in the author's premise that the subject of sexual abuse needs to be talked about. Bringing it into the light of dialogue proliferates the knowledge about this matter. Knowledge about sexual abuse can help remove the curtain of secrecy behind which so many sex offenders smugly hide. Nearly all sexual abusers of children swear the victim to secrecy, usually under dire threats. One of Hyde's most helpful chapters is "Some Kinds of Secrets Should Be Told."

The book is not a mass of statistics, but a number of social science studies reinforce the claims of the book. Studies show, for example, that 75% of sexually abused children are victimized by a family member or friend.

The book presents a rational approach—not a religious approach—to the various aspects of the problem of sexual abuse of children. Noticing behaviors typical of abusers, listening to the remarks of children for signs of trouble, how to prevent sexual abuse, how to explain the matter to children *before* abuse occurs, care for victim and offender are aspects of the problem treated in this book. The book is not as thorough as one might wish, but it is a useful primer.

One of the most valuable parts of the book is the list of 50 service agencies throughout the U.S.A. that offer care for young victims of sexual abuse.

—Norval Cauikins 

VICTIM!

As told to Nina Beegle

I squinted through swollen eyes, hating the light that stabbed at them, offering me another day. Day? The sun was shining, but that couldn't make it day for me. My life was a dark night, stretched out endlessly with no hope.

"Why don't You let me die, Lord? Why do You just let me suffer? You say in Your Word to ask and it will be given, and I've asked and asked, but You don't change things. Gary gets meaner every day. If You can't change our marriage, why don't You just take my life? I have no purpose for living."

I laid my fingers gingerly over one painful eye. Was that what was making my head ache so profusely? It was hard to tell. I felt like one giant bruise from head to toe. I remembered the crunching sound as my head met the wall last night. Broken head or broken wall? Probably both. The broken places in the walls of my home were silent reminders of the tumult of the past 20 years.

The house was quiet. The children had fended for themselves again. My heart ached for them, intensifying my misery. The only emotion that could rise above my pain was a fervent wish that a giant hand would come and scoop us all up in death—out of the awful trap we were caught in.

I hated to move, but I had to. If the house wasn't right, or the food wasn't right, or the table wasn't right when Gary came home, he'd be mad again. I had to try even harder to be a good wife. I'd let him rant and rave, and I wouldn't try to defend myself. Maybe that would help.

I poured myself a cup of cold coffee and set it in the microwave to heat. I poured out two aspirin tablets. My head was aching so much I could hardly see. Only once before

had a beating left me with such pain in my head. That was the time he beat me so badly I bled from my nose and ears and a dozen little cuts and bruises. I had gone to the bathroom to wash some of the blood away. He came in and said, "I'm sorry for what I did, but . . ." and then he went into the usual recital of what a bad person I was. It was as near remorse as he ever came. He was expecting some friends that evening, so he took me out shopping so they wouldn't see me and ask questions.

That time I'd had a CAT scan to assess the injuries. I'd probably have to go back for another, and the doctors would tell me again they were glad I was still alive. They'd ask me again why I don't leave him. They had warned me that if I continued to make myself his punching bag, it could one day leave me paralyzed, crippled, or dead.

I turned on some soothing Christian music and opened my Bible on the table. I tried to read as I sipped my coffee. Even though I felt angry with God much of the time, these were the things I turned to for my comfort. And even though my church activities were a constant excuse for Gary to berate me and abuse me, it was all that was good in life, and I kept going. I kept seeking, asking, knocking.

What if my church friends knew? Would they still like me? Would my friends still come here to get their hair fixed if they knew the awful tales these walls could tell? Sometimes I was tempted to tell them myself. Maybe then it wouldn't be so hard to go on. But I never did. Instead I called to change appointments, making excuses until my obvious bruises had time to heal. Sometimes I had to stay home from church.

It was all so unfair. Gary could walk out of the house and go to work and be his charming self as though everything was just peachy. If his boss knew . . . but he wouldn't believe it if I told him, if *anyone* told him. He knew Gary as a wonderful person with high morals and strict codes. Gary wasn't a churchgoer, but that was because he saw himself as much better than those "hypocrites" who were pious on Sunday. I was probably the only one who saw his critical, unforgiving spirit toward nearly everyone he knew. His scathing words and accusations had eroded my own soul for so long it was hard to remember who I was.

Who was I, anyway? I tried to think through the pain. I was a terrible creature who couldn't please her husband. My hair was too short. My blue jeans were too tight. Always, no matter how hard I tried, something was not right. I was the mother of four confused children. What good was that? They couldn't be happy either, in this miserable mess. Their lives were ruined before they started. My house was beautiful, but I was not supposed to have friends in it. It was just another facade, like everything in my life. How I wanted to die!

Blackness threatened to close in around my miserable musings, and I felt sick, so I headed toward the sofa. For a few seconds the pain was gone. Oblivion was sweet but too short-lived. I lay there wondering if I really was as bad a wife as he always accused me of being.

Let's see. What was it that triggered his anger this time? Oh, yes, I had thought he would be away for the evening, and this would be a rare opportunity for me to have the church group come to my home for their meeting. I couldn't think of do-

Continued on p. 14

PASTORAL CARE OF BATTERED WOMEN

A summary review of a book by Rita-Lou Clarke*

It was uncanny, as I read this book, how its information paralleled the case history of the couple in the article "Victim!" Wife batterers are described as "men who adopt all the external trappings of an aggressive, controlling image but are dependent and out of control within." They feel, "If I'm not worth anything and I want to maintain a relationship with you, I've got to do everything to try to control you, because if I don't, I'm going to lose you."

This fits into place perfectly with the actual facts in "Victim!" So does Clarke's observation that the batterer seldom considers getting help for himself until his wife leaves.

She fits another piece into the case when she says, "The batterer tends to deny or minimize his violence and blames it on his wife." And when she describes the batterer's dual (usually) personality: He is congenial and happy in public and goes to great lengths to protect his public image. Many times he lies to friends and relatives about his behavior and his wife's behavior, blaming her. The family believe him instead of her. He is often charming and competent at work, then goes into violent, angry scenes with his wife at home because he can safely vent his anger there. All of this is applicable in the case of Gary and Ellen (not their real names) in "Victim!"

Very little has been written on pastoral care of battered women. This book should be in every pastor's library.

Radical feminism will be recognized where it is found, but it should not cloud the real issues of dealing with the problem, the tragedy of the battered wife.

Wife battering was not recognized as a social problem until the late '70s. Afflicted women are just beginning to "come out of the dark," and pastors will often be the first persons they turn to. Shelters for battered women are a new thing, and some pastors are unaware they exist. Though the number of shelters has grown in recent years, they are still few. Most of those that exist operate on a shoestring budget.

Using her own and others' research, Clarke uncovers some misconceptions in our belief systems about this social problem, and even asks us to "challenge our theology to make it liberating for all, rather than oppressive to some." For example, the reasons why so many women remain in battering situations are very unlike the old clichés professional people offered, which only compounded the battered wife's problems:

"What did you do to cause it?" (From a marriage counselor).

"She is masochistic or has some flaw in her personality." (From a psychologist)

"Bear with patience the cross God has seen fit to place upon you; and meanwhile do not deviate from the duty you have before God to please your husband, but be faithful whatever happens." (From a pastor)

"It's just a domestic quarrel." (From the police)

When one woman called 911 because her husband had beaten her and pushed her down the stairs, the policeman said, "Listen, lady, he pays the bills, doesn't he? What he does inside his own house is his business."

The belief that "a man's home is

his castle" also enables judges to refuse to rule on wife-battering cases, telling the couple to "go home and settle their differences."

Clarke considers how culture and traditional beliefs, theology, economic pressures, TV depiction of violence as a way of life, and other factors feed the wife-battering issue.

Though Clarke feels pastors who are not trained to counsel in wife-battering cases should use the referral system, she encourages their involvement, directly and indirectly, in the victim's guidance and healing. For those who do the counseling, she offers practical guidelines.

- Listen to her without assigning blame. Beware of the temptation to think she is exaggerating. Telling the story is embarrassing for her. She is not likely to exaggerate.

- Help her express guilt, control anxiety, deal with anger.

- Confront her with the reality of the situation: She can't make him stop, and neither can you.

- Encourage her to find a safe place for herself if she is in physical danger.

- Offer alternatives. Her vision may be so clouded from a life of abuse that she may not be able to see her options.

- Support her decisions and choice of action. Beware of your tendency to want to rescue her.

- Help her discover and develop her own resources.

- Transfer her as quickly as possible to a woman counselor or women's group for the support she needs to deal with her situation.

Clarke also deals briefly with cri-

Continued on p. 15

VICTIM!

Continued from p. 12

ing such a thing when Gary was home. He deeply resented my church friends.

But he came home—unexpected—early. I dreaded what was bound to happen and felt awkward, on the spot, and guilty. The church group was discussing church affairs and the possibility of raising the pastor's salary. Gary remarked that the pastor didn't need any more money, and then I did a clumsy thing. I said, "But Gary, look at what he gets compared to your salary. Why should the pastor live on such a small salary?"

After they left, he said I had embarrassed and humiliated him in front of "his friends," and he beat me very badly.

I knew I had to do something. First I went to the doctor. I had a concussion, and there was some internal bleeding. I decided that this time I would go to the victims' crisis center. I phoned Gary to let him know I was there and explained that he was not allowed to come to the center, but they would bring me home when I was better. He was mean about that; not concerned about me, but angry because I was out of his reach.

That was my first trip to the crisis center, but not my last. They tried to get me to see the danger of going back home and the futility of it. But it was my home. All I had. There was no place else to go. The children needed me. I would go back, and maybe things would be better this time, I reasoned.

That was my life. When I finally summoned the courage to talk to my pastor, he told me that though my husband directed his anger at me, it probably was not me he was angry with. He couldn't lose his temper at work, or in front of his friends, so our home was the only safe place for him to release it, and I was the safe victim. I was so relieved to learn that I was not to blame for this mess, and that there was a God out there who really cared and, in fact, didn't require of me that I go through with this awful suffering.

My minister's advice was meant to help me see the need to get out of the situation. Instead I reasoned that maybe I could be nicer at those bad times. Sometimes I tried silence as a way of peacemaking, but it had a reverse effect. Gary stormed through the house hollering, swearing,

throwing things, pounding on the wall, declaring that if I weren't such a ——— I wouldn't do this to him.

One time when I withdrew in silence, he got in the car and drove away. I prayed hard at those times for the Lord to change me (I was reading Evelyn Christensen's book *Lord, Change Me*), make me a better wife. Many times I simply prayed to die.

One day, after 27 years of continual abuse, I was finally persuaded to take the advice of my doctors, the psychiatrists and counselors at the crisis center, and my minister. But it was the letter from Hansi that really caused me to make the break. I had read her book, *Please Don't Shoot, I'm Already Wounded*,* and in a desperate moment after another of those terrible nights when my head went through the wall, I sat down and poured out my heart to her in a

"Did God really require me to endure this ongoing abuse?"

letter. In just a few days I got her reply.

... Let me share my convictions with you, and they might sound harsh:

Any woman who accepts abuse is asking for it... Your husband is a very sick man emotionally... If you leave and he wants you back, you do *not* go back unless he goes through counseling first. He needs it—so do you, and it is obvious God has provided it for you in your minister. But no counseling will help you unless you are willing to make clear-cut decisions. There is nowhere a text in the Bible that demands of you to act as a doormat. It is your choice, and you cannot blame Christianity for it.

What people say is not an issue—your "good" front is a social lie and only confuses your kids more...

You try to force your environment to change by indecision and martyrdom. It will not change, only deteriorate...

Your husband will have to make his own decisions. You cannot do it for him, not even by your willingness to take his abuse, which only puts a bigger guilt trip on him

and makes him madder. It's a vicious circle; someone better break it!

God is providing you help in a good, counseling minister—your line to God's help. But it will stay plugged until you *listen*—or does the plug only open if He does it your way?... So you better make a decision for Ellen and leave your husband and kids in God's hands. He loves them more than you do

(Excerpts from Hansi's letter. Used by permission.)

Somehow, in my oppressed, confused state, I knew she was right. Still, it was a hard decision. I wept and wept, thinking of the uncertainty of the future, the effect on my now-grown children if I should leave and not return. Underneath their *battered emotions* they loved us both. But if my minister and other advisers were right, my husband as well as my children would be more apt to get help if I left than if I stayed. If, at this time of decision, just one person had told me to go back and everything would work out, I would have turned back. Thank God, not one did.

Instead I went back to the stress center where I was given every encouragement to stay with my decision to leave home. Even then the homing habit gripped me more than once. It was the long-range prospect that scared me so; of letting go of everything that had been me and mine. But I remembered an article by Dr. James Dobson that counseled battered wives not to go back too soon.

This time I must not rationalize. Somehow I had to be strong enough to leave 27 years behind and go on alone. At this time, only one child remained at home, and she had already turned on me, taking sides with her father that if I had somehow been different, things would not be as they were.

I had one friend from another church who called me occasionally to ask how I was doing. She always let me know she was praying for me and that her home was open to me if I ever needed a place to stay. I went there and found a haven with the warmth and love of a wonderful Christian family.

All my friends have given me encouragement, and it was surprising how many were aware, to one de-

gree or another, of what I thought was my well-kept secret.

It has been seven weeks now since I left Gary. I am still in the counseling program at the women's shelter. They work with me a lot on my lack of self-esteem. I've come a long way and am attending a cosmetology school so I can support myself. I'm on medication for head injuries; still, my head aches most of the time.

But a remarkable thing has happened in these few weeks. I once hated Gary for the awful things he said and did to me, and for taking away my self-worth. But with the help I have received through prayer, my friends, and the saturation counseling, I have been freed from hate. I only want him to get the help he needs. And I want my children to get the help they need so that they can have good homes of their own. That's all I want.

Yesterday the center succeeded in getting my husband to come into the counseling session. I was made aware, for the first time, of the depth of his problem. It reassured me that I was indeed doing the right thing, the thing I should have done when my children were small.

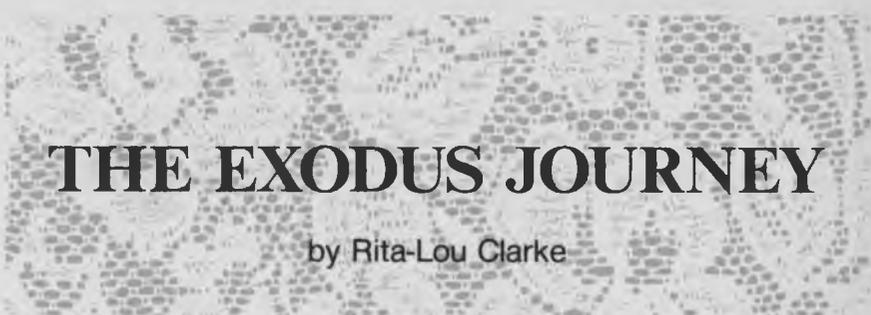
It doesn't look good for Gary and me. The psychiatrist told me (after Gary denied everything in the face of doctor's reports, X-rays, and records from the crisis center) that he indicates the worst kind of abuse/denial psychosis.

But the bleak future holds a rainbow of hope for me because I know nothing is too hard for the Lord, the God of all flesh (Jer. 32:27). I only wish I had trusted Him early in my marriage instead of blaming Him while I did nothing to change my situation. By sharing these things out of my life, I hope I can help some other woman to have the courage to walk out of her hopeless existence and trust God for something better.

CONCLUSION

Ellen (not her real name) had been estranged from her husband for seven weeks when her resolve broke. One of her counselors at the center charmed by Gary's charisma, began to question her veracity. Ellen became confused and decided to go back home and try again.

On her first night back, neighbors became concerned by the vocal blast that escaped from the walls of her home and called the police. But



THE EXODUS JOURNEY

by Rita-Lou Clarke

How long, O God, must I endure this bondage, this abuse?

Not long. I see your bondage. I feel your pain. I will lead you out. My people shall be free.

But God, I do not want to leave. I am afraid to leave. I have a nice home here. What about the children? It will be hard for them. We can't leave.

I will lead you out. I have a good place for you to go. I have a land flowing with milk and honey.

The passage is very difficult, very scary. I'm afraid I will drown.

I will hold back the waters. I will lead you.

How will I survive in this wilderness?

I will provide food and satisfy your thirst.

I do not know where I am going. I want to go back.

You must not turn back now. I will lead you. I will guide you.

I am afraid. At least there was some security back there in bondage.

I will lead you to a new place of freedom. I will guide you.

I am so alone. Who will care for me?

I have those along the way who will care for you and support you.

I'm afraid, but I will go on. I've gone too far to turn back now.

I will lead you. It won't be long now. You will be free.

What's that I see on the horizon? A new land across the river? A new place to be, to become? I have been without a land for so long.

That is the new place of freedom for you. I will lead you. I will guide you. You are almost there. Keep going.

Let us as pastors be "those along the way" as ministers of care and support on this journey.

Rita-Lou Clarke is associate pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Garden Grove, Calif., and is on the board of the Orange County Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She has worked in a shelter for battered women.

by the time they arrived, Gary's tirade had ended and he was in the shower. Beaten and bruised, Ellen told the police, "It's OK. Everything's all right now," and they left. 

*Published by Hansi Ministries, Huntington Beach, Calif. Hansi is Maria Ann Hirschmann, also author of *Hansi, the Girl Who Left the Swastika*, Tyndale House, 1973.

PASTORAL CARE

Continued from p. 13

sis counseling, couples counseling, counseling psychologically abused women, and counseling the batterer.

You really do need this book! 

**Pastoral Care of Battered Women*, by Rita-Lou Clarke. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986.

50 HOURS FOR THE POOR

by Tom Nees

Pastor, Community of Hope Church of the Nazarene
and Executive Director, Community of Hope, Inc., Washington, D.C.

Recently the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *American Bar Association Journal* contained identical editorials calling on doctors and lawyers to devote 50 hours a year in free service to the poor. The Medical Association journal printed an accompanying article about medical practice among the inner-city poor by Dr. David Hilfiker, medical director of the Community of Hope Health Services.

Upon reading the editorial and Dr. Hilfiker's article, I immediately thought that members of the clergy ought to at least match the commitment doctors and lawyers are called to make. There are three historic helping professions: medicine, law, and religion. Within each there is what the editorial referred to as the "great tradition" and "proper behavior" of giving time in service to poor.

The editorial called on their respective professions, the wealthiest in the nation, to return to what lawyers refer to as *pro bono publico* and doctors know as *caritas*. *Washington Post* columnist Colman McCarthy described this cooperative effort

by one of the nation's "oldest and bitterest rivalries" as "revolutionary." *USA Today* devoted its entire January 14, 1988, opinion page to this issue.

Health care and legal aid have become unaffordable luxuries for millions of America's poor citizens. The editorial placed responsibility upon the professionals. "Doctors and lawyers today have tended to become overly concerned with their professional incomes and practice efficiencies. . . . Many members of our professions have always cared for the poor who need legal or medical help. But their efforts are not what they should be, and there is abundant evidence of unmet needs."

Editors called on doctors and lawyers to give at least 50 hours a year to the poor as an ethical commitment to their own professions.

What about the clergy? Doctors and lawyers are willing to take a critical look at social needs and their own prosperity. Could we not, should we not, do as much? While ministers may not have the same opportunities for personal wealth, we may be as far removed from the

desperate needs of the poor. Soon after coming to Washington's National Presbyterian Church, Senior Pastor Dr. Louis Evans described himself as one of the new WASPs, "white, affluent, separated, and protected." He moved into an inner-city neighborhood and began serving among disadvantaged people in another congregation.

As with the medical and legal professions, ministers have plenty of historical precedent to lead the way in the care of needy people. One example in the Methodist tradition is the influence of John Wesley, leader of the 18-century evangelical revival. Methodism, which spawned the holiness churches including the Salvation Army, is credited with a unique combination of spiritual renewal and social concern.

At the age of 80, Wesley wrote in his journal concerning service to London's poor. "All my leisure hours this week I employed in visiting the poor and in begging for them." He gave very specific instructions to his colleagues trained for spiritual and social service. Drawing from his own personal experiences, he wrote:

I visited as many as I could of the sick. How much better it is, when it can be done, to carry relief to the poor, than to send it! and that both for our own sake and theirs. For theirs, as it is so much more comfortable to them, and as we may assist them in spirituals as well as temporals; and for our own, as it is far more apt to soften our heart and make us naturally care for each other.

If the medical needs of the poor should not be left to the public hospitals and street clinics, and legal aid not left to public defenders and government-sponsored programs, so compassionate ministry should not be the sole responsibility of those few ministers whose full-time service is among the poor.

It is significant that the medical and legal journals didn't call for more programs for poor people. Certainly there is a need for appropriate programmatic responses. But as important, if not more important, is personal involvement. So it is with the clergy. The issue is not so much what the church is going to do with human need, but what am I, as a minister, to do.

While some doctors and lawyers may attract indigent clients and patients, ministers may have to leave their familiar and comfortable churches and take to the streets and the shelters as Wesley did. Unlike doctors and lawyers, it may be best for the minister not even to reveal his identity. One must learn to serve, to

offer something as simple as "the cup of water," and, as Jesus did, to see needs and be moved with compassion. Organized programs will follow.

We don't need another organization to implement this commitment of 50 hours a year to the poor. Some level of communication to encourage one another will help. We need some examples. A small number of ministers leading the way will help others see the need.

Some of the doctors and lawyers called to serve the poor are in our congregations. It might prove to be encouragement for them and others to know that the clergy have joined them.

Colman McCarthy concluded his column about the joint editorial with this quote from Albert Schweitzer, whom he described as "one of the two or three most influential doctors of the 20th century" (he might have also noted that Schweitzer was equally important as a theologian and missionary):

No one has the right to take for granted his own advantages over others in health, in talents, in abilities, in success, in a happy childhood or congenial home conditions. One must pay a price for all these boons. What one owes in return is a special responsibility for other lives.

What better way to accept that responsibility than to minister for Christ's sake, expecting nothing in return, in giving 50 hours to the poor?

IN THE NAME OF SUBMISSION
by Kay Marshall Strom, Multnomah Press, 1986, \$6.95 (PA088-070-1633)

This author approaches the common problem of wife abuse from a biblical, rather than a secular, perspective and offers directives from that foundation. As Rita-Lou Clarke did in *Pastoral Care of Battered Women*, Strom touches on the injustice done to such women by pastors who give them unwise advice. In her research, Strom uncovered the same damaging counsel: "He wasn't very sympathetic. He said I should go home and pray and be careful not to upset Tom. According to him, it was my job to work out the difficulties. I should be willing to endure the suffering and hold the family together."

That kind of advice sent Janet, the subject in the case study the author follows throughout, back to Roger, who almost killed her, once by strangulation and once by drowning.

The author contends, "With a strong voice, the church must challenge the idea that family violence is a private matter, an area out-of-bounds to anyone outside the family. . . . The church needs to take a definite theological stand on marital violence." Strom sees no biblical grounds for divorce in such cases, but advocates separation as a step to help and healing for both parties.

This book is a *must* for pastors, especially those who think it would never happen to anyone in their congregations, and those who do not recognize its commonality.

—Nina E. Beegle

Pontius' Puddle



© Joel Kaufmann

HERMENEUTICAL INTEGRITY AND THE HOLINESS BIBLICAL SCHOLAR

by Alex R. G. Deasley

Professor of New Testament, Nazarene Theological Seminary

The issue I have been asked to address is whether a Nazarene biblical scholar is free to practice hermeneutical integrity, or whether in important respects he is obliged or compelled to practice a prescribed hermeneutic. What responsibility does the biblical scholar have to the church's traditional interpretations of the Scriptures, and to the doctrines that derive from these interpretations? What is the church's responsibility to the biblical scholar and the scholar's responsibility to the church?

It is impossible to engage this issue without first attempting to define some terms.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The term *hermeneutics* has historically been used as an umbrella term to denote the rules of exegesis. More recently, however, a disjunction has been driven between hermeneutics and exegesis, in which the term *hermeneutic* (usually in the singular) has come to denote that complex of philosophical and theological assumptions and categories in terms and in the context of which the task of exegesis is pursued and its results expressed. Hence such labels as the "new hermeneutic"¹ and the "Wesleyan hermeneutic."²

If I have understood my commission aright, I am to concern myself with exegesis rather than hermeneutics or "hermeneutic" (assuming, for the moment, that they are separable). I can therefore borrow the introductory sentences of Gordon Fee's recent book *New Testament Exegesis* to describe my task here: "The term 'exegesis' is used in this [paper] in a consciously limited sense to refer to the historical investigation into the meaning of the biblical text. Exegesis, therefore, answers the question, What *did* the biblical author *mean*? It has to do both with *what* he said (the content itself) and *why* he said it at any given point (the literary context). Furthermore, exegesis is primarily concerned with intentionality: What did the author *intend* his original readers to understand? . . . Thus the *immediate* aim of the Biblical student is to understand the Biblical text."³ This paper would, therefore, be more accurately titled "*Exegetical Integrity and the Holiness Biblical Scholar*."

With these clarifications we may now look, first, at the task of the exegete; second, at the task of the church; and in conclusion, attempt to see how these are to be related.

THE TASK OF THE BIBLICAL EXEGETE

The task of the exegete has not always been perceived and practiced as it is today. Speaking from the perspective of the Roman Catholic church, and painting with a wide brush, Raymond F. Collins claims that the church has been dominated by two major approaches to the use of Scripture. During the first millennium the allegorical method of Origen was dominant. All revelation (indeed all knowledge) was believed to be contained in the Bible, therefore theology was a matter of biblical exposition. When the literal sense of a passage yielded nothing of relevance or excitement, then this end was secured by resorting to allegorical interpretation. During the second millennium the proof-text method has predominated. With the revival of philosophy, theology became a matter of conceptual explanation, and doctrine took the place of Scripture. "The theological endeavor no longer proceeded from the Scriptures; rather it used the Scriptures in the exposition of a doctrine that had been otherwise (that is, philosophically) developed. Scripture became almost an icing on the cake . . . To a summary statement of doctrine, the thesis, there were appended 'proofs'—from Scripture, tradition, and reason."⁴ If this depiction seems overly bleak, it is not because Collins is blind to Jerome and the Victorines,⁵ but because they are not much more than shafts of light from an otherwise heavy sky.

A telling of the story from the Protestant side does not materially alter the picture. F. F. Bruce⁶ justly makes much of Luther: "We must keep to the simple, pure and natural sense of the words, as demanded by grammar and the use of language created by God among men";⁷ and equally of Calvin who showed himself to be a genuine exegete not least by the fact that so often the exegetical judgments in his commentaries square so ill with the theological deliverances of the *Institutes*.⁸ But the line did not flourish, and if there were a few exceptions (such as Mathias Flacius Illyricus, whose *Clavis Scripturae Sacrae*, published in 1567, is described by Kummel as "the real beginning of scholarly hermeneutics"), the generality of exegetes relapsed into a kind of Protestant scholastic trench warfare. If the 18th century saw many new beginnings in textual and gospel criticism, it is in the 19th century that the task of the exegete comes to a clarity of resolution that it has never lost.

The factor that made the decisive difference may be described most broadly as objectivity; but that is too broad a characterization to be serviceable. The principle was given more concrete expression in Benjamin Jowett's essay "On the Interpretation of Scripture," in *Essays and Reviews* (1860). Jowett was a classical scholar, and he pleaded that the same principles of interpretation applied to the classics be applied to the Bible also. "Interpret Scripture like any other book," Jowett wrote, adding that the respects in which it is *unlike* any other book "will appear in the results of such an interpretation." The principle is embodied in a *method*, variously designated as biblical criticism, the historical-critical method, or the grammatico-historical method; and the object of the method is to discover what the original writer meant.

It is important to be clear as to the meaning of this method, and what is denoted by the nomenclature just used, for some scholars make sharp distinctions between, for example, the historical-critical method and the grammatico-historical method, while to the uninstructed the very phrase "biblical criticism" turns on a battery of flashing red lights. The historical-critical method as understood and defined by Ernst Troeltsch, for example, operates with the principles of historical skepticism and the universe as a closed system in such a way as to exclude a priori the possibility of divine acts in history. But it is self-evident that such a procedure is contrived to uncover, not what the biblical writers really meant, but what Troeltsch thought they should have meant—which needs no uncovering, for it never was a secret. But there is no need for the method to be wedded to such skeptical and prejudicial presuppositions. What the method calls for is simply the examination of the biblical text in the light of its language and historical context, all available methods of literary and historical examination being brought to bear that do not sabotage the presuppositions of the original author. Robert W. Lyon correctly says that "as a *tool*, critical-historical method should serve the process of understanding rather than either substantiating or refuting Scripture."⁹

To say that the object of the method is the recovery of what the author said does not deny the distinction between what he said and what he says; it simply affirms that what he said is recoverable. It does not say that the process of recovery is easy. On the contrary, the recap-

turing of a mind-set and its accompanying culture removed from our own by two millennia is as hard as it is at the same time necessary if the documents are to be understood. To say that it is impossible is to deny, in principle, the possibility of the writing of history. To say it is not easy is to admit the difficulties, but also—and this is important—to imply the possibility of progress, thereby imparting a dynamic element to exegesis.

As has been said above, this emphasis on what the author *meant* is not intended to deny the propriety of the question as to what he *means*. Nor is it intended to deny that exegesis has a role to play in the elucidation of that. To borrow, once more, some words of Raymond Collins: "If exegesis is concerned with the exposition of a New Testament text in our language, a fully adequate exegesis must make use of hermeneutics to some degree. Hermeneutics, or the science of interpretation, is the study of how to translate the biblical message into a language and form understandable to people of the present generation."¹⁰ Indeed, one may press the point to the limit and say that the exegete himself can understand what the text meant only by understanding also what it means, inasmuch as he can only understand a 1st-century text as a 20th-century reader. Accordingly, all of the help available from the philosophers of language—Ricoeur, Gadamer, and their distinguished company—is to be laid under contribution, and in this work the exegete must be heavily involved. But it remains true that the exegete's title to a hearing rests primarily and fundamentally on his ability to recapture what the authors said, for, to borrow a phrase from Raymond E. Brown, what they meant is "a conscience and a control" on what they mean.¹¹ Insofar as the biblical exegete is successful in uncovering the faith of the New Testament Church, he is uncovering and clarifying that which is normative for Christian faith and practice in all ages.¹²

THE TASK OF THE CHURCH

From the task of the exegete we may now turn to the role of the church in the exegetical enterprise. It may be helpful to illuminate the understanding of this in our own denomination by making a comparison with that of another communion: the Roman Catholic church. In order to avoid tendentiousness or misrepresentation as much as possible, I shall depend here on the views of Roman Catholic exegetes who appear to be in the vanguard of Roman scholarship and also in the good graces of the Roman hierarchy, or at least whose works receive the *imprimatur*. Their understanding of their church's role in the work of exegesis appears to be summarizable in three statements.

First, the church has a role in the teaching of Christian doctrine. In the Roman church this is technically known as the magisterium: the sacred teaching office of the church. Raymond Collins describes it thus: "The Magisterium fulfills a pastoral function within the Church, namely that of teaching and proclaiming the Word of God in the name of Christ. In a privileged manner, the Magisterium enunciates the *sensus fidelium*. It solemnly and officially expresses the faith of the entire Church. As a pastoral and teaching office with respect to the faith, the Magisterium is distinct from the academic and investigative function of exegetes with respect to his-



Alex R. G. Deasley

tory. Exegesis and the Magisterium are distanced from each other. Each has its proper function, purpose, and methodology."¹³ Collins adds some important nuances to this statement. He points out that exegesis has a relative autonomy, noting that Vatican II adopted the expression that exegetes must pursue their task "under the *watchful care* of the sacred teaching office of the Church," rather than that of a earlier draft: "under the *guidance* of the sacred teaching office." The earlier wording did not express the proper autonomy of exegesis; the wording adopted expresses "both the relative independence of exegesis and the Magisterium and their mutual interdependence."¹⁴ But interdependence there must be since both are concerned with the Word of God. "The Magisterium cannot remain indifferent to exegesis since its authority is that of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures, whose sense is yielded by exegesis, bear witness to that self-same Jesus Christ. Thus the Council Fathers solemnly affirmed that the Magisterium 'is not above the word of God, but serves it.'"¹⁵ As to how the Magisterium serves the Word, Vatican II affirmed that it does so in two ways: by creating an atmosphere in which the Word of God can be heard and understood; and second, by listening. "If one does not listen, one can hardly serve."¹⁶

A second point that receives emphasis in current Roman Catholic understanding is that the church's angle of approach to exegesis is less from that of scientific investigation than from that of the definition, proclamation, and defense of the faith. Collins says flatly: "The Church understands the New Testament according to the categories of faith and theology; exegesis understands the New Testament as words of men."¹⁷ It is in extension and application of this point that Raymond Brown observes: "The role of church authority in interpreting the Bible has been more properly in the area of what Scripture means than in the area of what Scripture meant."¹⁸

But third, in the last analysis the final role in the defining of doctrine lies with the church. This position is implicit in the Roman view of the magisterium of the church already expounded, even if it is modified by the dependence of the church upon its exegetes. But it emerges most clearly in regard to those doctrines that, in R. E. Brown's sensitive phrase, are "not easily detectable in the New Testament." In his essay on "Critical Biblical Exegesis and the Development of Doctrine"¹⁹ he divides doctrines into three groups: those for which there is abundant but incipient basis in Scripture (e.g., the Trinity, the sacraments); those for which there is slender basis in Scripture (e.g., the Virginal Conception, the Petrine succession); and those about which the Scriptures are virtually silent (e.g., the perpetual virginity of Mary, the Immaculate Conception). He comments: "If by logic, or sheer historical reasoning, or traceable eyewitness tradition, the inevitable necessity of many dogmas *cannot* be shown from the New Testament data, we must then recognize that the guarantee about what must be believed and proclaimed rests with the Spirit working in the Church and speaking through its teachers."²⁰ If one asks on what basis this position rests, the answer appears to be on a comprehensive understanding of tradition in which "Scripture itself is seen as part

of Tradition—the tradition of Israel and of the early church."²¹ The one source of revelation is God himself; our knowledge of that revelation comes through a number of witnesses, including Scripture.

Raymond Brown concludes therefore that "tension is not an improper relationship between what the Scripture meant to its authors and what it has come to mean in the Church."²² That is to say, exegesis as the ongoing work of the exegete, and doctrine as the work of the church, may, in certain areas, stand over against each other. Nor is this necessarily a destructive thing; rather it may have positive value in interpreting and illuminating both Scripture and doctrine.

Against this view one may now set that of our own denomination. To my knowledge there are at least three official pronouncements that bear on the issue under consideration. First is Article IV of the Articles of Faith: "The Holy Scriptures, . . . the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments," are said to be "given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith."²³ The second defines the functions of the General Assembly. Paragraph 300 reads: "The General Assembly is the supreme doctrine-formulating, lawmaking, and elective authority of the Church of the Nazarene, subject to the provisions of the church Constitution."²⁴ The third, Paragraph 318, concerns the interpretation of the same: "The Board of General Superintendents shall be the authority for the interpretation of the law and doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene, and the meaning and force of all provisions of the *Manual*, subject to an appeal to the General Assembly."²⁵

There are both parallels and contrasts between the Roman and Nazarene positions. By way of parallel, the idea of magisterium is common to both. The church is regarded as having a teaching office, and in the Church of the Nazarene this is located in the doctrinal definitions of the General Assembly. The most obvious contrast is that in the Nazarene formularies a single source of doctrine is recognized: Holy Scripture. And this, in turn, leads to the provision for the interpretation of doctrine in the Board of General Superintendents, and ultimately (by appeal) to the General Assembly.

It is scarcely possible to go beyond this on the basis of the legal prescriptions. Exegesis as such is unmentioned; exegetes qua exegetes do not hold membership in the General Assembly. But if exegesis is not mentioned specifically, the dynamic underlying the Nazarene position is not in doubt: It is that of a body of believers acknowledging the final authority of Scripture and providing organs whereby that authority may be exercised. How far this has happened in fact is a task for a historian to essay. What may be attempted in the concluding section of this paper is some indication of why the church's exegetes may and must contribute to this process, and how their work is related to that of the church.

THE RELATION OF EXEGETE AND CHURCH

First, the work of exegesis is the fundamental guarantee that the Word is laid bare. Whatever the difficulty of employing the historical method, and whatever the

weaknesses of its practitioners, the point of departure of interpretation must lie in the intention of the original writer.²⁶ As R. E. Brown has expressed it: "The literal sense serves as an obstacle toward substituting a self-composed word for the word given so long ago."²⁷

Second, the work of exegesis brings the church under the constant judgment of the Word. To read Scripture in its original meaning and setting is to be confronted with the differences between their setting and ours, and in and through that very difference to be probed and challenged to hear its message again. This is not to be feared. On the contrary, it is to be welcomed just as the multiplying questions of a student are to be welcomed both as a sign of life and the promise of fuller life; for apart from the Word the church has no life. Hence the wisdom of the declaration of a general superintendent of an earlier day, Dr. John W. Goodwin: "We never should try to harmonize the Word with our doctrines, but rather undertake to harmonize our doctrines with the Word."²⁸ Precisely this spirit animated John Wesley, as is indicated throughout his works, but nowhere more clearly than in his reply to the Rev. Mr. Dodd, who had challenged Wesley's teaching in his sermon on Christian perfection. Wesley replied: "Neither the doctrine in question, nor any other, is anything to me, unless it be the doctrine of Christ and His Apostles. If, therefore, you will please point out to me any passages in that sermon which are either contrary to Scripture, or are not supported by it, and to show that they are not, I shall be full as willing to oppose as ever I was to defend them."²⁹ It is in this very process of searching the Word and being searched by it that the church is quickened and renovated, and saved from the petrification of holding to positions that have no other claim to cogency than repetition, or holding positions that have a better claim, but holding to them lifelessly.

Third, exegesis is to be ecclesial: that is, it is to be done in and for the church. This is the positive form of the statement made earlier that historical exegesis can be practiced only so long as the presuppositions of the original authors are respected. It is possible for one who does not share these presuppositions to adopt them provisionally, just as any historian must be able to transpose himself imaginatively into the mind-set of the era of which he is writing. But the typical exegete at one and the same time is standing without the church and within it; without the church as he brings the Word to the church; within the church as he explores the Word that is the church's life and breath. In a double sense, therefore, he stands at a point of tension: as one who brings to the church the Word that judges the church, but on which the church itself passes judgment; and as one who works in the Word over against the church to bring the Word to the church of which he himself is a part. The task of exegesis takes place at this critical crossroads.

CONCLUSION

The exegete therefore occupies a dangerous and exposed position. It belongs to his function to be the bearer of the Word to the church, and that word will often be the word of judgment as he advances understanding, brings to attention things that have been forgotten, demolishes exegetical props that his exegetical

discipline shows can no longer bear the weight they were once thought to bear, and—who knows?—even on occasion be the channel of some new light that, in the words of Pilgrim Father John Robinson, "God hath yet to break forth out of His most holy Word." The church on its side has the task of defining doctrine, and the instinct of the church in that regard is to leave things as they are. Nor is that necessarily bad, for doctrinal changes are not to be made lightly. The ultimate question is: Is the church open to a relationship with biblical exegesis that is genuinely dialogic? The issue is much more solemn than whether the church is prepared to listen to its exegetes. The issue is whether the church is ready to be the servant of the Word, not its owner.

I close with some words of Pope John Paul II to a group of theologians (in the generic sense); words that seem to me to reflect insight into the nature and necessity of the theological enterprise in all its branches, not excluding that of the biblical exegete; words that help to give definition to the responsibilities of theologians to church, and church to theologians. "I want to say a special word of gratitude, encouragement, and guidance for the theologians. The Church needs her theologians, particularly in this time and age so profoundly marked by deep changes in all areas of life and society . . . We all need your work, your dedication and the fruits of your reflection. We desire to listen to you, and we are eager to receive the valued assistance of your responsible scholarship."³⁰

His words must have fallen on grateful ears. 

NOTES

1. As in Anthony C. Thiselton's essay of that title in I. Howard Marshall, ed., *New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Principles and Methods* (Grand Rapids, 1977), 308-33.
2. As in Wayne McCown's essay, "Toward a Wesleyan Hermeneutic," in Wayne McCown and James Earl Massey, eds., *Interpreting God's Word for Today*, in Wesleyan Theological Perspectives, vol. 2 (Anderson, Ind., 1982), 1-30.
3. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors* (Grand Rapids, 1983), 21.
4. *Introduction to the New Testament* (London, 1983), 283.
5. *Ibid.*, 282.
6. "The History of New Testament Study," in Marshall, *New Testament Interpretation*, 21-59.
7. *Ibid.*, 31.
8. *Ibid.*, 33, for examples.
9. "Evangelicals and Critical Historical Method," in McCown and Massey, *Interpreting God's Word for Today*, 154.
10. *Introduction to the New Testament*, 278.
11. "What the Biblical Word Meant and What It Means," in *The Critical Meaning of the Bible* (New York, 1981), 33.
12. For a close analysis of this see Raymond F. Collins on "The Fivefold Task of Exegesis," *Introduction to the New Testament*, 291-98.
13. *Ibid.*, 299.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, 300.
16. *Ibid.*, 301.
17. *Ibid.*, 282.
18. *Critical Meaning of the Bible*, 37.
19. *Ibid.*, chap. 2.
20. *Ibid.*, 49-50.
21. *Ibid.*, 30.
22. *Ibid.*, 41.
23. *Manual*, 1985, 24.
24. *Ibid.*, 118.
25. *Ibid.*, 127.
26. Even a critic of single-meaning theory such as David C. Steinmetz proves at most that a *field* of possible meanings is intended, and it is open to question whether this is not overpressing the limits. See "The Superiority of Precritical Exegesis," *Theology Today*, April 1980, 27-38; reprinted in Donald K. McKim, ed., *A Guide to Contemporary Hermeneutics: Major Trends in Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, 1986), 65-77.
27. *Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 22.
28. "Inspiration and Revelation," *Preacher's Magazine*, March-April 1943, 29.
29. *Works*, ed. Jackson, 11:449.
30. Quoted in Brown, *Critical Meaning of the Bible*, iii.

CHARISMATA IN FIRST CORINTHIANS

by Clayton Bonar

Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Richland, Wash.

The most flamboyant congregation the apostle Paul probably ever dealt with was located at Corinth. A review of his First Epistle conveys them to be such. They were bold, boastful, and proud in their exercise of faith. Paul called them arrogant on more than one occasion.

The purpose of this article is to look at their perception and practice of the *charismata*, which would include the issue of speaking in tongues, specifically as it appears in the context of the Epistle.

The popularity of speaking in tongues, generated by the mid-century development of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement, has prompted many sincere Christians to ask whether this experience should be a normative part of life in the Church today.

For these Christians to reach a biblical answer from a contextual New Testament perspective, they must begin with First Corinthians. If the issue falls there, the whole house falls.

THE CORINTHIAN LETTER

New Testament scholarship is not always certain about authorship and dates in the writing of particular books of the Bible. Debates have flourished over a number of them. Even the most radical of Bible scholars, however, agree on a small cadre of Pauline letters, including Corinthians, as coming from the great apostle of grace.

First Corinthians was probably written circa A.D. 55-56, during Paul's third missionary tour. The Epistle to the Galatians, and the Thessalonian correspondence, had already been written.

Although the Pauline letters generally cover the period reported in the Acts of the Apostles, the Corinthian letters were produced a good nine years before Acts was written.

Paul and Luke, the assumed author of Acts, were friends and traveling companions on that third missionary journey. Passages in Acts called the "we" passages (16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16) are thought to be times when the physician Luke was a companion of the apostle. In fact, 2 Cor. 8:18-19 may be a reference to Luke.

If this were the case, then First Corinthians becomes the starting point for understanding the charismatic debate today. It is the first of Paul's statements on the gifts of the Spirit, and it is somewhat related to the later document Acts, if only through Luke.

Corinth at once posed a moral and spiritual impediment to, and yet was challenged by, the Christian message. The gospel of Jesus Christ confronted this New Testament church at every level. Yet it was in this congregation that speaking in "unknown" tongues—the most esoteric of the gifts—was so prevalent. One must remember that in the KJV, where the term *unknown* was used with reference to tongues, it was always italicized. That means that the word was not in the original but was an addition to the translation.

This experience was a common one within the Greek community. Speaking with the gods was the supernatural claim of all pneumatics, those possessed by the spirit of their god. To speak with the angels was a hallmark of their religious experience.

In his first letter to the Corinthian church, Paul spent considerable time assessing their faith and challenging them at points where they had assumed attitudes and actions of their pagan neighbors. It is in this setting that the whole issue of speaking in tongues arises.

THE CORINTHIAN CHARISMATA

The Corinthian correspondence portrays a church gone awry. But in it is the first documentation of what we now call the "gifts lists" of the New Testament.

The gifts are listed in 1 Cor. 12:8-11, 27-30. Wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, apostles, prophets, teachers, helps, and administration are mentioned.

If this were the only gift list, or if a common list were found in the Scriptures, it would make it a lot easier to determine the apostle's intentions. We have, however, a multiple listing, as indicated by Rom. 12:6-8. There are similarities in gifts, but there is no "fixed" list. In fact the Romans list, though shorter, includes gifts not specifically brought up in First Corinthians, including prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, and mercy.

Approximately a year following the writing of his Corinthian letters Paul is able to spend time with them. In that period he wrote to the Christians at Rome. Here, then, in the very community where he had specifically mentioned the gifts of the Spirit, he is writing to another group of Christians, only a year or so later. But the second list of gifts is different.

Add to this dilemma Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus somewhat later. In that Epistle he offers yet another list—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (4:8-13).

Then the reader can see that in 1 Corinthians, where the first gift list is mentioned, the apostle adds other gifts in the text that are not part of the list in chapter 12. One such example would be found in 7:7, where the single life is called a "gift of God." From this observation, the reader will also notice that the ecstatic gifts are mentioned only with regard to the Corinthians.

A further look must be made at the gift of tongues as it relates to an assumed parallel in Acts.

First Corinthians states that the gifts are a result of the Spirit of God acting in the life of the believer (12:7-9, 11, 13). Our Pentecostal brothers generally also feel that the use of the Spirit baptism language in 12:13, as used in the Corinthian letter, relates directly to the experience of the Holy Spirit falling on the believers in Acts.

Take special note, however, that there was a great spread of time involved in the three "Spirit baptism" instances recorded in Acts. We know that the experience found in Acts 2:4 is located in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. The second expression of it is given in 10:44-46 at Caesarea some five years later. The last instance recorded in Acts where tongues/languages is listed is found in 19:6, in Ephesus approximately 20 years after the Day of Pentecost.

The question is whether the term "tongues" in Acts is the same as that of 1 Corinthians. This has been debated in various forums across

the years. This author leans to the understanding that Acts' use of the term is that of "other languages." In each of the instances recorded above, the gospel began in a new cultural/language setting. It is the same as what happened on the Day of Pentecost when each person heard the word of salvation in his own language (2:11). Other times in Acts when the Spirit fell upon the believers, they did not speak in tongues (4:31; 8:17; 13:9).

The use of tongues in Corinth appears to fill a different place in the life of the church. In Acts it was used specifically to broadcast the work of God to unbelievers in their own languages. In First Corinthians it was a practice within the church, for the benefit of the individual believer.

In Acts there was no need of an interpreter. The miracle seemed to be languages enabling every man to understand for himself the mighty work of God in Christ for salvation. In Corinth an interpreter was required, yea, considered to have his own gift of the Spirit. From these casual observations it would be hard to make the two instances parallel experiences.

Further, we see no mention at all of the use of tongues by the apostle in his second letter to the Corinthian church. And it is completely absent from the "gifts" list in his Epistle to the Christians at Rome; this in spite of the fact that Romans is considered to be Paul's *magnum opus* on the plan of full salvation.

Yet another consideration in the use of the gifts in First Corinthians is noted. We see in 1:7 that these people were already in possession of all the gifts. The listing in chapter 12 includes the implication that these gifts were already in practice in the congregation.

One last brief observation points to the popular use of "prayer language" of charismatics today. This experience is alluded to only in 1 Cor. 14:14-15. It is not listed as a separate gift and so must be looked upon and analyzed in the same context as speaking in tongues. In fact, the whole paragraph in which this is found is with Paul's concern for the public worship service, not private devotions.

The issue of "prayer language" is not addressed in Acts. It is only mentioned in 1 Corinthians in a negative way. In fact, we see in Paul's conclusion of this section (14:13-19) a charge to stop this kind of self-satisfying ecstasy that has no benefit to the congregation (v. 20). He is for mature expression of the gospel, not childish euphoria that has no genuine fruit (v. 14).

THE PAULINE RESPONSE

Who were these people Paul was challenging in chapters 12—14? He sees them as already having been baptized by the Holy Spirit (12:13). They had received the grace of God in Christ for salvation (1:4), had been enriched in Christ (1:5), and had all knowledge (1:5).

Neither were they lacking in any gift (1:7), and they were eagerly awaiting the coming of Christ (1:7). This sounds, by all considerations, like the kind of church a Christian would want to be a part of. These people were in possession of the things of God and were lively in their expression of faith.

Paul thanked God for their faith in Christ (1:4). And he testified that the work of the Lord should be done in "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (2:4, NASB). What joy on earth and heaven was in store for God's people (2:6-10).

Pontius' Puddle



It doesn't take long, however, for Paul to start showing them who they really were. These people, who had just been praised in the first chapter, were also called carnal Christians, men of the flesh, in 3:1-4. They were a divisive crowd (1:11-13; 3:3), condoned incest (chap. 5), were taking one another to court (chap. 6), divorcing (chap. 7), and were generally abusing their privileges in grace (chaps. 8-10). One of the most stinging condemnations Paul placed on them was that they were arrogant (4:6-7, 18-19; 5:2, 6; 8:1).

To this Paul rejoined by saying his boasting would be in God only (1:26-31; 3:21). In fact, the apostle counters by saying love perfected would bring a new dimension to their lives (8:1; chap. 13, esp. v. 4; 14:1; 16:14).

Paul presents a new life-style to the Corinthian believers, brought about by the crisis of surrender and with the proper understanding of what it means to belong to God. That life-style is within the servant life.

After calling them arrogant and boastful, he points to his own focus of ministry—that of the servant. In four poignant references, Paul specifically uses terms that point to this servant life—albeit from different Greek words. In 3:5 he uses *diakonoi*, which the KJV translates as “ministers,” while the NIV, NASB,

and RSV use “servants.” Again, in 4:1, Paul makes reference to the servant life with the use of the word *hypēretas*, in which the KJV again uses “ministers” while the other translations listed above again use “servants.”

In the other references the apostle uses his preferred term *doulos* (7:21, 22) or *edoulōsa* (9:19). The KJV translates this as “servant” in all the references here listed, while the later versions all use the stronger term “slave.” From this it can be seen that the later translations tend to use the stronger language in these instances than the more institutional terminology of the KJV.

Paul's vision of this life was so large as to encompass the great Colosseum (4:6-13). A contrast between his own view of the Christian life and the Corinthians' perception is taken up here. He says, “You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you” (4:8, NASB). But he sees himself, instead, as part of the spectacle below in the sandpit, condemned to death for service to the King of Kings. While they cheered in the gallery, he fought for his life against man and beast to see the kingdom of God go forward.

Paul continues by exhorting these

Christians to imitate him in this servant role (4:14-17; 11:1). As in the Christ hymn of Phil. 2:5-11, and in Col. 1:24-29, as well as in other places in his writings, this great apostle seems to see the Suffering Servant as the focal point of his ministry. He saw clearly that if Christ is Lord, the Christian must be the love slave to carry on the mission of reconciliation in the world.

CONCLUSION

There are two distinct life-styles found in this Epistle—that of the boastful, arrogant, and yet gifted Christians at Corinth, and Paul the “love slave”—and the pattern is woven so masterfully one cannot escape the conclusion Paul draws. The charismata are secondary and to be subjugated to the primacy of full surrender to Christ. In this is love made perfect.

Facing the Cross, Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified” (John 17:17-19, NIV).

The gifts are not the measure of the sanctified life. The primacy of the full gospel is a holy life entered into by relinquishing the crown of self-sovereignty and taking up the cross to follow Jesus in true servanthood.

THE PREACHER'S EXCHANGE

WANTED: New or used copies of *New Waves of Glory*, songbook compiled by R. W. Stringfield, Lillenas Publishing Co., 1974. Contact Nolan Haring, Box 480, Sedgewick, Alta. T0B 4C0.

WANTED: Good Christian books, new or used, to be sent to holiness Bible colleges in third-world countries. Also, Nazarene or Wesleyan hymnals needed for the Philippines. Send

to Don and Joyce Berk, 1426 N. Towne Ave., Claremont, CA 91711.

FOR SALE: 57-vol. *Biblical Illustrator*, by Joseph Excell. Excellent condition, price negotiable. Contact Melvin R. James, 22329 Ladeene Ave., Torrance, CA 90505. Phone: (213) 373-8066.

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A TELEVISION MINISTRY FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

by Larry L. Cox

Pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Carnegie, Okla.

Does it take BIG money to get into television? No! Our church here in Carnegie, Okla., does not have big money. Yet we have been involved in a television ministry for 15 years. Often when we think of the television ministry, we think of the big names. It does not have to be that way. Fifteen years ago Bob Williams, the local pastor at the time, started with a black-and-white camera and some music. Now the church has a color camera and two VCRs. Every week we tape the morning services, we edit out the announcements and offering, and at 9 P.M. we play the service back to the whole town of Carnegie via the local cable television company.

After moving to Carnegie to pastor, I was surprised how quickly everyone in town recognized me. It was the television ministry. When I go to the post office, drug-store, or just about any place, I have people stop me to tell me how they enjoyed the program. Many have asked questions, and some have called on the phone.

The television ministry is an outreach for our church. Carnegie has a lot of older people here who can't get out during bad weather. We become their church at those times. Now most of them are regular viewers. I am surprised at the number of young marrieds who watch our program on a regular basis. They also have many ques-

tions to ask about the Bible, God, and Christian living. We do not make appeals for money on television, but this is something we could do for special occasions.

We have started putting a special "heart to heart" talk at the end of the program "from the pastor to you." "We just want to help you" is their main theme. We give special invitations to attend the regular services and special services.

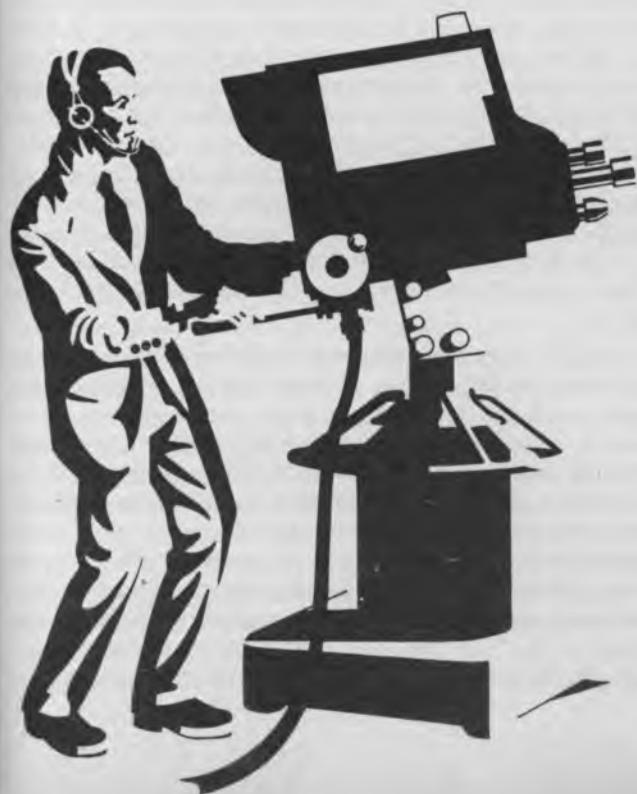
If you are wondering about the cost of equipment, you may be surprised at how little cost is involved. We have one color camera, and a recorder at the church. We tie the sound system into our recorder, using the 3/4" VCR. We did have to put in four more lights, but they match our existing ones. With the better quality equipment coming out now, a church may be able to do video recording with the present lighting. The newer 1/2" VHS has very good quality, and your local cable company may prefer it. We built a video booth at the cable company tower, and they supplied the cable with all the switches. We placed a monitor and our second recorder there. We then manually switch from the local cable weather channel to our program. We play the recorder, then give the local hospital news and switch everything back. We rewind the tape, and we are through for the night. The cable company did all of this for us for no fee, as well as giving us the air time. We are very thankful for all they have done.

The program we air is our morning worship service. The cable company limits us to one hour, so we edit out the announcements and offering and anything else we don't want aired. We try to keep the camera from interfering with our in-house worship service by not playing to the camera.

We have a very effective outreach here. God has blessed us, but we are still learning. I have been here 18 months and am still learning. I am still looking for ways to improve this outreach tool. We feel that God wants us to do whatever is necessary to win men and women to Jesus. God and the cable company are helping us to put the holiness message out to those who have not heard it.

I feel that the television ministry is good for me personally. Sitting back and watching myself has been quite revealing. It has motivated me to improve my pulpit ministry.

We would recommend looking into a possible television ministry to churches everywhere. A high-quality program will serve the local church, the community, and our Lord well.



PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION

An Extended Book Review* by Dale E. Jones

Statistical Research Manager, Division of Church Growth, Church of the Nazarene

Administration. It involves planning for the future of the church; it involves working with the saints; it involves reaching Christ's goals for His kingdom. Yet survey after survey indicates that administration is the least favorite task of most pastors.

A new book by David S. Luecke and Samuel Southard addresses the frustrations pastors face in administration, and suggests a cure for this frustration. The very title, *Pastoral Administration*, emphasizes that the task of administration is an integral part of the pastoral role.

Luecke and Southard first address the problem of *why* a pastor finds administration frustrating. Their basic premise is that administration is a twofold task, and most of us prefer only one of its "folds." For instance, the denomination asks for each local church's involvement in an upcoming Sunday School drive. Which of these thoughts is more likely to run through your mind?

Two more months, and the Sunday School drive begins. Here is a chance to make Brother Johnson feel like we still value his opinions. And the Hattaways need to be more involved; maybe this would challenge them. The teen group could plan a special social the first weekend. Then, there must be a way to use Ruth and the Women's Council.

Or,

Two more months, and the Sunday School drive begins. Attendance has been good recently; we should be able to beat last year's figures by at least 10 percent. And if we can increase the middle adult class by just another six or eight, we'll have enough of a nucleus to launch another adult group. And with all the new folks we'll have, a sermon series on stewardship seems especially fitting.

Both reactions are appropriate. Administration involves people. They have skills, gifts, and potential that ought to be used. They also have feelings that must be considered. And they are part of the Church for which Christ died.

But administration also involves goals: reaching more people for the Kingdom; incorporating them into the church; giving enough to missions so that still others can hear. Without specific planning, we might waste our energy without accomplishing any good thing.

Most pastors, especially the frustrated ones, have a natural affinity for one or the other part of administration. Either they enjoy the personal interactions with people ("Bob was really down Sunday; I'd better meet

with him today"), or they enjoy the challenge of new achievements ("Our average last month nearly tied the record attendance 12 years ago"). Pastors rarely enjoy both halves of administration naturally. And the half the pastor has no natural affinity for causes frustration.

It is easy to recognize the person-oriented/task-oriented dichotomy in this analysis of administration. The value of *Pastoral Administration* lies in its practical suggestions on how to develop the opposite orientation.

Burnout

What can a pastor do to challenge himself when he is approaching "burnout"? Burnout is assumed to result from loss of challenge. Southard suggests that a pastor analyze his interests and abilities. Knowing himself, he ought then to look for opportunities to use these strengths in board meetings, counseling situations, and other administrative roles.

For instance, the pastor finds his interest is strong in counseling. He analyzes his church and finds that the struggle between strong and weak people evident through society affects relations in the church. In this case, let the pastor look for opportunities to help the "weak" and "strong" church members understand each other. Let him teach the ones who are hesitant to voice an opinion to value the contributions of the self-assured, decisive, and sometimes pushy board chairman. And let him help this same chairman recognize that his strong traits often arouse resentment in those who are told in all their secular pursuits what to do and how to do it. As both groups understand each other, the church will become more Christlike, and the pastor will see that the "routine" tasks have taken on new meaning as he uses them as avenues to building Christlike attitudes in the people.

Luecke suggests that there are three roles pastors can choose in building a church: carpenter, contractor, and architect. Carpenters concentrate on hands-on tasks, doing the primary building tasks themselves. Contractors can hand specific tasks to others, but depend on someone else (denominational leaders? predecessors?) to decide which tasks need to be done. Both these roles lead to burnout. A pastor who tries to do most of the work himself will become discouraged when he realizes he alone cannot accomplish everything. The pastor who can keep several people busy at church-building will find discouragement in always trying to



keep the same programs going, or in realizing that much of the work is not helping the church develop as it ought.

Luecke suggests the pastor become the architect, not supplanting God's place as ultimate church builder, but still being used by God to view the total task of the church, to focus ministry in appropriate areas, to show others what the church ought to be aiming for.

Let the pastor see himself as having a larger responsibility in the church; let that knowledge color his actions in each endeavor; then he will not be subject to discouragement over temporary setbacks or "insoluble," but minor, problems.

Motivating Volunteers

"How do I motivate the people in the church?" The authors again give answers from different perspectives.

Luecke sees two forces for moving people—*pushing* and *pulling*. The push comes from inside; a spiritual motive should be present within Christians. If the inner motivation is missing, the pastor needs to address this in preaching, teaching, and group and individual interaction.

More often, the need is not for more push but for more pull. Rather than dragging people to their tasks, however, Luecke suggests offering responsibilities that meet the drives within them. If a layperson feels a strong interest in sharing Christ with others, he will feel a pull toward a job with a chance for personal evangelism. Asking him to lead a fellowship group will have much less appeal and will lessen his motivation.

To find the right activities for people to use their abilities requires strong administration. Without careful planning, there will either be too few jobs to challenge laymen, or too many different jobs not leading to a common goal. The selection of the right person for each position also requires pastoral involvement. The pastor may not appoint each person or keep track of specific tasks, but the pastor must see that such things are done by someone. Delegation is a legitimate tool.

To effectively utilize the people of the church, training must be available. Appointing someone to a position in which they have interest but inadequate understanding leads to frustration. Frustration deadens motivation, whether of the "push" or "pull" variety. To Luecke, a key function of pastoral administration is overseeing the proper use of spiritual gifts.

Southard approaches motivation as influence. He de-

finer five ways of exerting influence. Many pastors try to motivate parishioners through *coercion*, usually by applying guilt. Whatever the ethics of such an approach, it is not an effective means of motivation over the long term. *Reward* is another means of having people do what the pastor wants. In the workplace, this is often done through financial incentives. In volunteer agencies, recognition of effort is the usual reward. This brings the pastor back to involvement in administration. If he has no effective means of knowing which tasks are being accomplished well by laypeople, rewards will come sporadically, if at all.

The remaining means of influence depend upon the pastor as a person. The pastor's *position* ought to exert influence. In denominational churches, this is more likely to occur early in a pastoral term, but even in such churches pastors are having to "prove themselves" before they can expect laypeople to support any pastorally inspired programs. The pastor as *respected person* is far more likely to encourage people to action. This comes only as the pastor demonstrates integrity, and it will always take time.

Perhaps the final source of influence holds hope for many of today's better educated pastors—the *expert*. The pastor has been trained to handle church-related matters; his suggestions carry weight. The danger here is that the pastor and laity might begin to treat the pastor as "God's special person" in the wrong sense, thus defeating efforts to involve the laypeople.

Southard also recognizes that pastors are not the only ones who can, will, or ought to exert influence. The pastor must understand the types of "power" different persons in the congregation have, and know which types are appropriate in which situations.

Handling Conflict

How does the pastor handle conflict? If the conflict involves a flagrant violation of Christian norms, pastors may be reluctant to act, but they at least know where they and the church stand on such issues. But what about the obvious cases? The pastor's plans for missions offering drive this spring interfere with the traditional Sunday School promotion the church school board has always had.

If the pastor is one of the major parties in the disagreement, a time of conflict can be an opportunity for personal growth. "Why is the situation threatening to

me? Which of my values is at stake?" Southard suggests such questions can help the pastor take stock of his spiritual development. For instance, if an arising conflict is honestly seen as a threat to personal prestige, this may be an opportunity to evaluate one's death to self.

Once the pastor's personal involvement is understood, there will still be many opportunities for good people to misunderstand each other. The people approach calls for openness on the part of all those involved. First, give all persons time to consider why they hold the positions they do. Most of the time, some spiritual dimension will be cited. "Growth of individual believers," "reaching new souls," or "being good stewards" may be mentioned. If in fact everyone understands that the "other people" also are concerned with spiritual matters, chances for harmonious resolution of the conflict are improved.

Confrontation, though not a natural response for many people, is far preferable to lingering hurt feelings, smoldering resentments, and other results of "let's hope it all goes away" thinking. A major step in confrontation includes setting ground rules at the start of any meeting: We'll all be able to express ourselves; No decision will be made tonight; Let's also look for areas of agreement.

Luecke acknowledges that confrontation is needed when the disagreement has reached a certain point. However, many disagreements can be avoided by careful administration. Since many conflicts arise due to overlapping roles (both the Sunday School and the mission council have an interest in what the youth program provides), clearly delineating which areas are covered by which offices will head off difficulties. Job descriptions, organizational flow charts, and consistency in following them are part of his solution.

However, Luecke then warns against avoiding too

much conflict. God himself, says Luecke, created diversity in humans. A natural result of diversity is that people will interfere with each other's plans. A complete lack of conflict may indicate that the church is stifling divergent opinions. This will make the church increasingly inaccessible to new methods, leading to an eventual decline.

Conflict will not be fun, but it can result in spiritual growth for individuals and for the church. But the pastor must take the lead in resolving problems.

Conclusion

Throughout the book, the authors emphasize the pastor as key to organizing the church as part of the Body of Christ. People need to use their God-given gifts, opportunities for Christian service arise, and the pastor is expected to know how to match the former with the latter. Neither author assumes the pastor must *do* the matching, but the pastor has to be aware of how the process goes on.

Throughout the book, interesting side issues are explored. Nor are the authors strictly interested in communicating business principles to a church audience. Appropriate biblical illustrations abound. In an intriguing Bible study, Nehemiah is held up as an effective communicator who motivated his "audience" to build a wall, purify lives, and stick by agreements.

Let the potential buyer beware, however. Some of the language is technical; some of the illustrations are too specific for general application. Still, the book is rich in suggestions (When is it inappropriate to use new members in leadership roles? How can volunteers be held accountable?), and pastoral administrators who can see behind the words to the truths beneath will benefit from studying *Pastoral Administration*.

*Pastoral Administration: Integrating Ministry and Management in the Church, by David S. Luecke and Samuel Southard (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1986).



ALL RIGHT, SO EVERYONE IN FAVOR OF CHANGING THE MAROON BAPTISTRY CURTAINS, THAT MRS. McENTIRE PURCHASED 25 YEARS AGO, TO GREEN ONES, AFTER SHE MOVES TO FLORIDA, SAY SO WITH AN UPLIFTED HAND.

COMMON SENSE AND THE PASTORAL VOTE

by Jim Cummins

Senior Pastor, Central Church of the Nazarene, Orlando, Fla.

In 25 years of pastoral ministry, I have experienced frustration, headache, relaxation, and peace—all over the pastoral vote. I have tried to analyze why I have felt such extreme feelings, and it seems to boil down to one single factor: common sense. The day that I changed my attitude toward the vote made a tremendous difference to me, my wife and children, and to our congregation.

The first common sense item with which we have to deal is the *attitude of a minister* toward the vote itself. For the first few years of my pastoral ministry, I felt it was me against the congregation. I finally began to understand that it was all of us pulling together. We are in the same boat, rowing in the same direction, and if the boat sprang a leak and took on water, we were all going to sink—pastor, family, and congregation. To avoid this kind of embarrassment and hurt for myself, the church, and my family, I've developed a method of seeing the pastoral vote come to be a help instead of a hurt. First of all, two months prior to the pastoral vote, I go to the church board and pass out blank ballots. I ask them two questions: (1) "Should we have a pastoral vote? Yes or No." (2) Then I give them the number I think will be voting. I ask them to predict, based on their feelings and on their knowledge, what percent of the congregation will vote yes, and what percent will vote no. I collect the ballots, put them in my pocket, and go on with the board meeting. After the board meeting, I tally the percentage and take the average percentages of what the board members have felt. I have learned to rely on and trust my board, and to let them understand that they are part of a team.

The second common sense thing I have done is to *relax my attitude toward the pastoral vote*. My philosophy is that if I'm worth my salt, if I'm a laborer worthy of his hire, and if this congregation does not want me, there is another one that will. If I am good at what I do, and across the years I have done my best to improve, then my services will be needed and wanted in another congregation. I have also made a decision to allow my people to vote their convictions without harassment, wondering, or criticism from me.

The third common sense thing I have done is to *al-*

low the congregation to know what my decision will be. I tell them publicly, "I will accept the vote if it is one over the required amount. I love being your pastor, I enjoy living here, and if you vote for me, I plan to stay." There is no question in my mind or in their minds that if the vote is positive, if there is any way I can stay, I will.

The fourth common sense item is that we have *rearranged our voting time until we have an open poll from 9 A.M. until 12 noon for a time of balloting*. We do not take time from our actual service to do the voting. We have voting booths set up in the foyer of the church, so that when people come, they go to the table that corresponds with their last name. Their name is checked off by the teller, they are given a ballot, and then they put their vote into a box. At noon the polls are closed, the tally is taken, and the results are read in the evening service. It does not take away from the morning service. There have been times of outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on a Sunday of the pastoral vote. Had we taken the vote during the worship time, this would not have happened.

The fifth common sense item is to *help my family understand the vote*. My attitude toward the family and the pastoral vote has been this: I have been sure that they understand that my attitude is not negative, bitter, sinful, or even questioning of the individual who votes no. I have instructed my children that everyone has a right to vote his conscience. If someone votes no, it is not necessarily because of a personality conflict, difference of opinion, or lack of support. It could be one of many valid reasons. And even though every negative vote hurts (and in my pastoral ministry I have received many), I still believe that every individual should be regarded as voting his own conviction.

The sixth common sense item is to *help my wife with the vote*. My wife probably has more trouble with the pastoral vote than my children, myself, or even the congregation. Again, I have tried to reassure her, give her support and understanding, and allow her to vent her feelings. I listen when she is hurting and reassure her that my abilities are not going to allow the family to go without bread or shelter. Emotional support for your spouse at vote time is very important.

Continued on p. 31

The Church's Other Ambassador

by Patricia Wood

A few years ago I worked as a secretary for our local church. Answering phones, typing letters, meeting people, and keeping statistics were only some of my duties. Sometimes there was a luncheon for ministers to be arranged, breakfast meeting for the board, and so on. I carried these duties out with no real problem until I was assigned the monthly church newsletter. Gathering articles and anecdotes, doing the layout, setting headlines, and mailing procedures were way beyond my training. Where should I go to get help? What was the purpose of all this frustration and work that took almost a whole week out of my month?

My research highlighted the fact that people are the ambassadors of Christ, of each other, and of the church. But the church has another ambassador—the newsletter. This journal is usually once a month, although some churches put out a weekly (midweek) newsletter. This piece of paper may be the only contact some people have with the church. Not only does it inform the regular attenders of church happenings, it communicates to the occasional attender.

With all the work that goes into this production, why not make it the most attractive, attention-getting piece it can be? I asked myself these questions:

What impression is this paper making? What do the families receiving it think about our church? Do they read it? Or is it a waste of time for the pastor and secretary? What should be included in the newsletter? What should be left out? How long should it be?

I'm no longer the church secretary. Now I work at home, writing for Christian magazines. My husband no longer pastors a church. He is a district representative for 44 churches. I still ask myself these questions every time we receive one of their newsletters.

There are some basic things that should be evident in a church newsletter. The first is accuracy. It should be more than the monthly calendar, although that is important. People need to be informed of church events. I personally like the calendar on a separate page that can be posted at home. Don't forget to include the dates, times and places of events listed. I recently read an ad in a small-town newspaper that did not include the company's name. And I was interested in what was advertised, too!

A short, well-highlighted publication is more appealing than a long one—one to three pages at the most, if printed on both sides. Don't put all statistics and reporting in one edition. Each issue might include a statistic or a curious incident in the history of the church. Highlight one department each time: a Sunday School class, the library, the youth department, and so on. Plan ahead to coordinate your issues with holidays. For a large, growing church it is better to have a midweek newsletter to provide more chances to inform the readers of all the opportunities available.

Make sure superlatives are appropriate. Do not use *excellent* when *good* would best describe the person or event. I read recently that Jesus was spoken of in the Scriptures as "Good Master," not "Excellent Master." Everything is not always fantastic.

Beware of writing over your readers' heads. Use understandable vocabulary. It is suggested that in the United States the average person reads at fifth or sixth grade level. This is not the place to use theological terms or clichés that most people would not understand.

Another basic to be considered in preparing the church newsletter is an abbreviated writing style. This means using nouns and verbs, eliminating adjectives, conjunctions, and articles.

People do not always want to be reading about the past. Use verbs in the present tense. What is happening today is of more interest than what the church did last week.

Using people's names helps to make the reader relate to what is happening. How about quoting Jane Doe's favorite Scripture verse? The next month will feature another person's favorite. Let people know who is in charge of an activity, who won an award in their school, community, service club, and so on.

Human interest is a major factor to consider in periodicals. The Bentley Creek, Pa., Wesleyan Church's newsletter introduces a different family each month, sharing some personal information about them. In their November 1985 issue, the Dean family was introduced. It related how John once ended up with a plateful of tomatoes in his lap when he courted Anne. He married her anyway.

One newsletter we receive contains a two-page,

single-spaced sermon. Newsletters are not for preaching. Most people are too busy to read sermons, even if they wanted to. If the pastor includes a devotional, "it should never be more than 100 words," according to *Christian Writing Techniques*, published by Christian Life Publications, Inc.

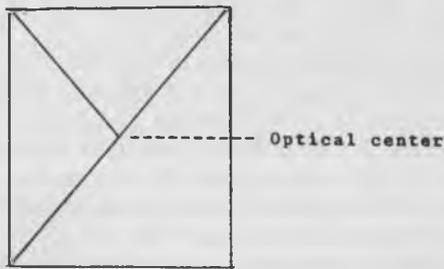
Pictures attract attention. Every page should contain something to draw the eye of the reader. This presented a problem to me as an editor until I discovered that companies that sell bulletins also have stenciled line art if you are mimeographing. Now that copiers are used for reproduction, illustrations can be obtained from almost any place.

Another problem I ran into was my own frame of mind. A negative, critical attitude can come through in the paper. A sarcastic poem about nonchurch attenders was to get them interested in worshipping with us. It failed. With much prayer I endeavored to keep the paper positive. If we enjoy reading bad news, we can pick up any newspaper and find it. The church newsletter should be encouraging, uplifting, and light. It should inform and challenge.

Humor is a good attraction. Appropriate Christian cartoons are usually read first and can get a message across better than a sermon. "I always read the cartoons first," a friend recently told me. "Then I read the rest."

It goes without saying that the publication should include the name, address, and phone number of the church, as well as the pastor's name (and maybe even his picture). It just may get into the hands of someone looking for a church. A picture of the church itself is an added identifier.

How do we set it all up? I had to take some lessons from my daughter at this point. She was taking a course in journalism in high school and gave me some pointers, such as: The type does not have to be in column form. Neither does it have to be folded like a bulletin. Want to highlight an event? Put it in prime space—the optical center. To determine the optical center, draw a line from the lower left corner to the upper right corner. Then from the upper left corner draw a line to meet the first line. Where the lines meet is the optical center.



Don't be afraid to ask for help, even from your daughter. College English professors or high school teachers can help, or libraries have books on the subject.

Reading is work for most people, and the temptation is to avoid work. Therefore, be sure the letter is broken up with plenty of white or blank space. It makes reading easier.

"A word fitly spoken [or written] is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

COMMON SENSE

Continued from p. 29

The seventh common sense item is to *let my people know I love them*. If our congregation understands that we love them, that we support them, that we are part of the team, it will make a large difference in the pastoral vote. Our attitude of caring for them and meeting their needs will make them feel important. If we are not careful, we ministers become selfish, self-centered, and on the taking end, rather than on the giving end, when it comes to expressions of love and expressions of concern. Let them know that you love them. Let them know that you support them. Let them know it by bragging on them and lifting them up. When it comes time for the pastoral vote, they in turn will lift you up.

The eighth common sense item is to *not let the critical minority rule*. The critical minority can run and rule a pastor. There always seems to be a small minority in every church that want to have their way and many times vote out a pastor. How do we handle it? How do we face them? We can face them by becoming bitter, or we can face them by simply realizing that one way to quiet the negative minority is to bring in new people to overshadow, to absorb, to take leadership roles, and to dispel the vote and the voices of the negative few. One lady smiled recently and said, "Pastor, you made the comment a few years ago that if we are not willing to grow, you would simply go out and get new people, win them to the Lord, and we will fill the congregation with those who do want to grow." She laughed and said, "That's exactly what we have done." If we are laborers and are good at what we do, we will be busy in winning new people, and those people will create a new excitement. They will create a new vision. They will create a new leadership base, and the negative minority will soon lose its voice. Its members will lose their positions and will be absorbed in the mighty positive move as a church goes forward.

As pastors, we must be careful not to listen to the small, negative minority and allow them to control us. Too many pastors listen to the 10 percent negative and have forgotten to listen to the 90 percent positive vote. Most of the congregation is for us. If we allow the negative minority to control us, we are wrong. By not listening to the positive congregation and the positive majority, we as leaders are forgetting to be democratic in a process that will usually work for us. As we look at the total process of the pastoral vote, we need to use our common sense.

Pastors, part of the responsibility is on our shoulders. We need to be leaders and we need to take the steps in becoming *good* leaders, leaders filled with the Holy Spirit, to lead our congregation to a positive experience in the pastoral vote.

I am not saying that every pastoral vote will be unanimous. I have had very few unanimous votes. I draw a lot of negatives. I always will. I understand that. But I will continue to love those who vote no, and let them speak their mind. And I will use the common sense that I need to have as a leader of my congregation, and move in a positive aspect for Jesus Christ and His Church.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Children's church, in its simplest form, is a worship service planned specifically for children. It is a gathering of children, usually simultaneous with the adult worship service. Robert Clark, teacher of Christian education at Moody Bible Institute, states that children's church usually follows one of two formats. In the first, an attempt is made to produce a replica of adult worship, where all the children worship together in one place. The second format is to divide the children into groups and provide time for them to prepare parts of the worship that they will present. After everyone has been given time to prepare, then they come together and present their portion. Clark states that "a well organized children's church provides instruction, worship, fellowship, and expression on the child's intellectual and spiritual level."¹

Betty Bowes defines children's church by first describing what it is not.

It is not a duplicate Sunday School session. It is not mere child care. It is not a Sunday School extended session such as planned for nursery and kindergarten children.

Children's church is a service of worship and correlated activities for primary, middler, and junior boys and girls. To be effective it must be geared to their level of understanding. It must involve the children through active participation demanding more than just passive listening.²

We can see from these definitions that children's church is worship on the child's level. It consists of related group activities, but worship is (or should be) the main objective. But there are other goals. Miriam Hall, director of Children's Ministries for the Church of the Nazarene, writes, "Children's church has four important goals: (1) to strengthen the children's relationship with God, (2) to allow boys and girls to have a worship experience appropriate for their age, (3) to prepare them for participation in adult worship when they are older, [and] (4) to train them for service to God and the church."³ "In addition to these goals of teaching saved children to worship and serve the Lord, children's church can also help unsaved children to see their need of Christ."⁴

Another goal, although seldom stated as one, is to remove children from the adults' service. Children in the sanctuary distract adults from worship. By removing them, we allow adults to worship freely, without interruption.

If worship is the central theme of children's church, then we need to define worship. "Worship is the specific act of adoring contemplation of God."⁵ "To worship is to experience reality, to touch life. It is to know, to feel, to experience the resurrected Christ in the midst of the gathered community."⁶ "If worship is viewed in these terms, then the hearing of scripture, singing, praying and listening to a sermon are not worship in themselves, they simply help lead us to worship."⁷ Therefore, worship can happen at any time or place the believer experiences these "adoring contemplations" of the risen Christ. Children often experience God in different ways. John Pridmore describes their experience of worship as "a Godward gladness," a joy at realizing truth, excitement, or other emotions when confronted with God's Word. He states that "there is a *Godward gladness* that takes place in early childhood which we may believe is received as worship, even if it is not consciously thought of as worship."⁸

Providing a separate place apart from the sanctuary, where children can learn to worship with their peers at their own level of understanding, has become increasingly popular. But do children have to be separated from the rest of the congregation to experience worship? *Children in the Worshiping Community*, by David Ng and Virginia Thomas, challenges this notion. The book's premise is that "the gospel is for all persons, regardless of age. The church includes all persons of all ages, and worship is a corporate action in which children are participants with adults."⁹ Ng and Thomas contend that children are a part of the body, and to exclude them from worship is to separate them from the body.

This view is echoed by Roger Gobel. He states, "Children belong to and in the gathered worshiping community. . . . The problem is not what shall we do *for* children during worship, but what shall we do along *with* children."¹⁰ Jerome DeJong also disagrees with re-

Nazarene

UPDATE

UPDATE EDITOR, MARK D. MARVIN, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

GIVING MINISTERS PROPER RESPECT

Ministers are flesh and blood. Tickle us and we laugh, cut us and we bleed, crush us and we die. We are subject to the same cultural changes that impact everyone else. In North America and northern Europe, the trend has been toward greater familiarity between people. The result for the ministry has been a setting aside of titles and traditional expressions of respect. Spiritual leaders are increasingly called by their first names, sometimes even nicknames.

Many aspects of this across-the-board friendliness are pleasant. However, the time may have come for us to examine the direction we are headed. Perhaps we should ask, What is the result of this new attitude toward the clergy?

Some pastors insist that the ministry is not esteemed as it once was. They blame clergy members who have disgraced the profession by their behavior, their moral or ethical misdeeds exposed by the secular media. Pastors



by General Superintendent
Jerald D. Johnson

and evangelists are increasingly held up to public ridicule. Every spiritual leader, so the argument goes, suffers from an inevitable lack of respect. Some ministers feel their opportunities for service have been limited, and the strength of their ministries diminished.

It probably isn't as bad as some make it appear. Understandably, we tend to apologize for the guilty ones, even those who are not a part of our church or theological tradition.

Indeed, we do hurt for the cause of Christ. Yet, assuming that the attitude toward the clergy is changing, might do well to address the situation and try to alter it. It may be that it's at the point of familiarity where we ought to begin some changes. When clergy members are addressed by their first names, those who do so may think less of the minister. It may also prompt the minister to consider himself less valuable, subconsciously causing him to let down on some social or moral principles. The result could lead to ministerial disgrace.

Is it too late to argue for a return to traditional, even old-fashioned terms of respect? Or have we come so far we must adjust to the situation as it is? Perhaps there is room for compromise.

Let today's minister be a friend as well as a spiritual leader. Let people of all ages find their pastor approachable. But at the same time, it might be worth our efforts to start what may be a long process back to the use of the title "Reverend," instead of "Jack" or "John." "Pastor" says far more, and says it better, than "Preacher." Even "Mister" carries more respect than just first names.

"Familiarity breeds contempt." There may be more truth in the old proverb than we have imagined. At least the present social and religious climates give cause for considering some cultural shifts. As ministers, we may have to be the ones who start them.



FAITH IN THE WORKPLACE

Industrial Chaplaincy Answers the Call

In this high tech era, industry has recognized the need for professional, competent spiritual support and guidance for its workers. In 1982, the UAW International recognized the need for a chaplaincy program to provide ministry in the workplace.

Managers realize the value of providing chaplains with whom their employees can share their problems and needs. They note that employees' performance records improve as they work through problems with a chaplain's counsel. They also note the cost-effectiveness of industrial chaplaincy. There's a direct correlation between the availability of a chaplain and absenteeism, diminished productivity, and attrition. According to Chaplain Vernon Swim, "Most businesses believe that it costs between \$8,500 and \$20,000 to replace each professional level employee. These figures affirm that a chaplain is a direct cost benefit to a corporation by saving many employees per year from attrition."

What is involved in industrial chaplaincy?

1. He represents God's concern for all in their working relationships.

2. The chaplain ministers to a wide range of faith groups.
3. He inspires confidence, radiates good will, and establishes rapport.
4. The chaplain is acquainted with the nature of each employee's work.
5. The chaplain demonstrates concern for employees' family lives.
6. He assists in funeral services and performs wedding ceremonies.
7. He counsels those who seek his help or those who are referred to him.
8. He works within company policies and under designated supervision.
9. He gives classes on a number of subjects: communication, interpersonal relations, drug/alcohol abuse, ethics, values, etc.
10. Duties will not hinder his regular ministry or be out of harmony with his primary ministerial role.

Most industries require denominational endorsement for chaplains. If you feel God calling you into this ministry and would like further information or endorsement, contact:

“The goal of industrial chaplaincy is to provide discerning, compassionate outreach to enable workers to discover their full potential.”

**—George Andrew
Industrial Chaplain**

CH(COL) Curt Bowers USA (Ret)
Chaplaincy Ministries Director
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131
816-333-7000

Multicongregational Works



Currently, in the U.S. and Canada, 116 ethnic congregations share worship facilities with host congregations. This accounts for just over 50% of the Church of the Nazarene's ethnic ministry in North America.

Multicongregational arrangements have proven mutually beneficial. Ethnic ministries are free to devote more of their limited resources to reaching their target groups than if they were responsible for the rent and maintenance of a separate facility.

Host congregations have the unique opportunity to catch the vision of an international church, and to increase their understanding of and passion for missions.

As the map indicates, the multicongregational frontier is still wide open. Is God calling you to open your hearts and churches to the ethnic community in the shadow of your steeple? Call us. We can help you identify the target groups in your sphere of influence.



CHURCH GROWTH RESEARCH CENTER

6401 THE PASEO

KANSAS CITY, MO 64131

(816) 333-7000



THE BOARD OF GENERAL SUPERINTENDENTS has declared 1989 THE YEAR OF CHURCH PLANTING.

The Church of the Nazarene is committed to plant 2,000 new works in this General Assembly year, resulting in 730 fully organized churches across the denomination.

We need a corps of like-committed pastors and seminary or Bible college graduates to help realize this goal. If you feel led to be on the cutting edge of this venture in faith, contact your district superintendent or

CHURCH EXTENSION MINISTRIES

6401 The Paseo

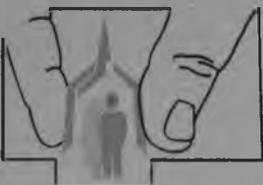
March 12,
1989 is

Home Mission Sunday

Home Mission Sunday provides you an opportunity to let your people share in **The Year of Church Planting**. Invite a church planter to speak to your church, or preach a message on church planting yourself.

Perhaps now is the time for your church to consider sponsoring an extension revival or VBS, a satellite Sunday School, a compassionate ministry, or a home Bible study or Church-type Mission.

For more information, contact Church Extension Ministries, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.



In- for- ma- tion

(Available Here)

Need to know ? Just Ask !

All items listed are revised periodically to keep up to date with changing conditions. All are available free upon request.

- MEMO No. 1, *Housing for Your Pastor: Parsonage or Housing Allowance?*
- MEMO No. 2, *Church Employees or Independent Contractors?*
- MEMO No. 3, *The Local Church as Employer—What Are The Tax Implications?*
- MEMO No. 4, *Changing Patterns in Ministerial Compensation.*
- MEMO No. 5, *Minimizing Income Taxes for Church Employees*
- MEMO No. 6, *Annual Wage Statements for Church Employees*
- MEMO No. 7, *Payroll Tax Procedures for Congregations*
- MEMO No. 9, *Workers' Compensation Laws and the Local Church*
- MEMO No. 10, *Can Ministers Opt Out of Social Security?*
- MEMO No. 11, *Auto Expenses and Federal Income Taxes*
- MEMO No. 12, *The Deacon's Tax Status*
- MEMO No. 13, *The Minister's Housing Allowance*
- MEMO No. 14, *Social Security for Ministers and Church-Employed Laymen*
- MEMO NO. 15, *Moving Expenses: Reporting Requirements and Deductions*
- "Basic" Pension Policy Summary
- Information on Supplemental Retirement Program for Church Employees: TSA____IRA____KEOGH____
- Information on Group Term Life Insurance for Church Employees
- Information on Long-Term Disability Income Protection for Church Employees
- Information on Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance for Church Employees.

"To be properly informed is to take the first step toward performing the task as it should be done."

Clip request list and mail to:

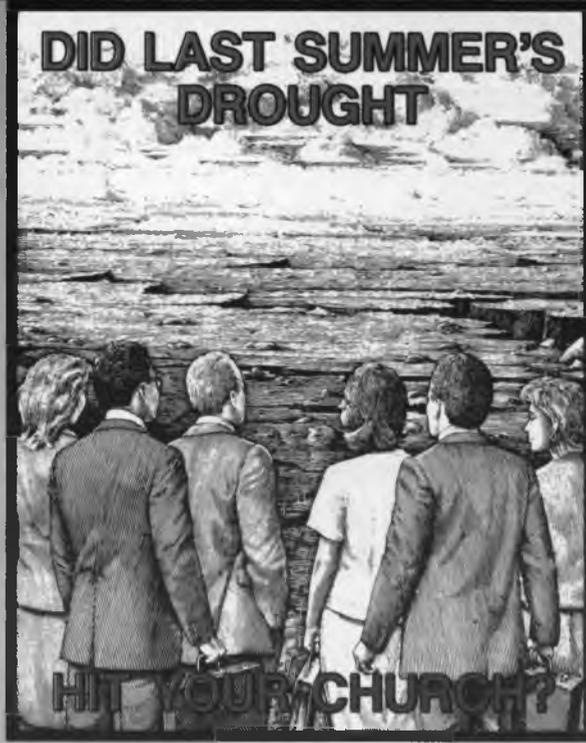
Board of Pensions and Benefits USA, 6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, Mo. 64131

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____



Discover a "brand-new reservoir" by inviting the Life Income Gifts Services' representative to present a Wills Seminar at your church.

The seminars are offered at no cost by your general church. Only a freewill offering for the representative is requested.

According to pastors' reports, some 500 local churches have shared more than 7 million spendable dollars that came into their coffers through bequests in wills over the last two years.

LIFE INCOME GIFTS SERVICES
Church of the Nazarene
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131
Rev. Robert D. Hempel, Director

Name: _____
Telephone: _____
Address: _____
Church: _____
District: _____

[] I/We would like to talk to someone about scheduling a Wills Seminar at our church.

THE SECRET OF ALABASTER IS IN ITS 40th YEAR

In 1949, the General Council of the Nazarene World Mission Society adopted a plan presented by Mrs. Elizabeth Venum, a member of the council. Through the plan individuals would be challenged to do without something they wanted, but didn't really need, putting the money equivalent to the cost of the item into Alabaster love boxes.

To keep the offering unique as a mission special over and above regular General Budget giving, moneys collected in Alabaster offerings are designated for buildings and sites in mission areas of the Church of the Nazarene.

Alabaster giving is the overflow of hearts filled with gratitude to God for the wonderful gift of His Son.

Challenge your church with the Alabaster story from Matthew 26. Amaze them with the things that Alabaster offerings are doing today. Astound them with the needs for the future.

We give because we love Christ—that is the secret of Alabaster giving.

A secret shared for 40 years.

February Is Alabaster Month!

Alabaster supplies available from Nazarene Publishing House:

- Alabaster Boxes (pkg. of 25)—Order No. PAO-2; Cost \$5.00
- Alabaster Seals (pkg. of 25)—Order No. PAO-3; Cost \$1.50
- Giant Alabaster Box (NZ)—Order No. PAU-80; Cost \$6.95
- Alabaster Promotion Brochure—Lists results of Alabaster giving; Order No. PAX-1; Cost 10¢ each (minimum order \$2.50)
- "The Story of Alabaster" Brochure—Gives background of the Alabaster Offering—Order No. PAX-31; Cost 10¢ each (minimum order \$2.50)
- "An Alabaster Heart" (video)—Order No. PAVA-173; Cost \$10.00
- "An Alabaster Heart" (film)—Order No. PAFR-173; Cost \$25.00 rental, \$175 purchase

"Concerts of Prayer"

"The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous person avails much" (James 5:16).

One of the NWMS objectives is "to enlist the members of the church in united prayer." Will you as a pastor guide your church as they participate in the "Concerts of Prayer"? This occurrence will involve Nazarenes in a total of *one million hours of prayer* for the upcoming General Assembly and general conventions. The "Concerts of Prayer" event is planned for January through June 1989.

The plan: district NWMS presidents are signing contracts for the amount of hours their NWMS members will pray specifically for the assembly and conventions. If every district takes as a minimum the number that is twice its total NWMS membership, one million hours of prayer will be contracted.

The success of this prayer effort lies with you and your local church. Only at the local level can this challenge be met. Only through your emphasis on prayer support as pastor will your church feel the importance of this need. And only through your belief in the prayer plan will you be able to pray most effectively.

The "Concerts of Prayer" will include intercession for revival, participants and leaders, worship and evangelistic services, business sessions, and specific events for all conventions (CL/SS, NWMS, and NYI) and the assembly.

The Church of the Nazarene was born in prayer and its ongoing effectiveness depends on prayer. The Lord promises to answer those who call upon Him. Let us faithfully call.

—Nina G. Gunter
General NWMS Director

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

PASTOR—a Service to You

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

Name _____ Date of Change _____

Former Address _____ ZIP _____

Former Church _____

New Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Name of Church _____ District _____

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

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

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

Other _____

(Clip and send to the Subscription Department,

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE • Post Office Box 419527, Kansas City, Missouri 64141

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

the 1989

CHURCH GROWTH CONFERENCE

June 21 & 22

at the

WESTIN HOTEL

in

Indianapolis



*Watch your mail
for complete
information*

Introducing 2 new targets for the 1989 Thrust to the Cities



Paris, the "City of Light,"
is actually a city of deep spiritual darkness. We
want to change that by introducing the people of Paris to
Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.



THRUST GOAL

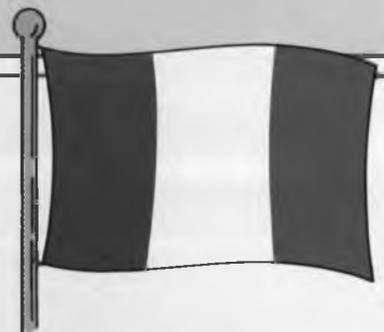
10 NEW WORKS BY 1991

To accomplish this goal, we need the investments of Nazarenes worldwide in prayer, finances, and in Work and Witness teams.

*For more information, contact
Thrust to the Cities
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131*

*For Work and Witness opportunities,
contact David Hayse
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131*

PARIS



São Paulo



São Paulo, Brazil: the largest city in South America. Its motto is "São Paulo cannot stop."

In this 50th anniversary year of our work in Brazil, we plan to show São Paulo that the Church of the Nazarene cannot stop calling people back to Jesus Christ.

In this city of over 16 million people with an average age of under 18, the Church of the Nazarene plans to start 30 new churches in the next two years. How can you help? We

need churches to commit finances and Work and Witness teams to São Paulo. Above all, we need Nazarenes worldwide to commit themselves to pray for the São Paulo Thrust.

For more information, contact Thrust to the Cities, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131. For information on Work and Witness opportunities in São Paulo, contact David Hayse, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.



THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE

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

LEADERSHIP • INSPIRATION • FULFILLMENT • ENRICHMENT

HUNGER:

A SIGN OF HEALTH

With deep disappointment in his voice, an elderly man admitted to me, "Food just doesn't taste the same anymore." His weakening body was a commentary on minimal nourishment supplied by a jaded appetite. Another lady, longing for days of good health, said to me, "Pastor, you should thank God for your good appetite."

The most encouraging sign of spiritual health in the church is a hunger for revival. We desperately cry for revival, and God listens.

Christian consciousness has been crusted over with scientific determinism. The foundations of our faith are being assaulted. It is easy to become defensive and withdraw our witness because of fear and doubt. However, beneath that sense of spiritual loss is a desperate hunger for *reality*. The *hunger* is our *hope!* It is a sign of life and health. Without such an appetite disease would have gripped its victim. The felt need for revival is no reason for despair or fear. Rather, sensing such a need is our greatest opportunity for a new spiritual movement.



Wilbur W. Brannon
Pastoral Ministries Director

Hunger pains will gnaw for nourishment until they are satisfied. Just as each meal satisfies our physical needs, so spiritual revival lifts our faith, energizes our commitment, and supports our vision. In each case the need remains for continual replenishment. Renewal is not an event; it is a process! That's why we are to "pray without ceasing." We must continually be in touch with the world behind the world we see. God's heaven is not far away, and He really does want to do His will on earth!

Therefore, our hunger for God is not an end in itself but a means for us to be satisfied by the energy received to affirm and accomplish His will. Our greatest joy is not experienced in emotional self-indulgence but in witnessing what God is doing through us. It is the Great Commission realized! It is renewal with a reason.

The hunger reveals health and growth. Nurture the appetite and make your enjoyment not the meal but the life it nourishes.



MEET "HEARTLINE" COUNSELOR DON HARVEY



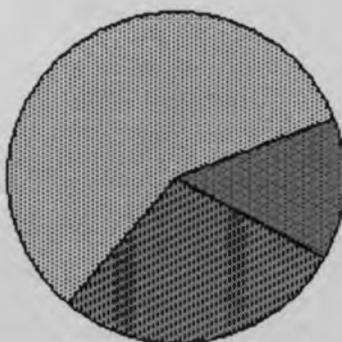
Dr. Don Harvey has a doctorate in marriage and family therapy and came to Christian Counseling Services by way of a number of counseling positions in both public and

private settings. His role as clinical director requires him to supervise the work of the counseling staff in addition to maintaining a personal case load. His first book, *Drifting Marriage: The Quiet Crisis*, was released by Fleming Revell Publishers in March of this year.

Dr. Harvey considers himself a transplanted Yankee. Although born and raised in California, he came to the south upon graduation from Bethany Nazarene College. For enjoyment, he spends time with his wife and family. When asked what he does for himself, he replied: "I run on a daily basis and enjoy an occasional afternoon of golf or fishing. But probably one of my more enjoyable pleasures is writing. I view it as an extension of myself. As such, it is my therapy."

"HEARTLINE" CALLERS

The **HEARTLINE** was open 248 days in 1987. We received 802 total calls with 343 hours spent on the phone. The diagram above illustrates the percentage of callers who were pastors, pastors' spouses, or others (church workers, members, or other professionals).



| | |
|---------|-----|
| PASTORS | 58% |
| SPOUSES | 28% |
| OTHERS | 14% |

COURSE OF STUDY UPDATE

A Short Life of Christ, by Everette F. Harrison, is the replacement optional reading book for *The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ*, Elder, Level I, No. 111c; Deacon—Christian Education, Level I, No. 211c; Deacon—Compassionate Ministries, Level I, No. 311c; Deacon—Music Ministries, Level I, No. 411c.

The Tender Shepherd, by John Killinger, is the replacement optional reading book for *Baker's Handbook on Practical Theology*, Elder, Level II, No. 125d.

Fundamentals of Preaching, by John Killinger, is the replacement optional reading book for *Creative Preaching: Finding the Words*, Elder, Level III, No. 134d.

Pastoral Leadership, by Robert D.

Dale, is the replacement optional reading book for *Strategy for Leadership*, Elder, Level III, No. 135d.

Philosophy of Religion, by D. Elton Trueblood, is the replacement required reading book for *A Christian Perspective of Knowing*, Elder, Level IV, No. 142a; Deacon—Christian Education, Level IV, No. 242a; Deacon—Compassionate Ministries, Level IV, No. 342a; Deacon—Music Ministries, Level IV, No. 442a.

Strengthening the Adult Sunday School, by Dick Murray, is the replacement text for *Ministering to Adults Today*, Deacon—Christian Education, Level IV, No. 245.

The Urban Christian, by Ray Bakke, is the replacement optional

reading book for *Bring Forth Justice*, Deacon—Compassionate Ministries, Level II, No. 324d.

Leading Younger Children's Choirs, by Butler, Jackson, and Woodward, and *Leading Older Children's Choirs*, by Kirkland, Butler, and Kirkland, are the replacement texts for *Ministry of Music with Children*, Deacon—Music Ministries, Level III, No. 435.

Transition and Newness, by D. Bagby, Deacon—Compassionate Ministries, Level IV, No. 344d; and *Fundamentals of Music*, by William L. Hooper, Deacon—Music Ministries, Level IV, No. 444b, have gone out of print. Contact Pastoral Ministries for information on their replacements.

CONTINUING EDUCATION IS FOR YOU!

Do you face a problem that has arisen after several years of ministry? Are you unable to cope with new situations; unprepared for changing conditions? Do you desire to move to a more demanding call? If you answered yes to any of these questions, continuing education is for you.

According to Southern Baptist Pastoral Ministries Consultant Bruce Grubbs, "A competent minister must continue to develop his skill. If . . . continuing education is neglected, the minister faces the risk of trying to deal with new problems using outdated skills."

Our educational institutions, district leaders, and Pastoral Ministries all work to offer continuing education for the growing pastor. As the entities designed to provide you with opportunities for professional enhancement, we are available to assist you with the issues facing your ministry. As Grubbs says, "Implicit in the call [to ministry] is a commission to work and study."

If you are interested in the continuing education opportunities provided by your district, contact your Board of Ministerial Studies chairman or secretary. The religion department of your college/university would be the contact point for continuing education at the institution level. If you are interested in directed studies, Pastoral Ministries offers a number of courses. With Dr. Leslie Parrott's permission, we are pleased to offer "The Seven Concerns of the Local Church Board" This video series (VA-164) can be used to train board members and update your administrative expertise. The video series sells for \$69.95. It may be borrowed from Pastoral Ministries for \$15.00, which includes the study guide, "Approved Workman" course fee.

If you are looking for help with the challenges facing your ministry, now is the time for continuing education. For further information, contact Pastoral Ministries, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

I recently interviewed Ralph Mosgrove, Central Florida District's Ministerial Studies Board chairman, and Don Dunnington, Trevecca Nazarene College chaplain, about the importance of continuing education on their districts.

WELCH: What continuing education opportunities does your district offer?

DUNNINGTON: We hold an annual pastors' conference that speaks to certain needs and problems pastors face. We advertise these events throughout the educational region. Presently we are working to affiliate our continuing education training with TNC's master of arts degree program. We offer a three-day seminar four to six times a year. A student may take the course either for CEU credit or apply the credits toward TNC's M.A. in religion program. We offer these courses off campus.

MOSGROVE: Each year we offer at least one course in a particular book of the Bible and one course dealing with the practical aspects of ministry. We also send out the "Approved Workman" (a continuing edu-

cation recognition program for ministers offered through Pastoral Ministries) program brochure twice a year. This way pastors can enhance their skills in the convenience of their homes or offices.

WELCH: How has continuing education helped you grow?

DUNNINGTON: Personally, continuing education is part of life; to stop learning is to stop growing. While attending the first PALCON, I remember when Dr. W. E. McCumber distributed his "Planning a Preaching Program." That led me to ask myself, "What do I want to read and why?"

The mark of an educated person is knowing how to learn and how to study on one's own. That's why continuing education is important to me. For instance, while on sabbatical I attended Asbury College's spiritual formation course. I read the required reading and participated just like any other student. The only difference between my training and the other students was that mine was rather informal training.

MOSGROVE: Continuing education has helped me see other ways to accomplish my goals; to see that alternatives are valid. If you want to be like Jesus, you have to be willing to pay the price. In the same way, if you really want to learn, you must be willing to pay the price. I have learned things that I wasn't sure I could learn because I stretched myself through continuing education. The more I study, the more I realize what I don't know, and the more I want to learn.

WELCH: How would you instruct a pastor to begin his continuing education?

DUNNINGTON: First, I would tell him to look at his ministry and decide what God wants him to concentrate on. Second, he should ask, "What resources do I need to garner?" Third, I would have him select a CE program that best meets the needs he has identified. For example, if he wanted to begin a singles ministry in his church, he should (1) ask, "What do I need to know?" (2) select a reading list; (3) get involved with others involved in leading such a group; and (4) choose the direction that he wants it to go and then pursue it.

Continuing education is the process of learning how to be a student. My one regret is having spent too much time reading popular books and not the great books—the ones that have endured through time.

Ministry is as much an intellectual process as it is emotional stimulation. There needs to be a balance of the two. Many times we may think that we need to be encouraged by highly emotional seminars while what we may really need is the stimulation of our intellects. If we *enrich* our ministries, we will more than likely *prolong* our ministries.



Donald W. Welch
Pastoral Ministries Coordinator

22nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
and
International Conventions
JUNE 21-30, 1989

INDIANAPOLIS
CONVENTION CENTER
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA



Facilities:

The Indianapolis Convention Center will house the CL/SS Convention, NYI Convention, and the 83,000 square foot Exhibition Hall. The NWMS Convention, General Assembly, and most evening services will be held in the 60,000-seat Hoosier Dome, which is annexed to the Convention Center.

Conventions, Workshops, Conferences

| | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|--|
| NWMS Convention | June 21-23 | (Dome) |
| NYI Convention | June 21-23 | (Convention Center) |
| CL/SS Convention and Workshops | June 21-23 | (Convention Center) |
| Church Growth Conference | June 21-22 | (Westin Hotel across from Convention Center) |

General Assembly

| | | |
|-------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Caucuses | June 24 | (Convention Center) |
| Communion Service | June 25 | (Dome) |
| Plenary Sessions | June 26-30 | (Dome) |

Schedule of Services:

| | | |
|-------------------|---------|--|
| Wednesday Evening | June 21 | NYI Rally (Convention Center) |
| Wednesday Evening | June 21 | Church Growth Conf. Inspirational Service (Westin Hotel) |
| Thursday Evening | June 22 | Conventions (Convention Center and Dome) |
| Friday Evening | June 23 | Church Growth and Christian Life (Dome) |
| Saturday Evening | June 24 | World Mission Service (Dome) |
| Sunday Morning | June 25 | Communion Service (Dome) |
| Sunday Evening | June 25 | Holiness Evangelism (Dome) |
| Monday Evening | June 26 | Education Service (Dome) |
| Tuesday Evening | June 27 | Inspirational Service (Dome) |
| Wednesday Evening | June 28 | Camp Meeting Service (Dome) |

Exhibition Theme & Hours

Theme: Nazarene Expo '89—Partners in Vision and Venture

| | | |
|--------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Hours: | Thursday, June 22 | 10:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M. |
| | Friday, June 23 | 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M. |
| | Saturday, June 24 | 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M. |
| | Sunday, June 25 | 2:00 P.M.-4:00 P.M. |
| | Monday, June 26 | 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M. |
| | Tuesday, June 27 | 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M. |
| | Wednesday, June 28 | 9:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M. |

Pastor's Remembrance Plan

A card from the pastor can mean so much



A systematic method of recognizing those special days in the life of members and friends in your congregation.

Warm, friendly designs in full color coupled with meaningful selections of prose, scripture, and prayerettes beautifully express the interest and love of a pastor. Space optional for personal message.

Lithographed in four colors on a high-gloss stock. 4 1/2" x 6". Matching envelopes.

- PAG-891 BIRTHDAY
- PAG-892 ANNIVERSARY
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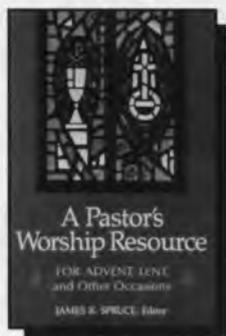
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 - ◆ **JONTE, JOHN.** (R) 3905 N.W. 55th Pl., Oklahoma City, OK 73112
 - ◆ **JORDAN, RONALD.** (R) 4962 Ridge Park Dr., Memphis, TN 38128
 - ◆ **JUSTICE, MEL & DONNA.** (C) 1618 Chapel St., Dayton, OH 45404

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

- L**
- ◆ **LAING, GERALD.** (C) 11436 East St., Vicksburg, MI 49097
 - ◆ **LaSALLE, JAN (MRS. RAY).** (C) P.O. Box 350, Fort Scott, KS 66701
 - ◆ **LaSALLE, RAY.** (C) P.O. Box 350, Fort Scott, KS 66701
 - ◆ **LAWSON, WAYNE.** (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
 - ◆ **LAXSON, KIP.** (R) 55 Hart St., Apt. 10, Nashville, TN 37210
 - ◆ **LAXSON, WALLY & GINGER.** (C) Rte. 3, Box 118, Athens, AL 35611
 - ◆ **LAYCOCK, ERIC L.** (R) 115 Crosthwaite Ave. N., Hamilton, ON L8H 4V3
 - ◆ **LECKRONE, LARRY.** (C) 403 E. Main, Morenci, MI 49256
 - ◆ **LEIDY, ARNOLD G.** (C) 2936 Calle Princesa Juana, Santa Fe, NM 87501
 - ◆ **LEIGH, GILBERT.** (R) 5004 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60651
 - ▽ **LEONARD, J. C.** 1410 Armory, Chariton, IA 50049
 - ◆ **LEPTER, DOUGLAS & SAMUELLA.** (C) 821 Springdale Ave., Annapolis, MD 21403
 - ▽ **LESTER, FRED R.** 7404 Ed Rice, Mesa, AZ 85208
 - ◆ **LIDDELL, R. L.** (C) 3530 W. Allen Rd., Howell, MI 48843
 - ◆ **LISTON, CLARENCE.** (R) P.O. Box 23576, Tucson, AZ 85734
 - ◆ **LITTLE, HAROLD.** (R) 9907 White Oak, No. 114, Northridge, CA 91325
 - ◆ **LOHR, DONALD.** (C) P.O. Box 7056, Charleston, WV 25356
 - ◆ **LORENZEN, LINDA.** (R) Rte. 3, Box 231A, Blanchester, OH 45107
 - ◆ **LOUGHBRIDGE, WILLIAM.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 38, Wister, OK 74966
 - ◆ **LOVE, ROBERT.** (R) 6425 Nanette, Colorado Springs, CO 80907
 - ◆ **LOVING, BECKY.** (R) 1101 S. Park Rd., Texarkana, TX 75503
 - ◆ **LOWN, ALBERT J.** 23 Elmview, Airedale Park, Steeton, Keighley, Yorkshire, England
 - ◆ **LYBARGER, EVERETT.** (C) P.O. Box 1534, Conway, AR 72032

- M**
- ◆ **MACK, WILLIAM M.** (R) 106 Youpon Dr., Hubert, NC 28539
 - ◆ **MADDOX, HOMER & MARTHA.** (R) 1917 Wilkens St., Indianapolis, IN 46221

- ◆ **MANER, ROBERT E.** (C) P.O. Box 675, Fitzgerald, GA 31750
- ◆ **MANLEY, STEPHEN.** (C) Box 522, Upland, IN 46989
- ◆ **MANN, THURL & MARY KAY.** (C) 90 Sycamore Ln., Fort Myers, FL 33908
- ▽ **MARSH, MILTON.** (R) Box 234, Remington, IN 47977
- ▽ **MARTIN, LEON.** Rte. 3, Box 242A, Bonham, TX 75418
- ◆ **MATTER, DAN & ANN.** (R) 2617 Carew St., Fort Wayne, IN 46805
- ▽ **MAX, HOMER.** Rte. 3, Box 217, Knoxville, IA 50138
- ▽ **MAY, JOHN.** RD 1, Box 17-SG, Colliers, WV 26035
- ◆ **MAYO, CLIFFORD.** (R) Star Rte. 1, Box 13, Dumont, TX 79232
- ◆ **McABEE, JAMES.** (C) 103 Loretta Dr., Spartanburg, SC 29301
- ◆ **McCALLIE, JAMES.** (R) Rte. 6, Box 254, Columbus, IN 47201
- ◆ **McCARTY, DON W.** (R) P.O. Box 1561, Sitka, AK 99835
- ◆ **McCOOL, EARL.** (C) 3130 Westcliff Drive E., Colorado Springs, CO 80906-4529
- ◆ **McCORKLE, ROB.** (R) 7606 W. 86th St., Overland Park, KS 66212
- ◆ **McDONALD, CHARLIE E.** (C) 920 W. Olive St., West Monroe, LA 71291
- ▽ **McDOWELL, DORIS.** 540 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre, CA 91024
- ◆ **McELFRESH, RONALD.** (C) 1964 Osage Cir., Olathe, KS 66062
- ◆ **McELROY, HUGH.** (R) 1237 9th St., West Portsmouth, OH 45662
- ◆ **McFARLAND, CARLYLE.** (R) R.R. 3, Box 120, Tipton, IN 46072
- ◆ **McFERRIN, RICK & LANETTE.** (R) Rte. 8, Box 300, Lot 13, Muncie, IN 47302
- ◆ **McGEE, JERRY.** (R) 3115 Goldmine Rd., Monroe, NC 28110
- ◆ **McGUFFEY, JAMES.** (R) 1580 Cape Charles Ct., Cicero, IN 46034
- ◆ **McKELLIPS, DALLAS.** (C) P.O. Box 921, Bethany, OK 73008
- ◆ **McKINNON, JUANITA.** (C) Box 126, Institute, WV 25112
- ◆ **McMAHAN, W. T. & MARGARET.** (R) 4218 Lazard St., Chattanooga, TN 37412
- ◆ **McNISH, PHYLLIS.** (R) 4527 N.W. Geronimo Terr., Topeka, KS 66618
- ◆ **McWHIRTER, STUART.** (C) P.O. Box 458, Corydon, IN 47112
- ▽ **MEADOWS, NAOMI.** 2626 Washington Ave., Lot 65, Vincennes, IN 47591
- ◆ **MEEK, WESLEY.** (R) 5713 S. Shartel, Oklahoma City, OK 73109
- ◆ **MEENACH, CHRIS.** (R) Rte. 2, Box 80A, Franklin Furnace, OH 45629
- ◆ **MEHR, BETHANY.** (R) Box 37, South Lyon, MI 48178
- ◆ **MELVIN, DOLORES.** (C) HC 60, Box 224, Greenup, KY 41144
- ◆ **MEREDITH, DWIGHT & NORMA JEAN.** (C) c/o Evangelism Ministries*
- ◆ **METCALF, HENRY.** (R) P.O. Box 27. HCR 61, Island Palm, VT 05846
- ◆ **MEYER, VIRGIL & DOROTHY.** 3112 Willow Oak Dr., Fort Wayne, IN 46809
- ◆ **MICKEY, BOB.** (C) 504 N. Sixth, Lamar, CO 81052
- ◆ **MILBURN, GARY.** (R) P.O. Box 475, Braddock Heights, MD 21714
- ◆ **MILLER, RICHARD S.** (R) 2727 Sugar Tree Rd., Bethel, OH 45106
- ◆ **MILLER, WALLY & CARROLL.** (C) 20110 Finnigan Hill Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97123
- ◆ **MILLHUFF, CHUCK.** (C) Box 160, Olathe, KS 66061
- ◆ **MILLS, CARLTON A.** (C) 24 Bow St., Danvers, MA 01923
- ◆ **MITCHUM, CLARENCE.** (R) 1225 Rockport Rd., Apt. 342B, Boonville, IN 47601
- ▽ **MIZ MAUDIE MINISTRIES.** 5117 Haleville, Memphis, TN 38116
- ◆ **MOATS, MARILYN.** (R) 617 W. Oak St., Carmi, IL 62821
- ◆ **MONCK, JIM.** (C) 920 Madrone Ave., Chico, CA 95926
- ◆ **MONROE, JOHN.** (R) Rte. 1, Box 389, McLoud, OK 74851
- ◆ **MOORE, NORMAN.** (C) P.O. Box 1510, Vista, CA 92083
- ◆ **MOORE, RUDDOLPH.** (C) P.O. Box 56, Fortville, IN 46040
- ◆ **MORLEY, FRANK.** (C) 4080 Pedley Rd., No. 151, Riverside, CA 92509
- ◆ **MORRIS, CLYDE.** (C) 101 Bryant Lake Rd., Cross Lanes, WV 25313
- ◆ **MORRIS, JAMES.** (R) 141 Dutch Rd., Charleston, WV 25302
- ◆ **MOSER, THOMAS W.** (R) 555 Barts Church Rd., Hanover, PA 17331
- ◆ **MOSGROVE, REED.** (R) 7536 17th Ln. N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702
- ◆ **MOSS, KEITH LYNN.** (R) 12750 Preston, R.R. 1, Britton, MI 49229
- ◆ **MOSS, UDELL & DORIS.** (C) 1980 S. Florissant, Florissant, MO 63031
- ◆ **MUNCIE, BOB & JANE.** (C) Rte. 1, Box 17, Cory, IN 47846
- ◆ **MURPHY, MARK.** (R) 410 S. Clay St., Sturgis, MI 49091
- ◆ **MYERS, HAROLD & MRS.** (C) 575 Ferris N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504
- ◆ **MYERS, JACK M.** (R) P.O. Box 111134, Nashville, TN 37222
- ◆ **MYERS, ROBERT.** (R) 1323 W. River Dr., Margate, FL 33063

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

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR:

There has never been a time in history in which revival has been more sorely needed. The influences and pressures of this world have never had a more *direct path* to impacting the lives of God's people than they do now. Christians are called upon to strain against the powerful tides of world-assimilation and the incursion of evil. Messages from the evil one have unhindered flow in our society, in both overt and subtle forms. Those influences and pressures become the instruments of God's enemy and produce envy, jealousy, greed, lust, impatience, self-seeking, immorality, compromise, church conflicts, and a whole catalog of other hindrances to the work of the Body of Christ. While a great number of our people are earnestly seeking and finding continuing victory over all of these, *to deny the need for revival would admit to a voluntary blindness and would be both dishonest and irresponsible.* Even the sanctified victorious need to be encouraged and motivated occasionally.

The reasons given most often for having no scheduled revivals may be the most powerful indications of need. Some of the more common reasons stated are:

- **People will not come.** Schedules are filled with activity, and some have real difficulty attending each service of a revival. But people have always been busy! Setting aside a few days for intense spiritual concentration requires the severe discipline of establishing priorities. Church calendars that include revival schedules should provide adequate advance notice to permit the clearing of schedules and laying aside of personal interests. If people are too busy for revival, they are too busy. *When personal schedules preclude revival attendance, the church needs revival!*
- **Revivals do not fit our style.** This line of reasoning is often accompanied by a false pride and dignity that is cold and lifeless. When a church does not have revival, the "style" of the church progresses through a predictable evolution. A spiritual sameness develops that places a high value upon its own image but derides the revivalistic church as being "uncultured." God has called many kinds of people into evangelism, and you may be certain that there are some who will fit every cultural expectation. *When the "style" of the church precludes revival, the church needs revival!*
- **Our church already has a strong evangelistic ministry.** Could this statement originate from pastoral ego? The pastor who believes that his strong evangelistic preaching is probing every conscience is only fooling himself. People develop immunities, and sometimes it takes another prophetic voice to penetrate callous hearts. Some will recall a presidential debate in which a candidate made the now-famous statement, "There you go again. . . ." The statement was a very skillful use of a communication dynamic. It refuted nothing, but because it implied the denial of a rhetoric, it cancelled the effect of rational argument. Each time the pastor preaches, there are some who are rationalizing, "There you go again. . . ." Sometimes the same logic, presented in a different tone or rhythm, can break through well-constructed filters. *When the statement of an inflated self-view precludes revival, the church needs revival!*

- **The evangelists do not carry a burden.** It would be unfair to suggest that every evangelist is equally effective in every situation. It is also unfair to suggest that every situation is equal. The church that has effectively prepared for revival will provide a spiritual atmosphere that makes the work of the evangelist more dynamic and his spirit more transparent. *When an unhappy memory precludes revival, the church needs revival!*
- **Evangelists come in and stir things up; then they leave the church in a mess for the pastor.** There is no question that this has often occurred. Evangelists must assume the role of "prophet" to the church, and that means that they will probe deeply into things that have been well-concealed. Evangelists do not create the "mess"; they just bring it to light. *When the fear of revealed sin precludes revival, the church needs revival!*
- **Sinners do not come to revival to be saved.** Most evangelists would agree that there is only limited evangelism of the pagan world occurring in revivals. That fact, however, does not negate the imperative for revival. Evangelism is most effective when sinners are touched by the love of a concerned Christian. Churches without revival will often develop a self-perpetuating ministry that loses sight of ripened harvest fields. Revivals awaken Christians to the needs of the lost, and the Body of Christ is prepared for life-changing evangelism. *When experiences of unrealized expectation preclude revival, the church needs revival!*
- **Revivals cost too much.** Revivals are expensive. Plans must be made in advance, and the difficult task of raising adequate money must be undertaken with faith and commitment. God has selected individuals for the field of evangelism by His own choice. The obligation for support of these individuals belongs to the church, and the future of the God-called evangelist is at stake. Selection of revival workers in salaried positions, in the interest of securing "bargain" rates, is an unworthy motivation. *When financial considerations preclude revival, the church needs revival!*

Unfortunately, it is the very nature of organizations that they tend to drift from their original commitments and purposes. All over the world, there are churches with various identities, that have become centers for worship, study, activity, and fellowship, but have little or no identity with New Testament examples. The driving force for the New Testament church was not love for souls, or a vision of the lost, or compassion for people living under undesirable circumstances. The driving force was *an all-consuming love for Jesus Christ!* That love was demonstrated in their eagerness to tell the good news of God's Son and was evidenced in the salvation of the lost. The Church is brought to a restoration of priorities, the drift is arrested, and the congregation is awakened to the need for evangelism through revival.



M. V. SCUTT, Director

YOUR CHURCH NEEDS REVIVAL, TOO!

**Annual
Offering
January 29th**

**Rooted
in the
PAST**

**Reaching
to the
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**NAZARENE
THEOLOGICAL
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What It Is, What It Is Not, and What It Could Be

by Ron Jackson

Minister of Youth and Children, Church of the Nazarene, Richardson, Tex.

moving children from the adult service. He states, "It is impossible to think of the total people of God without including the children. . . . There is an absolute psychological and spiritual disadvantage to having children absent from the sanctuary. The advantages of keeping them in the sanctuary far outweigh the disadvantages."¹¹ These disadvantages include sermons that children cannot understand, much less relate to. Symbolism is not made clear many times. Ritual is followed with little or no explanation. Is it any wonder that children often become bored or do not understand what is happening? But this is not the children's fault; it's ours. Could what we often consider problems with children in the sanctuary be actually assets? Ng and Thomas ask these questions:

What could a child's awareness of the sanctuary and its symbols add to our worship? Could their motion and rhythm expand our understanding of worship beyond "sitting still"? What if their humor flavored our sobriety, their vocabulary limitations sharpened our communications, and their need for concrete made visible our abstractions?¹²

As a result of these and other ideas, many churches have made attempts to include children in the worship service. These churches practice a variety of methods and ideas to involve, educate, and inform children about worship. In many cases, children take classes on worship along with their parents. In these classes, parents and children are exposed to creative ways to enhance worship for the child as well as the adult. The worship service itself includes elements that serve to meet a variety of needs. For many churches, a separate children's church is not an option.

We can see that we now have two distinct programs for children and worship. One is a planned children's church program, designed specifically to meet the needs of children. And one is a regular worship service designed to include children. How then do we decide which program is best and which to follow? What are we saying theologically by our choice?

Answering the first question is no easy task. It's not as simple as saying one method is better than the other.

Each has its own strengths and weaknesses. As with any decision making, we must first ask what we are trying to accomplish. What is our primary motivation for choosing a children's church program? Is it because the children cause distractions that bother us during worship? Why do we redesign our worship services to include the children? Is it out of a genuine concern to teach, train, and involve our children in worship? After these questions are answered, we must then explore another.

Is what we gain by separating the children overshadowed by what we sacrifice? We gain worship experience for the children at their own level, training in small groups in worship, and greater participation and involvement in worship. Sacrifices include the children's exposure to the testimonies of the saints, altar services, hymns, revivals, special speakers, and so on.

After these questions are dealt with comes the theological question. What do we say theologically by separation or by joining together? To examine this question we must examine what Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason says to us concerning children and worship.

Scripture

God's Word calls us to give Him the glory due His name (Pss. 8:1; 29:2; 34:3; 66:2; 96:8; Matt. 6:9; Acts 4:12). We are told to give God glory simply because He is worthy of glory. Pss. 122:1 and 26:8 both state the Psalmist's love and gladness at the mention of going to the house of the Lord. The Word of God was given to Moses, and he commanded Joshua to read it to the people. This assembly included the children (Josh. 8:35). As a vast army from Edom and Moab were advancing on Judea, Jehoshaphat declared a fast (2 Chronicles 20). The people assembled in Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat prayed. When his prayer was finished, Scripture records that not only men and women but also the "children and little ones" stood before the Lord (v. 13, NIV). Later, when Nehemiah dedicated the wall of Jerusalem, women and children are mentioned as being part of the group that was rejoicing because God had

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given them great joy (Neh. 12:43). There are specific passages in the Old Testament where Israel offers worship, praise, or thanks to God where no specific mention of children is made. We cannot, however, assume that there were no children present. We can only conclude that Scripture does not specifically mention them. (See Num. 1:18; Judg. 20:1; 1 Sam. 11:7; and Ezra 9:4.)

Children are often mentioned in the Gospels. Matthew records a story about a group of children who, following Jesus' triumphal entry, shouted, "Hosanna to the son of David" (21:15). The chief priests and scribes were indignant and asked Jesus what He thought about this praise. Jesus responded by quoting Ps. 8:2, "From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise" (Matt. 21:16, NIV). In this response, Jesus reaffirms what the Psalmist had known—that children, even infants, are well able to praise God.

From these and other Scripture passages, we can infer four things about children and worship: (1) Worship of God is mandatory for everyone, including children. (2) There is, or should be, gladness in worship. (3) Children are included in corporate worship. (4) Children are capable of worship experience.

Tradition

Our tradition comes to us mostly through the writings of the Early Church fathers. In comparison to the amount written on other subjects, there is very little mention of children in the writings of these fathers. Yet it is evident in the New Testament that children were to be highly regarded (see Matt. 18:3-7, 10, 14; 19:13-14; Mark 10:14-16; Luke 13:34; Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20-21). By Tertullian's day the baptism of infants seems to have been common practice, so much so that "he spoke of it as if all Christians were familiar with its practice."¹³ It should be noted that although he spoke about the practice, he did not completely agree with it. He favored deferring baptism until the child knew Christ and asked to be baptized.¹⁴ Ignatius, in his *Epistle to the Antiochians*, exhorts parents to "impart a holy training" to their children.¹⁵ One of the largest collections of comments by the fathers comes in the *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles*.

He, therefore, that neglects to admonish and instruct his own son hates his own child. Do you, therefore, teach your children by the word of the Lord. Bring them under with cutting stripes, and make them

subject from their infancy, teaching them the Holy Scriptures which are Christian and Divine, and deliver to them every sacred writing.¹⁶

Regarding worship, Clement explains "that he is a worshiper of God who does the will of God and observes the precepts of his law."¹⁷

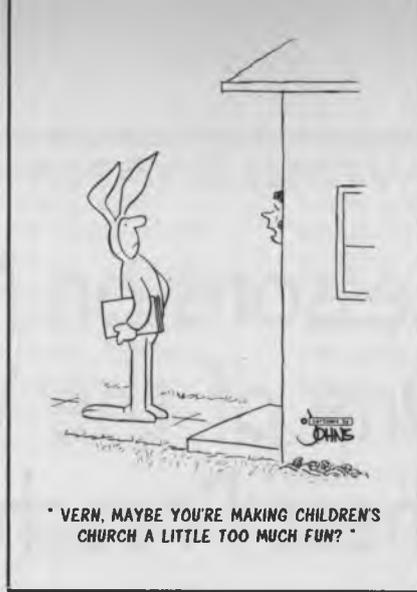
We can assume from these early writings that children, although not specifically mentioned as part of the worshiping community, were (1) considered an important part of the body, (2) to be instructed in the Scriptures, taught the word of the Lord and given a "holy training," (3) involved (sometimes involuntarily) in the sacrament of baptism, and (4) not excluded from Clement's definition of a worshiper.

Experience

We learn several things about children and worship from experience. First, they are indeed capable of spiritual understanding. Many pastors, evangelists, and missionaries testify that they felt God's call upon their lives when they were children, quite often as very young ones.

Children are also capable of deep levels of trust and faith. We often experience this in the form of a child's gullibility. They are easily tricked into believing things that a rational adult would see impossible. It is only as a child begins to "grow up" that he begins to develop a doubting or disbelieving attitude. Children tend to believe what they hear, especially when what they hear comes from adults they trust. When these things deal with the gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ, many times a child has a much easier time accepting them as truth than do many adults. Children are also capable of experiencing great depths of love and compassion. What affects the people they love affects them. Along with this, children often experience feelings of deep devotion and dedication to people and causes that affect them.

But the same experience that teaches us these positive emotional expressions also reminds us that there are many negative ones. Children's attention spans vary, depending on age and environment. As a general rule, they lose interest faster than the adults with whom they worship. After sitting for long periods of time, they often become restless. Their vocabulary and their ability to think abstractly are limited. We have all observed children who are simply bored or disinterested in adult worship.



To sum up our discussion of our experience, we can say: (1) Children are capable of spiritual understanding and worship. (2) They have little or no hindrances in believing the Bible or the claims of Christ. (3) They possess, in different degrees, a full gamut of emotions. (4) They often have difficulty in understanding worship.

Reason

We are now ready to bring together, reasonably, what Scripture, tradition, and experience have taught us. We have no scriptural mandate either for or against including children in formal worship. We do have one for teaching and training them in spiritual matters. Nowhere in Scripture does it say, "Thou shalt exclude children from worship." This concept is reinforced in the writings of the early fathers. But children are often displaced in adult worship. Could it be that neither a complete separation from or a total participation in adult worship is the answer? What about a combination of the two? Could a church restructure, redesign, and reprogram its worship service so that boys and girls could gain a better understanding of what true worship is about? Could this same congregation also provide a children's church program that would reinforce and train their children to be participants in worship?

Could we design our worship services in such a way that children could be with their own families (extended or their own), participating together in singing the hymns of the church, the reading of Scripture, prayer, and, as a family, enjoy the choir or special music? Then at some planned time in the service, perhaps after the offertory, the children could be dismissed to different areas of the church. There they could experience other related worship at levels that they could both comprehend and benefit from. Also during this time, could they hear the gospel in a way that would meet them at their points of need; a gospel simple enough for them to understand and, at the same time, call them to some type of spiritual decision? On special occasions (revivals, Easter, Advent, Communion, baptisms, Mother's Day and Father's Day, etc.) we could join together for services planned with the whole body in mind.

This plan would do several things. First, it would help make our worship truly corporate. It would include rather than exclude the children. It would provide them with an opportunity to worship with the whole body. They would experience firsthand the great hymns of the

church, the sacraments, the altar services, and the testimonies of the saints. And yet they would still be provided with an opportunity to hear the gospel interpreted to meet their needs.

Classes would have to be planned and taught for parents and children to aid in their worship together. It would require some rethinking about what is and is not permissible in a worship service. We would have to "tolerate" interruptions caused by children leaving during the service. Yet we can comfort ourselves with the fact that we, as well as the children, will benefit from our togetherness as well as our separation.

If adopted, this program would require work and planning. It would not happen if we simply decided to start a children's church and then dismiss it occasionally to worship together. But if our children, rather than our own self-interests, are our motivation, then God will surely bless our effort and make it successful. Scripture teaches that everything that has breath must praise the Lord. We must provide opportunities for our children not only to learn about worship but also to experience it. ✠

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Four Lessons on Money from One of the World's Richest Preachers

by Charles Edward White

*Assistant Professor of Christian Thought and History
Spring Arbor College, Spring Arbor, Mich.*

Most of us know that John Wesley was used of God to revive 18th-century England and to start the Methodist church. We think of him as a great preacher and a greater organizer. We remember him for his contribution to the church's belief about sanctification. But few of us realize that Wesley got rich off his preaching. The sale of his writings made him one of England's wealthiest men. In an age when a single man could live comfortable on £30 a year, his annual income reached £1,400. This rich preacher has much to say to us about money.

1. Why Revival Taries

Near the end of his life John Wesley became discouraged with Methodism. Although he had seen the movement grow from two brothers seeking for salvation to a society that embraced almost a million members, he felt that it had lost much of its spiritual power. He believed that the Methodists were no longer as hungry and thirsty for righteousness as they once were. He had observed that they were not as eager to attend the 5 A.M. preaching service as they had been in the past.¹ He was afraid his followers had lost much of their love for their neighbors because he had seen that they were not as ready to visit the sick and needy as they had been.² He was convinced that this decline had grieved God's Holy Spirit and driven Him from their midst. He feared his lifetime of labor had been in vain.³ He spoke out against the ones whom he held personally responsible for the decline of Methodism, saying, "Ye are the men, some of the chief men, who continually grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and in a great measure stop his gracious influence from descending on our assemblies."⁴ Their sin, he claimed, was the love of money.

John Wesley noted that in the early days of Methodism the people were poor. But, he continued, in the 20, 30, or 40 years since they joined the society, many Methodists had become 20, 30, or even 100 times richer than they were at first.⁵ With this increase in wealth came a decrease in godliness. The more money they had, the less they loved the Lord.

Wesley noted several instances of the decline of godliness among the Methodists. The first was a lessening

of their love for God evidenced by a lack of interest in sanctification. He told them they no longer had "the same vehement desire as you formerly had, of 'going on unto perfection.'" A second instance was pride. Wesley warned his followers that increasing wealth had made them arrogant. They had become more confident of their own opinions and less willing to hear reproof: "You are not so teachable as you were . . . you have a much better opinion of your own judgment and are more attached to your own will."⁶

Another sign of their backsliding was that the Methodists were less meek than they had been. "[In the past]," Wesley said, "your love was *not provoked*, but enabled you on all occasions to overcome evil with good." But now, "How quickly are you ruffled!" Another indication of their spiritual deadness was an unwillingness to help the poor. John Wesley reminded his hearers, "You once pushed on, through cold or rain, or whatever cross lay in your way, to see the poor, the sick, the distressed." Now, however, he asks, "Do you fear spoiling your silken coat? . . . Are you afraid of catching vermin?" The final mark of how far the Methodists had fallen was their neglect of personal evangelism. Whereas his followers once readily spoke to people about their souls, Wesley is now forced to inquire, "But which of you now has that compassion for the ignorant, and for them that are out of the way? They may wander on, for [all] *you* [care], and plunge into the lake of fire, without let or hindrance. Gold hath steeled your hearts."⁷

2. The One Word John Wesley Hated

John Wesley felt that one word had helped to lure his followers into financial sin. He became angry whenever he heard this word on a Christian's lips. He preached against it several times. He described this word as "idle," "nonsensical," "stupid," "miserable," "vile," and "diabolical." He said it was "the very cant of hell." No Christian should ever utter it. The exceedingly evil word was "afford."

"But I can afford it," replied the Methodists when Wesley preached against extravagance in food, dress, or life-

style. Wesley argued that no Christian could afford anything beyond the bare necessities required for life and work. He based his reasoning on five main points:

1. *God is the Source of the Christian's money.* None of us really earns money by his own cleverness or hard work. God is the One who gives us energy and intelligence. He is the true Source of all our wealth. Wesley inquired of some Methodists who felt they were entitled to a higher standard of living now that they could afford it, "Who gave you this addition to your fortune; or (to speak properly) *lent* it to you?"⁸
2. *Christians must account to the Lord for how they have used money.* Wesley urged people always to use money wisely because at any moment they may have to give an account to the Lord for the way in which they have used the wealth He gave them. Because no one knows when he must give that account, none can ever waste money now, planning to make it up to the Lord later. "How long are you to stay here?" Wesley asked those who felt free to spend extra money on themselves. "May not you tomorrow, perhaps tonight, be summoned to arise and go hence, in order to give an account of this and all your talents to the Judge of quick and dead?"⁹
3. *Christians are trustees of the Lord's money.* The money God has put into our hands is not our own but His. We do not own it; rather we are His agents in distributing it. Thus we must use it, not as we wish, but as He directs. John Wesley reminded his hearers of this truth by asking, "Can any steward *afford* to be an arrant knave? to waste his Lord's goods? Can any servant *afford* to lay out his Master's money, any otherwise than his Master appoints him?"¹⁰
4. *God gives Christians money for them to pass along to those who need it.* God's purpose in giving us money is for us to help the poor and needy. To use it on ourselves is to steal from God. Wesley demanded of some comfortable Methodists,
Do not you know that God entrusted you with that money (all above what buys necessities for your families) to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to help the stranger, the widow, the fatherless; and, indeed, as far as it will go, to relieve the wants of all mankind? How can you, how dare you, defraud your Lord, by applying it to any other purpose?¹¹
5. *Christians may no more buy luxuries for themselves than they may throw their money away.* God made us trustees of His resources so that we may feed the hungry and clothe the naked in His name. We should turn our extra money into food and clothing for the poor. Just as it would be wrong to destroy other people's food and clothes, so it is also wrong to spend money needlessly on ourselves. Wesley said, "None can *afford* to throw any part of that food and raiment into the sea, which was lodged with him on purpose to feed the hungry and clothe the naked."¹² But if we are determined to waste God's money, Wesley argued that it would be better to actually throw it into the sea

than to spend it extravagantly: "And it is far worse than simple waste to spend any part of it in gay or costly apparel. For this is no less than to turn wholesome food into deadly poison." At least throwing money into the sea hurts no one, while spending it needlessly on ourselves poisons all who see it with "pride, vanity, anger, lust, love of the world, and a thousand 'foolish and hurtful desires.'"¹³

3. John Wesley's Advice About Money

Besides condemning the wrong use of money, John Wesley also gave his hearers clear biblical guidelines for the right use of money. His first rule about money was "*Gain all you can.*" Despite its potential for misuse, money in itself is not evil. There is no end to the good it can do:

In the hands of [God's] children, it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked: It gives to the traveler and the stranger where to lay his head. By it we may supply the place of a husband to the widow, and of a father to the fatherless. We may be a defense for the oppressed, a means of health to the sick, of ease to them that are in pain; it may be as eyes to the blind, as feet to the lame; yea, a lifter up from the gates of death!¹⁴

Because money can do all these things, Wesley wanted Methodists to get every penny they possibly could.

The second rule for the use of money was "*Save all you can.*" He urged his hearers not to waste any of the pennies they had worked so hard to gain. He especially warned them against spending money merely to gratify "the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life." He cried out against expensive food, fancy clothes, and elegant furniture: "Cut off all this expense! Despise delicacy and variety, and be content with what plain nature requires."¹⁵

Wesley had two reasons for telling Christians to buy only necessities: The obvious one is so that they would not waste money; the second is so that they would not increase their desires. The old preacher wisely pointed out that when people spend money on things they don't really need, they begin to want more things they don't need. Instead of satisfying their desires, people who spend money needlessly on themselves only increase those desires. The more they have, the more they want.¹⁶

Wesley especially warned against buying too much for children. People who would never waste money on themselves might be more indulgent with their children. On the principle that gratifying a desire needlessly only tends to increase it, he asked these well-intentioned parents,

Why should you purchase for them more pride or lust, more vanity, or foolish and hurtful desires? . . . Why should you be at further expense to increase their temptations and snares, and to pierce them through with more sorrows?¹⁷

John Wesley's third advice was "*Give all you can.*" Giving should begin with the tithe. He told the one who did not tithe, "Thou dost undoubtedly set thy heart upon thy gold," and warns, "It will 'eat the flesh as fire!'"¹⁸ But giving should not end at the tithe. All of the Christian's

money, not just the first 10th, belongs to God. Believers must use 100 percent of their incomes as God directs. And how has God directed Christians to use their incomes? Wesley listed four scriptural priorities:

1. Provide things needful for yourself and your family (1 Tim. 5:8). The believer should make sure that the family has the necessities and conveniences of life, that is, "a sufficiency of plain, wholesome food to eat, and clean raiment to put on" as well as a place to live. The believer must also insure that the family has enough to live on if something were to happen to the breadwinner.¹⁹
2. "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (1 Tim. 6:8). How should Christians decide how much to spend on themselves and their families? Where should they draw the line? Wesley answered by quoting Paul's words to Timothy. He added that the word translated "raiment" is literally "coverings" and thus includes lodging as well as clothes, and continued,
It plainly follows, whatever is more than these is, in the sense of the Apostle, *riches*; whatever is above the plain necessities, or at most conveniences, of life. Whoever has sufficient food to eat, and raiment to put on, with a place where to lay his head, and something over, is *rich*.²⁰
3. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17) and "Owe no man any thing" (13:8). Wesley said the next claim on a Christian's money belongs to his creditors, and adds that those who are in business for themselves need to have adequate tools, stock, or capital "for the carrying on of that business."²¹
4. "Do good . . . unto them who are of the household of faith," and "As [you] have . . . opportunity, . . . do good unto all men" (Gal. 6:10). After the Christian has provided for his family, his creditors, and the business, the next obligation is to use any money that is left to meet the needs of others. Wesley said that God gives His children money so that their reasonable needs will be met, and then expects them to return the rest to Him by giving it to the poor. God wants all Christians to regard themselves as "only one of that number of poor, whose wants were to be supplied out of that part of [the Lord's] substance which [He] had placed in [their] hands for this purpose." The Lord will then inquire of the believer,

Wast thou accordingly a general benefactor to mankind? feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, comforting the sick, assisting the stranger, relieving the afflicted, according to their various necessities? Wast thou eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame? a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow?²²

Beside giving these four biblical principles, Wesley also recognized that some situations were not clear-cut. It is not always obvious how the Christian should use the Lord's money. Wesley accordingly suggested this prayer before a purchase:

Lord, thou seest I am going to expend this sum on that food, apparel, [or] furniture. And thou knowest, I act therein with a single eye, as a steward of thy

goods, expending this portion of them thus, in pursuance of the design thou hadst in entrusting me with them. Thou knowest I do this in obedience to thy word, as thou commandest, and because thou commandest it. Let this, I beseech thee, be an holy sacrifice, acceptable through Jesus Christ! And give me a witness in myself, that for this labor of love I shall have a recompence when thou rewardest every man according to his works.²³

He was confident any believer who had a clear conscience after praying this prayer would be using money wisely.

4. John Wesley's Example About Money

Though some could ignore what Wesley said about money, no one could dismiss the way he used it. What he preached with his deeds spoke even more loudly than what he preached with his words. John Wesley knew grinding poverty as a child. His father, Samuel Wesley, was the Anglican priest in one of England's lowest-paying parishes and had nine children to support. Samuel was rarely out of debt, and once John even saw his father being marched off to debtors' prison. Thus when John followed his father into the ministry, he had no illusions about financial rewards. It probably came as a surprise to him that, while God had called him to follow his father's vocation, he had not also called him to share his father's life of poverty. Instead of being a parish priest like his father, John felt God's direction to teach at Oxford University. There he was elected a fellow of Lincoln College, and his financial status changed dramatically. His position usually paid him at least £30 a year, more than enough money for a single man to live on. John seems to have enjoyed his relative prosperity, spending money on playing cards, tobacco, and brandy.²⁴

While at Oxford an incident occurred that changed Wesley's perspective on money. He had just finished paying for some pictures for his room when one of the chambermaids came to his door. It was a cold winter's day, and he noticed that she had nothing to protect her except a thin linen gown. He reached into his pocket to give her some money to buy a coat, but found he had very little left. Immediately the thought struck him that the Lord was not pleased with the way he spent his money. He asked himself:

"Will thy Master say, 'Well done, good and faithful steward?' Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O justice! O mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?"²⁵

In 1731, perhaps as a result of this incident, Wesley began to budget his expenses so that he would have money to give to the poor. He records that one year his income was £30, and his living expenses £28, so he had £2 to give away. The next year his income doubled, but he still managed to live on £28, so he had £32 to give to the poor. In the third year his income jumped to £90. Instead of letting his expenses rise with his income, he kept them down to £28 and gave £62 away. In the fourth year he received £120. As before, his expenses were £28, so his giving rose to £92.²⁶

Wesley had preached that the Christian should not merely tithe but give away all extra income once the family and creditors were taken care of. He believed that with increasing income, the Christian's standard of giving, not the standard of living, should rise. As we have seen, he began this practice at Oxford. He continued it throughout his life. Even when his income rose into the thousands of pounds sterling, he lived simply and quickly gave his surplus money away. One year his income was a little over £1,400. He lived on £30. He gave £1,400 away.²⁷ Because he had no family to care for, he had no need for savings. He was afraid of laying up treasures on earth, so the money went out in charity as quickly as it came in. He reported that he never had £100 at any one time.²⁸

Wesley limited his expenditures by not purchasing the kinds of things that were thought essential for a man in his station of life. In 1776 the English tax commissioners inspected his return and wrote him the following: "[We] cannot doubt but you have plate for which you have hitherto neglected to make an entry." They were saying that a man of his prominence certainly must have some silver plate in his house, accusing him of failing to pay excise tax on it. Wesley wrote back: "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate I have at present, and I shall not buy any more *while so many round me want bread.*"²⁹

Another way Wesley limited his expenses was by identifying with the needy. He had preached that Christians should consider themselves members of the poor whom God had given them money to aid. He put his words into practice by living and eating with the poor. Under Wesley's leadership, the London Methodists had established two homes for widows in the city. They were supported by offerings taken at the band meetings and at the Lord's Supper. In 1748 nine widows, one blind woman, and two children lived there. With them lived John Wesley and any other Methodist preacher who happened to be in town. Wesley rejoiced to eat the same food at the same table, looking forward to the heavenly banquet that all Christians would share.³⁰

Wesley not only identified with the poor by sharing their food and lodging, and by forgoing the luxuries that so many considered necessities; he sometimes went without necessities in order to have more money to give away. For almost four years, Wesley's diet consisted mainly of potatoes. He lived on potatoes, not only to improve his health but also to save money. He said:

"What I save from my own meat, will feed another that else would have none."³¹

By these means the man who made more than £1,000 a year found he could live on £30 and give the rest away. In 1744 Wesley wrote, "[When I die] if I leave behind me ten pounds . . . you and all mankind [may] bear witness against me, that I lived and died a thief and a robber."³² When he died in 1791, the only money mentioned in his will was the miscellaneous coins to be found in his pockets and dresser drawers.³³ What had happened to the rest of his money, to the estimated £30,000 he had earned over his lifetime? He had given it away. As Wesley said, "I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but, in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors."³⁴

NOTES

1. John Wesley, "The Danger of Riches," in *The Works of John Wesley*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 3rd ed., 14 vols. (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872; reprint, Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978), 7:13
2. *Ibid.*, 14.
3. "On Dress," 7:24.
4. "Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity," 7:286.
5. *Ibid.*, 286-87.
6. "The Danger of Riches," 7:11, 12.
7. *Ibid.*, 12-14. See also "On Riches," 7:216-22; "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Discourse 8," 5:368-74; and "The Use of Money," 6:131, for similar comments.
8. "On the Danger of Increasing Riches," 7:360.
9. "On Dress," 7:22.
10. "Causes of the Inefficacy of Christianity," 7:286.
11. "On the Danger of Increasing Riches," 7:360.
12. "On Dress," 7:25.
13. *Ibid.*
14. "The Use of Money," 6:126.
15. *Ibid.*, 131.
16. *Ibid.*, 130-31.
17. *Ibid.*, 132.
18. "On the Danger of Increasing Riches," 7:358.
19. "Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, Discourse 8," 5:367; and "The Danger of Riches," 7:3.
20. "The Danger of Riches," 7:3.
21. *Ibid.*
22. "The Good Steward," 6:146-47.
23. "The Use of Money," 6:134.
24. Vivian H. H. Green, *The Young Mr. Wesley* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), 102.
25. "On Dress," 7:21.
26. "The More Excellent Way," 7:36.
27. John Wesley Bready, *England: Before and After Wesley* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1938), 238.
28. Letter of John Wesley cited in Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., Founder of the Methodists*, 3 vols. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1890), 3:614.
29. Cited in Bready, 238.
30. "A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists," 8:265.
31. "On the Danger of Increasing Riches," 7:356.
32. "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," 8:40.
33. Tyerman, 3:617.
34. "The Danger of Riches," 7:9.

Beyond Belief



SAYING GOOD-BYE



MEMORIES

EASIN

Dear Lord, You know the decision to move did not come easily. Thank You for the assurance of it being Your will. I could never leave these precious friends did I not have that confidence. How will I ever say good-bye?

I may have to leave behind dear Christian friends, but thank You for the memories I take with me. How could I forget the candlelight service that first Christmas after we started the church. There were so few of us gathered around the altar, but how close You were, as we lit one another's candle and shared our love for Christ and each other. We were assured we had begun our monumental task of building a church with Your will being clear and the assurance of Your presence.

How could I forget the excitement we shared as the church grew and new ones joined the fellowship. There was always enough love for one more. Your love seems to grow larger the more we give it away. I'll never forget the crazy, fun things either. Like Christmas caroling in July and eating cardboard ice cream, or watching Brother Lantz scrape bubble gum off the bottom of his shoes, or the teens'

potato head contest and snowball show and tell.

How could I forget the answers to prayer? Like seeing Danny bow at the altar after the church had prayed with Suzanne for his salvation for three years. Or seeing the baby born to the Waylands after praying as a church that you would bless them with a child. Or the many times we prayed for the unemployed, only to once again see our prayers answered.

Thank You for the memories of the children. Our first children's Easter program was such a blessing, as each child shared Your Word and acted out a scene from the "First Easter." Our tomb was really a pup tent, but how You blessed our meager efforts.

Lord, thanks for the memories, but don't let me stay there! Help me to pick up and go on now to make new memories. There are new prayers to be prayed, new people who need Your love, and crazy, fun things about to happen. Help me to be like Paul and "press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14, NIV).

Lord, help me to say good-bye.

—Gwen Rodgers

Every ministry move will create nostalgia. Uprooting and leaving a place that was home for years brings wistful feelings. Memories and friends tug on the heartstrings and emotions. Despite the prospects of new challenges and sometimes better opportunities, a chapter of life is ending. Even after a hard, bitter pastorate where "good riddance" is on the mind, there will also be a small part inside that holds on to something that was.

Moving often brings newness to life again. The anticipation of making a new home and meeting people in different surroundings is exciting. The future is ripe with possibilities as this chapter of life begins.

Then it happens. There are differences. Advantages and disadvantages begin to surface. We notice that this parsonage is so much better than what we had before. But then we see that the people at the last church were so much more thoughtful and generous. Before long we are in the game of comparisons.

Comparisons can spill over into ministry. We often repeat the activities that were successful before. We usually don't step out on faith to do something new when we are comfortable with what we have done already. Sometimes we find our program doesn't "go over" at the new place. What once gave great satisfaction can become defeating and disappointing.

We cannot escape making comparisons. Differences color our experiences. However, we can choose to enjoy new and different things for this stage in our lives.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME



E PAIN

When making a move:

1. *"Never diminish the importance of a chapter in your life,"* Pastor Mark Goodwin once said. Some people and places will be very special to you forever. Let them live on in your heart even if you never have a chance to relive those times. There will always be lessons to learn from the rough pastorates. Don't cut that segment of your life off.
2. *Enjoy what you have now.* Let what you have be unique. It will never be like this again. Don't be caught wishing you were somewhere else and then finding after a move that you had it pretty good where you were before! Treasure the moments and the people. Love them today. Be happy with what God has given you and where He has placed you. Make the best of the situation despite problems that surface.
3. *Find some new places to serve.* Don't feel as though you have to relive past successes. God often blesses new ventures of faith, and you will grow more in dependence on Him for trying something you've never done before. Repeating events continues the comparison game.
4. *Remember, you can set the stage for attitudes and feelings in your family.* Help your children to appreciate something else when they complain about their smaller rooms. Moving from the city with its malls and symphonies can be disappointing, but the small town has acres to roam and may have better schools. Give yourself a chance to appreciate all the differences in some way, and lead your family in developing a healthy attitude toward change.

—Sharon R. Harvey

ALL BUSINESS

You have accepted a new ministry assignment and are excited about the possibilities that are ahead. In the frenzy of packing and saying good-byes, don't forget to have your husband leave a folder of helpful information for the incoming pastor.

In this folder there could be a sheet titled "Items That May Be Helpful!" Listed should be things such as a reliable dentist; a good family doctor; the closest hospital; where the church bank account is; a suggested hair stylist; grocery store; pharmacy; and nearest Christian bookstore. Include addresses and phone numbers for each of these.

There should also be a page indicating where church items are ordered, such as paper towels, paper, office supplies, films, and so on. Correct addresses and current phone numbers will help.

A listing of all individuals who at-

tend the church and their current ministry involvement would be most helpful. For example, by each person's name itemize whether they are a nursery helper, usher, Sunday School teacher, sound technician, counter, church board member, greeter, pianist, kitchen coordinator, church decorator, treasurer, preschool church worker, shower coordinator, ladies fellowship director, and so on.

A sheet with the names, addresses, and phone numbers of members of all boards would be beneficial.

If at all possible, include a current church directory and an area map. If your local chamber of commerce provides materials, these would also be of interest.

This will not take much of your time, and your successor will say nice things about you and your husband.

—Betty B. Robertson



MOVING EXPENSES

Tax laws and reporting requirements directly impact the reporting and deductibility of moving expenses. There are requirements for reporting both direct payments and reimbursements of moving costs by the employer.

The concept of reporting and deducting moving expenses is different than the concept used for the reimbursement of normal employee business expenses. In the case of a normal business expense reimbursement, the employer does not report the reimbursement as income and the employee does not deduct the expense. However, with moving expenses, the employer must always report any reimbursement for moving expenses and any direct payment of moving expenses as wages paid to the employee. Therefore, the employee must always claim and deduct the expenses on his tax forms in order to avoid income tax on the reported "income."

Mandatory Employer Reporting Requirements

Employers, including churches, must report as taxable wages any amount that the employer reimburses an employee for moving expenses and any amount the employer pays directly to a provider for expenses relating to the move of an employee. The amounts to be reported would include direct expenses, such as the travel costs of the employee and members of the employee's household en route to the new home as well as the actual cost of moving personal effects. It would also include any indirect expenses related to the cost of premove house-hunting trips, temporary living quarters at the new job location, and the expenses of selling, purchasing, or leasing a residence.

The amount of employer-paid or employer-reimbursed moving expenses would be reported on Form W-2, Box 10 along with the employee's other taxable wages. The amount included in Box 10 for moving expenses would be reported as a separate amount in Box 16 and identified as "moving expenses." To the extent that the employer can reasonably assume that the expenses are deductible by the employee, no withholding is required for a lay employee, nor are the amounts included in Boxes 11 or 13 as wages subject to Social Security tax.

The employer is also required to complete Form 4782, "Employee Moving Expense Information," and give the form to the employee by January 31 of the year following the payment. The completion of Form 4782 by the employer is mandatory. The information on the form is used by the employee in completing appropriate tax forms in order to deduct the expenses.

Eligibility for Deduction of Moving Expenses

Generally, eligibility to deduct moving expenses depends upon the passing of two separate tests: (1) a mileage distance test and (2) a period of time worked test. To be eligible to deduct moving expenses, the distance between the new job location and the former home must be at least 35 miles more than the distance between the old job location and the former home. This 35-mile test applies to both self-employed individuals and employees. While the moves made by most ministers would easily meet this test, it is possible that some moves might fail the mileage test.

The "period of time worked" test requires that the individual must remain in the new locality as a full-time employee for at least 39 weeks during the 12-month period immediately following arrival at the new job location. The minister not employed by a church but serving in a truly self-employed ministry must work full-time for at least 78 weeks during the 24 months immediately following arrival at the new location. Where a joint return is filed, moving expenses may be deducted if either the individual or their spouse can satisfy the time test based on individual work records.

Deductible Moving Expenses—Form 3903

The law distinguishes between two types of moving expenses: (1) direct expenses that are fully deductible and (2) indirect expenses that have certain limits.

Direct expenses are fully deductible and include the traveling cost of the individual and members of the household en route from the old home to the new location. Included are the costs of transportation, meals, and lodging along the direct route to the new location. Food and lodging for one day before departure after the old residence is unusable and food and lodging for the day of arrival at the new location are included. The cost of meals must be reduced by 20 percent before they are deducted. Either a deduction for the actual cost of gasoline, oil, and repairs (but not depreciation) during the trip or a deduction based on a standard rate of 9 cents-per mile plus parking fees and tolls may be taken. Direct expenses also include the actual cost of moving the personal effects and household items. This would include the cost of packing and transportation plus storage for up to 30 consecutive days. Insurance for the goods in transit and the cost of moving a pet or shipping an automobile are also deductible. The cost of connecting or disconnecting utilities are deductible except for the cost of connecting a telephone at the new home.

Indirect expenses that are deductible within certain limits include the cost of premove house-hunting trips, temporary living quarters at the new location, and expenses of selling, purchasing, or leasing a residence. To be deductible, these expenses must be incurred after actual employment has been obtained. For the self-employed, expenses for premove house-hunting trips or expenses for temporary living quarters at the new location are not deductible unless substantial arrangements have been made to begin work at the new location. The tax code does allow a deduction for expenses incurred in looking for a new job in the same line of work; however, these expenses are deducted as miscellaneous expenses subject to the new 2 percent adjusted gross income (AGI) floor, and the cost of meals must be reduced by 20 percent before they are deducted.

An overall limit of \$3,000 is applied to indirect moving expenses. Of this amount, no more than \$1,500 can be incurred for temporary living expenses during a 30-day period and for house-hunting trips.

When Are Deductions Taken?

The reimbursements and direct payments by the employer for moving expenses and the deduction for moving expenses will generally occur within the same tax year. However, if the reimbursement occurs in a year other than the year the expenses are paid, the individual may elect to deduct the expenses in the year of reimbursement provided that (a) the expenses are paid in a prior year, or (b) the expenses are paid in the year following the year of reimbursement, but before the filing deadline for the tax return.

The expense deduction using Form 3903 is not a direct adjustment to income on Form 1040. The deductible expenses are taken on Schedule A as an itemized deduction not subject to the 2 percent AGI test. Of course, in order for them to be deductible, itemized deductions must exceed the standard deduction allowed by the tax code.

*1987/88 rate unless changed by IRS.

Submitted by the Office of the Board of Pensions and Benefits USA, Church of the Nazarene.

The information contained in this article is of a general nature. It is not offered as specific legal or tax "advice." Each person, local church board, and district should evaluate their own unique situation in consultation with their local legal and tax advisers.

An Exegetical and Homiletical Study

FROM SLAVERY TO SONSHIP

by Roger Hahn

Associate Professor of Religion, Southern Nazarene University, Bethany, Okla.

A warm and loving relationship of a father and a child is one of the most delightful relationships to enjoy and to observe. On the other hand, one of the most bitter and undesirable of relationships is that of an unhappy slave with an antagonistic master. Paul drew upon the contrast in those relationships to illustrate his understanding of the Christian life in Gal. 4:1-7.

THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF GALATIANS

The traditional questions of historical exegesis, author, audience, date, provenance, and purpose tantalize the interpreter with the appearance of simplicity. However, the fact that Paul wrote the letter is the only historical question that we can answer confidently. The audience consists of several congregations (notice the plural, "churches," in 1:2) in Galatia. But whether "Galatia" refers to the province (the so-called South Galatian theory) or the territory (the North Galatian theory) is still debated. The material in Acts 16:6 and 18:23 suggests a later date (such as A.D. 53-55) if the North Galatian theory is adopted. Acts 13-14 permits, but does not demand, an ear-

lier date (perhaps as early as A.D. 48) if the South Galatian view prevails. The question of the date is further complicated by the question of the relationship of Paul's visit to Jerusalem (mentioned in Galatians 2) to the visits mentioned in Acts 11 and 15.

The purpose of Galatians has long been held to be simple and straightforward. The letter was written to call the Galatians back to the pure evangelical doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. False teachers had infiltrated the churches and undercut Paul's authority by promoting the necessity of observing the Mosaic Law for salvation. Most view these false teachers as Jewish Christians, but there is little agreement as to whether or not they represented the Jerusalem church. Some see them influenced by gnosticism, urging circumcision and calendar observance for ascetic reasons rather than interest in the Jewish Law. One has claimed that the false teachers were, in fact, Gentile Christians who, in their extreme zeal for their newfound faith, legalistically urged total observance of the Mosaic Law. Others have claimed that Paul was fighting on two fronts against a legalistic group in

the first four chapters and against a “superspiritual” group claiming to be above moral restrictions in the last chapter and a half.

THE ROLE OF GAL. 4:1-7 IN THE LETTER

Gal. 4:1-7 provides part of Paul’s argument that belonging to Christ means freedom from legalism. In the first two chapters, Paul reminded the Galatians that the issue at stake is nothing less than the gospel (1:6-9). The ultimate source of authority, therefore, is not the Jewish Law, nor the apostles in Jerusalem, nor Paul himself, but Jesus Christ. Participation and identity in the gospel can not be based on “Judaizing” (taking the yoke of the Law), but must be based on faith in Jesus Christ.

Chapters 3 and 4 are dedicated to proving that proposition. A series of independent but linked arguments is produced to provide proof. Gal. 4:1-7 provides one of the proofs that Christian faith rests on relationship to Christ rather than on obedience to the Law. Generally speaking, 4:1-7 could be omitted without destroying the argument; the other proofs would suffice to prove the point. In that sense, the paragraph is independent. However, 4:1-7 is linked to both the preceding and following material.

In 3:19ff. Paul explains why the Law is no longer the basis for relationship with God. In 3:23ff. he specifically declares that the Law played a custodial role up to the coming of Christ. Then 4:1-7 illustrates the change in status that can be experienced because of Christ’s coming. The force of 4:1-7 rests on the fact that the Galatians had actually experienced this change in status in their relationship with God through Christ. They were, in fact, adopted as sons of God and enabled by the Spirit to cry, “Abba, Father” in their prayer of worship. That status, having been adopted, meant that the period of slavery to the Law was past.

Though nothing after 4:7 seems to absolutely require 4:1-7, there are a significant number of references to slavery or freedom, sonship, and the effect of the Holy Spirit in believers’ lives. As the letter is constructed, each of those references is indebted to 4:1-7 for perspective. The interrelationship between freedom, sonship, and the Spirit that is laid out in 4:1-7 is assumed in the subsequent discussion of 4:8—5:25. Also 5:1—6:10 contains a series of ethical exhortations that would be only partially understood if 4:1-7 were to have been omitted.

EXEGETICAL INSIGHTS IN GAL. 4:1-7

The transition from 3:23-29 to 4:1-3 suggests another illustration of the role of the Law. Verses 24-25 had described the Law as an attendant slave (*paidagōgos*). The *paidagōgos* was responsible for safely conducting the children of the master to and from school. Verses 25-26 affirms that we, as believers, are no longer under the *paidagōgos* because we are now sons [of God] through faith. However, simply being sons of God does not prove that the Law is no longer to exercise its custodial role. A further illustration was necessary. That is the point of 4:1.

As long as the heir is a minor, he is no different than a slave, even though he owns everything. By a change of terminology, Paul is able to redirect the sonship illustration. The word “heir” becomes the general designation for the offspring of the father, which allows the distinction to be made between a minor (*nēpios*) and a son (who has come of age). Though *nēpios* could refer to a person from infancy into the 20s, here it describes the person who is younger than the age set for the

inheritance of property. In point of fact there is a tremendous difference between the heir and a slave. However, Paul’s point here is that the heir, while a minor, has no more freedom of action or self-determination than the slave does.

The “slavery” of the minor is expressed by the fact that he is under guardians and managers until the time set by the father. Normally, the minor was placed under the legal guardianship of one person if the father died. Paul’s terminology (guardians and managers) appears to be an attempt to be as comprehensive as possible rather than to reflect typical practice. The time at which the minor was freed from guardianship was generally set by the government, though evidence suggests that the father could legally determine the time of maturity in some provinces. In any case, the illustration clearly affirms that guardianship comes to an end at a legally established, specific point in time.

Verse 3 begins the application: So then, we also, when we were minors, were enslaved under the elements of the world. Prior to becoming a Christian, all (both Jewish and Gentile believers) had been minors in the sense of verse 1. Paul directly compares the minor’s status to slavery via a pluperfect passive periphrastic construction of the verb *douloō*. The point of the construction is that the status of slavery continued for a significant period of time following an initial event of being enslaved, but the slavery is now past. The construction is quite understandable if Paul was referring to slavery to the Law, initiated at Mount Sinai but now past because of the work of Christ.

The surprising twist of verse 3 is that Paul describes the slavery as *under the elements of the world*. The translation of “elements” is problematic. It can mean elementary or beginning level principles, the ABCs, so to speak, of existence in general and religion in particular. As such, “elements” could simply refer to the Law as the elementary or beginning level religious principle that had enslaved the Galatians. However, such an interpretation would imply a Jewish background from which the Galatians had been delivered. It is more likely that “elements” refers to the spiritual powers thought to control the world. These elemental spirits, including astral powers, were considered to be the shapers of daily life through (what we call) natural and supernatural events. Humans were completely at the mercy of these tyrannical powers.

To gain some measure of freedom from the stifling elements of the world, ancient man attempted to appease the powers by religious practices such as sacrifice, rituals, prayers, magic, and astrology. Gal. 4:8-10 reminds the Galatians of the enslavement they had experienced to such powers, and of the rituals they had used to attempt to gain their freedom. The list of rituals also demonstrates that Paul could understand the Law as one of the means used in response to the elemental spirits. Thus turning to the observance of the Law, as demanded by Judaizers, would be, in effect, a return to slavery to the elements of the world, a slavery from which Christ had freed them.

However, Paul’s chief interest in this section is not on slavery and the Law but on freedom and Christ. The change in focus appears in verses 4-5. The opening phrase, *when the fullness of time came* (author’s translations throughout), corresponds to the time set by the father mentioned in verse 2. As the minor passed from the status of slave to freedom, so a change in status, for the Galatians in particular and mankind in general, is envisioned. Because Christ is the focus of Paul’s interest, he will further explain the great pivot point of history

with several subordinate clauses. The kernel sentence would read, "When the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son in order that we might receive adoption, the status of sonship."

The *fullness of time* is sometimes explained in terms of several first-century situations that allowed for the rapid expansion of the gospel. Koine Greek was a lingua franca that allowed evangelization throughout the known world without the painstaking work of learning new languages. The Pax Romana provided the first Christian century with one of the longest periods of general peace in human history. This and the Roman system of roads allowed relatively rapid and safe travel in a way not possible in the preceding or following centuries. The general decline of philosophy and the Greco-Roman religions left a spiritual vacuum, which Christianity was well designed to fill.

These facts provide inspirational insight into God's timing, but they require a historical perspective not available to Paul. For him, the fullness of time was a way of declaring that Christ's coming signaled the end of this present evil age and the beginning of the age to come. In 1 Cor. 10:11, he had described Christians as "those upon whom the ends of the ages have come." The point is that the coming of Christ marked the "time set by the father," and the Galatians must live with the freedom and spiritual maturity that their status as "sons" demands.

Paul draws upon a traditional sending formula in the words "God sent forth His Son." The same form is used in Rom. 8:3-4; John 3:16-17; and 1 John 4:9-10. The sending formulas all describe Christ as Son and imply preexistence (see Bruce, 194-95). But the emphasis is on the salvific purpose stated in each. Before stating the soteriological purpose in verse 5, Paul amplifies the nature of Christ in two concise clauses at the end of verse 4. Christ was born of the woman. This expression was used in Judaism to simply indicate a human being. The impact of the meaning primarily arises from it being in apposition to the Son whom God had sent forth. Furthermore, the preexistent Son was born under (the authority of) the Law. Redemption from the bondage of the Law was not accomplished by one who had never experienced it. Rather, he experienced the Law "in all points like as we, yet without sin" (see Heb. 4:15).

God sent this one born under the Law in order that He might redeem those under (the authority of) the Law, in order that we might receive adoption (v. 5). The two purpose clauses accomplish several objectives. It is clear that Christ came to redeem those under the Law, specifically Jews. The obvious implication is that a Judaizing process that would return to slavery to the Law runs against the flow of salvation history and the specific purpose of Christ. Jews are redeemed and we (including the Galatian Gentiles) are adopted. The two verbs embrace two major perspectives of salvation. *Redemption* is a legal term that describes the purchase of liberty and thus the end of bondage. How appropriate that the one born under the Law legally purchases freedom from the Law. But *salvation* is more than simply the legal purchase of freedom out of slavery. It is also a personal acceptance into a family.

Paul's use of the word *adoption* is based on contemporary Roman practice. This practice bestowed a change in legal status that immediately placed the adopted son in the same status as those born into the family. In light of the flow of Paul's argument, it would seem that he introduces the concept of adoption to show the new status of believers as sons and

daughters of God. We are no longer slaves, but sons and daughters with "all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities appertaining thereunto."

Verse 6 moves from the status of sonship described in verse 5b to the actual experience and joy of belonging to God as true sons and daughters. "And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son." The opening *because* makes it clear that the gift of the Spirit is based on our having been adopted. As Ebeling states, "Receiving the Spirit does not make us sons; it is our being made sons that enables us to receive the Spirit" (p. 221). The close relationship of verses 4-5 and verse 6 is reinforced by the fact that the main subject and verb are identical—"God sent forth." The sending of the Spirit is a distinct but inseparable consequence of the sending of God's Son.

Paul further describes the Spirit as "the Spirit of His [God's] Son." This unique phrase is one of several ways that Paul carefully defines the content or meaning of the Holy Spirit in terms of the person of Christ. "The crucified Christ is the criterion by which the Spirit is rightly understood and spirits are distinguished. No spirit that does not meet this criterion is the Holy Spirit" (Ebeling, 222).

When the Spirit is sent by God the Father, He (the Spirit) enters the human heart, where He cries out, "Abba, Father!" "Abba" was the Aramaic expression used by children in their affectionate address of their fathers. It was a term of endearment, trust, and warmth. In some (though not all) instances, the English word *daddy* can carry the same force. Jews never used the term in their address to God as Father. Jesus frequently called God "Abba." That God would send His Spirit into our hearts with the Abba cry testifies not only to our status as sons and daughters, but also to God's desire that we experience and enjoy that relationship in love, trust, and warmth.

Verse 7 sums the matter up. "As a result then, you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if you are a son, you are an heir through God." The reality of the change in status is ultimately proved by the will. Our sonship is authentic enough in the mind of God that we become heirs—coheirs, as Rom. 8:17 notes.

TOWARD PREACHING THE TEXT

Gal. 4:1-7 offers a profoundly simple summary of soteriology. We were suffering in the slavery of sin; God sent His Son to adopt us; God sent the Spirit to make us Christlike. (The frequent use of words whose English translation begins with the letter *s* offers tantalizing opportunities for alliteration.) Several observations regarding preaching are in order.

The structure of the passage will allow for three points:

- I. Sin's Enslaving Stranglehold (vv. 1-3)
 - A. Bondage to the Law
 - B. Bondage to the World
 - C. Bondage to Childhood
- II. God's Saving Sending of the Son (vv. 4-5)
 - A. Freedom from the Law Through Christ
 - B. Freedom from Minor-Child Status Through Adoption
- III. God's Strengthening Sending of the Spirit (vv. 6-7)
 - A. Freedom for Intimacy with God Through the Spirit
 - B. Freedom to Share the Inheritance of Christ Through the Spirit
 - C. Freedom for Fellowship Through the Spirit

However, the flow of Paul's thought and his rhetoric is antithetical. This implies a twofold structure that can be ex-

Continued on p. 47

A Christmas Communion Sermon

HOW FAR IS IT FROM BETHLEHEM TO CALVARY?

by D. Martin Butler

*Administrative Assistant to the President
Nazarene Theological Seminary*

How far is it from Bethlehem to Calvary? Let's ask a few folks.

I. Geographically

"How far is it from Bethlehem to Calvary?" we could ask the tour guide.

"Geographically, it's closer than you might think," he responds. It's just a few miles from the sleepy village of Bethlehem to the bustling city of Jerusalem, where outside the city gates Christ was crucified.

If you get on this road right here and travel north, it's just a short distance from Bethlehem to Calvary.

II. Historically

"How far is it from Bethlehem to Calvary?" we could ask the historian.

"Historically, it's closer than you might think," he responds. Compared to the aeons of time since the creation of the world, 33½ years is a short period.

It's really not very far from the time the star lighted the Eastern sky in Bethlehem to the darkened sky in the middle of the day at Calvary. A short lifetime from singing angels and tears of joy to cursing soldiers and tears of grief. A few years from swaddling clothes to a crown of thorns; from dimples and stubby fingers to blood-stained cheeks and nail-pierced hands.

Many in our world have not made the 33-year journey from Bethlehem to Calvary. It's much more comfortable to tell about a cooing baby than a bleeding corpse. The historical journey from Bethlehem to Calvary should be a short one, but many prefer the cradle to the Cross.

It seems much less offensive to read to our children the words, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," than to read, "And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him." Both of these passages are recorded by the same evangelist, Luke (2:10-11; 23:33). Both speak of the same person, Jesus of Nazareth. Yet some ignore their historical connectedness.

Everyone likes Christmas with its bright lights, upbeat music, and gift exchanges. Persons who may give God and the church little attention throughout the year give Him great attention at Christmastime, even if they do it unintentionally. While some people grieve over the secularization and commercialization of Christmas, that really doesn't bother me. Whether society admits it or not, they are helping us celebrate Christ's birth. Every advertisement for Christmas sales is another opportunity to get the Messiah's name before the people. Every store or radio station that plays Christmas music helps us to hum the words to "Silent Night" or "O Little Town of Bethlehem." For every chance the world has of thinking favorably of Christ's name, we should rise up and call it blessed.

But Easter is different. Though there have been attempts to capitalize on the holiday, it runs a poor second to Christmas. People prefer not to talk about death and burial. But whether or not our world is willing to accept it, historically it is but a short distance from Bethlehem to Calvary.

III. Theologically

"How far is it from Bethlehem to Calvary?" we could ask the theologian.

"Theologically, it's closer than you might think," he responds.

The birth of the Child in Bethlehem would be of little consequence without His sacrificial death on Calvary's cross. "He . . . who knew no sin" became sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13). The Babe became the Man who suffered and died for us. Bethlehem pales into insignificance without Calvary.

But the converse is also true. Calvary would not be the redeeming event it was without the condescension of God in Bethlehem's manger when He became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh (Phil. 2:6-8). It was not a God who died on Calvary's cross, nor was it a man who died there. It was not a God who was born in the cattle stall, nor was it a man born there. It was the *God-man* who was born and who died. The paradox of the Incarnation leaps out at us. It defies all of our attempts to explain it. The Incarnation was inevitable. Love had to express itself thus to show its ultimate depth.

Theologically it is but a short distance from Bethlehem to Calvary.

IV. Today

"How far is it from Bethlehem to Calvary in 1988?" we might ask.

It's closer than you might think. For it is my privilege to remind us who know it so well that He who was born in a manger, died on a cross, and was buried in a cave was also resurrected. The angels who sang, "Glory to God in the highest" (Luke 2:14) now sing "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. 5:12). The angels who announced, "For unto you is born . . ." now announce, "He is not here: for he is risen" (Matt. 28:6). He is alive and at the right hand of God the Father, interceding for us. In a sense the Incarnation changed God. Christ is now not a God, not a man, but the God-man who has seen our dilemma from both sides.

Conclusion

How far is it from Bethlehem to Calvary? It's not far geographically, historically, or theologically. And it's as close this morning as this bread and cup that we are about to receive. As we eat and drink, let us remember that Bethlehem and Calvary are the road to eternal life through Him who loved us and gave himself for us. How far is it from Bethlehem to Calvary? It's so close we can taste it. Let us eat and drink the symbols of Bethlehem and Calvary. 

SLAVERY TO SONSHIP

Continued from p. 45

pressed in several ways: slavery versus sonship, bondage or limitations versus freedom, or even legalism versus love. The second pole of Paul's thought includes both the works of the Son and the Spirit, both adoption and sanctification. Thus, rather than dividing soteriology into adoption and sanctification, which would lead to compartmentalizing and taking one or the other as optional, Paul views salvation as a whole piece in which the works of the Father, Son, and Spirit are complementary and naturally inclusive. Sonship must ultimately be understood as responsible freedom, a point Paul will make quite clear in chapter 5. This suggests a possible two-point sermon:

- I. The Bondage of the Slaves of Sin (vv. 1-3)
 - A. Legalism—Bondage to the Law
 - B. Libertinism—Bondage to the World
 - C. Immaturity—Bondage to Minor Status
- II. The Freedom of the Sons of God (vv. 4-7)
 - A. Redemption—Freedom from the Law
 - B. Adoption—Freedom to Be like Christ
 - C. Sanctification—Freedom for Fellowship with God

The primary emphasis of this text is on God the Father. He is the One who set the fullness of time for our liberation. He is the One who sent His Son. He is the One who sent the Spirit. It is through Him that we are made heirs. It would be a severe misunderstanding of Paul to preach this text and not give central prominence to God and His gracious activity on our behalf. The Galatian believers (and we) did not overcome enslavement to this world, nor find or come to know God. God set them (and us) free, He searched for and found us, and He

revealed the knowledge of himself to us. This text is salvation history, not moral development.

The lectionaries of Christian churches have often listed this passage as the Epistle reading for either Christmas Day or the first Sunday after Christmas. It is especially appropriate at a season when the expectation is one of joy and holiday spirit. But the reality for many is depression, emptiness, and despair. There is no Christmas spirit apart from the sending of the Son and the Spirit of the Son. The celebration of God's gracious activity on our behalf highlights the bondage experienced by those in whom the Spirit does not cry, "Abba, Father." How incredible it is that some in the Galatian (and our) churches would want to abandon the enjoyment of sonship to return to slave status under the law. May the Christmas message not only set us free but also keep us free. 

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COME WORSHIP THE KING

A Meditation on the Visit of the Magi for the First Week of Epiphany

by Becky V. Tinnon

TEXT: Matt. 2:1-12

As the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season approaches with all of the decorations and rampant commercialization of the Christ child event, I am carried back in my mind's eye to a simple time—a time when, as a child, the story of Christ's birth was first made real for me.

One special Christmas my father carried a huge box in from the car. Within that box was the most beautiful handcrafted manger scene that I had ever laid my eyes upon. It was all that my small imagination could conceive the stable in the Christmas story to be. Each detail was lovingly included. There was a loft, a stable, and a haymow. The gates and the doors could all be latched and unlatched. Most striking of all was the rustic manger in which Baby Jesus would lie. It was perfect in every aspect!

From a smaller box, my father began unwrapping small bundles of tissue paper, revealing miniature porcelain figurines to place in the manger scene. Sheep, cows, and houses soon occupied their proper places in the stable. Mary and Joseph quickly followed and were strategically placed behind the manger. Next came the infant Jesus, who with great care was gently laid to sleep in the manger. Atop the roof was inserted the star, which, when lit, cast a bright light into the dimly lit room. Shepherds and several porcelain sheep were carefully placed. Last came the three wise men, the Magi, who carried treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Everything in place, we all stood back to admire our handiwork. It was beautiful in itself but not nearly as beautiful as the story we were soon to hear. Sitting as a family around the crèche, my father took out his Bible and began reading the familiar Christmas story. Only lately have I begun to grasp the full significance of that story first told to me so many years ago.

Three wise men from the east came to Jerusalem. "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him" (Matt. 2:2, NIV). These wise men were led by a star, a great, shining star that burst forth out of the darkness to lead not only the wise men but all men to the Christ child. What a powerful message this bright, shining star brings to us! The darkness was broken by light. God in His perfection had inaugurated a plan for light, hope, and salvation to break forth into the dark, sinful state of man's existence. Out of great darkness had come God's redemptive plan of salvation, and this in the form of an infant, the Baby Jesus. Today, just as the wise men did over 2,000 years ago, we must seek and find the Source of this light. This is the hope of our salvation.

"On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh" (Matt. 2:11, NIV). These Magi, certainly not Jews, upon finding the Child, bowed down and worshiped Him. They brought with them an offering of gifts. These were not your typical baby gifts but were gifts that recognized the true nature of the Child. They were gifts fit for a king—the King of the Jews! Gold was to indicate His kingship, incense to recognize His priestly nature, and myrrh to foreshadow His eventual death on a cross.

Recognizing that these costly gifts could not remotely pay homage to the King of the Jews, these wise men offered their only acceptable response. They bowed in humble adoration and worship to the King. We too, finding no acceptable worldly gift to offer the Child, can only bow down and humbly offer ourselves in worship to the King.

The vision of that Christmas season

when, as a child, I first encountered the essence of the Christmas story shall always remain with me. More than that, the message behind the story rings through the centuries down to today. God, looking down through the centuries to you and to me—we who existed in a hopeless state of darkness—has constructed a plan. This plan called for the birth of His Son, His only Son, who would bring with Him the plan of salvation for all mankind. We in our humanness can only respond to the Christ by following the example set for us centuries ago. The star of Bethlehem, shining as a beacon and guide for the Magi, gave testimony to His glory. These wise men from the east, bringing gifts and bowing down in humble adoration, recognized the true, awesome nature of this glory.

Christ is the Light shining brightly in the darkness. This Child-King is our Hope, our Salvation, our future. What gift can we offer Him other than the gift of ourselves bowed down in humble adoration, recognizing and affirming that He truly is the entrance of God into our world!

The Magi are our spiritual ancestors. They represent us in a special way. You see, they were the very first Gentiles to whom Jesus Christ was revealed as the Son of God. The very meaning of Epiphany has to do with the revelation of Jesus as the Christ, the Savior, the Redeemer. Throughout Epiphany we celebrate several special revelations of Jesus Christ. On the first day of Epiphany (January 6), or early in the first week of Epiphany, Christians all over the world celebrate the three kings, the Magi who represent all Gentiles and the salvation by God's grace offered to them. Once they were not the chosen people; now all of us are chosen for salvation in Christ. Let us then in joy, awe, and reverence line up behind the wise men to "worship the King."

TO FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS

A Meditation on the Revelation of Jesus as the Son of God at His Baptism for the Second Week of Epiphany

by Michael S. Tinnon
Chaplain, U.S. Army, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

TEXT: Matt. 3:13-17

Have you ever gotten a glimpse of the future and realized your place in the world? For many of us there are epiphany-like moments when we get a fuller vision of who we are and how we fit into the scope of that vision. Whatever degree of self-understanding the God-man possessed previously, on that day at the Jordan, it appears that Jesus received an even fuller revelation of who He was and what He was called to do. If we open ourselves to the Father, we too can share with Jesus in this moment of illumination when He sees His role and accepts His mission.

At Bethlehem, we see God's plan of salvation inaugurated when Jesus enters our world as the Christ child. At the Jordan, we see the next step in God's plan of salvation, the beginning of Jesus' Messianic life. With the gift of the Holy Spirit and the commissioning of the Father, Jesus begins His mission of "birthing" and building the Kingdom. Upon entering into the Jordan River, He leaves behind a private life overshadowed by family ties and personal history. Then He steps out onto the banks, drenched with a vision and anxious to accept His mission prepared for Him by the Father.

However, our Lord's baptism does present us with one burning question. Why? Jesus, the One without fault and knowing no sin, had no need for this baptism. Why then, we ask, did He present himself to John as a candidate? Why should He "who committed no sin" (1 Pet. 2:22, NASB) offer himself for this public act of cleansing? The answer lies in His obedient heart, where Jesus longs to fulfill every religious duty. We uncover the very purpose of His baptism in His own words, "It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15, NASB). He who had no sin sought to fulfill all righteousness. In perfect obedience to the Father's will, He submits to baptism in order that He might, first,

identify himself with all of sinful humanity; and second, present himself to be anointed for sacrifice, for His eventual death on a cross.

Jesus in His baptism identifies himself fully with us, even in our sin. The apostle Paul defines the meaning of the Cross when he says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). In similar fashion we may speak of Jesus' baptism: He who needed no repentance became one with those who did, in order that the righteousness of God might be fulfilled in them through Him. His identification with all sinners is the key that unlocks the door to understanding the purpose in Jesus submitting himself for baptism.

Karl Barth put it this way: "He who did not need baptism submitted himself to it and so set forth His solidarity with sinners." G. Campbell Morgan offers this: "As Jesus left that in His life which was preparatory, and entered upon the actual work of the ministry, He devoted himself to the ultimate issue of His work, that namely, of an identification with men even to death." More specifically: "His being baptized was an act by which He consented to take His place among sinners." When Jesus submitted to John's baptism, He was saying, "I am one with you. As you have dedicated yourselves to become a part of the kingdom of heaven, I dedicate myself to do that which will make possible your entrance into it."

The Epiphany revelation is that Christ has joined himself to all of sinful humanity. He lived with sinners, ate and drank with sinners, was judged a sinner, died on a cross between two condemned sinners; you see that whole purpose of His life enacted in His baptism. In the muddy Jordan River, Jesus stood and identified with sinners—all sinners.

But Jesus' baptism also represents His anointing by the Holy Spirit for sacrifice. This baptismal anointing marks the beginning of Jesus' Messianic life, His

public ministry to the whole world. In reality we can see the Resurrection as a sign of Christ's universal Lordship, then surely we can push back the message of the Resurrection to Christ's baptism and declare that in baptism He was ordained Servant-Savior of the world. He fulfilled every religious duty in order that He might present himself as the perfect Sacrifice.

Yes, at the very inception of His public ministry, Jesus submitted himself to be anointed for sacrifice. Christ's baptism represented the anointing of the King by the Holy Spirit. He was not anointed King, He was King anointed. Anointed for what? As a sacrifice for sin. This is quite contrary to the popular Jewish concept, which pictured the Messiah coming in all power and glory. Herein lies the significance of the voice from heaven that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (RSV). Jesus' baptism revealed that He was God's Anointed One, whose life was to be characterized not by power and glory, but by suffering and a cross. Jesus was anointed, not for military exploits as the Jews had expected, but as the only sacrifice for sin.

His baptism symbolized all that He would do for the salvation of lost humanity. It was not merely an event. It was the prophecy of that greater event, namely, His death and resurrection, which provided salvation for all, both Jew and Gentile. In Jordan's waters, Jesus presented himself for baptism in order to fulfill all righteousness. He fulfilled every religious duty by identifying himself with all of sinful humanity and by becoming anointed for sacrifice even unto death. Realizing His part in God's great plan of salvation, He humbly submitted to the dark waters of the Jordan. The One who fulfills all righteousness goes forth to claim His kingdom. His baptism is a pattern for what Christ does in each of us. He and He alone empowers us to fulfill every religious duty.



NO CROSS, NO GLORY

A Meditation Based on the Transfiguration of Christ for the Last Week of Epiphany

by Michael S. Tinnon

TEXT: Matt. 17:1-9

A popular phrase declares, "No pain—no gain!" When I look back across the years, the individual accomplishments that mean the most to me are those that involved sweat, hard work, and a degree of personal suffering. On the Mount of Transfiguration Jesus tried to convey a similar truth regarding His suffering. In essence He said not only to the disciples but to all of humanity, "No cross—no glory!"

On this final week of Epiphany let's closely examine the vision of glory that is associated with Jesus' transfiguration on Mount Hermon. The event takes place shortly after Peter's confession of Jesus' deity and after Christ's prediction of His passion (Matthew 16). However, in order to understand the full significance of Christ's glory, we must first come to a proper understanding of His purpose in taking three disciples with Him to the mountaintop. There is always a divine purpose to be found at the center of divine teaching, and this is certainly no exception. Actually, Jesus had a twofold purpose in taking Peter, James, and John with Him.

First, as revelation and confirmation of His deity, Jesus allowed them to catch a glimpse of His eternal glory. Matthew's account of the transformation of Christ's appearance is described thus: "His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light" (NIV). Jesus appeared to His disciples in His true essence as the God-man. This metamorphosis showed His fusion flashing forth as perfect Deity and perfect humanity. This was not a light shining forth from without but rather His deity shining forth from within. His true glory: "His face shone like the sun."

The sun does not give off reflected light but is the source of natural light that shines forth out of its very nature.

Likewise out of His very nature as Deity did the face of Jesus shine with His own glory emanating from within. Then His Father's voice from the cloud confirmed the deity of Jesus. "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased" (NIV).

Jesus also had a second purpose in mind: He wanted to confirm once and for all the importance and necessity of His suffering and death on the Cross. He wanted His followers to completely understand that without the Cross there could be no glory! The disciples had no problem recognizing Jesus as Deity. Peter had even confessed Him as such. But they had real problems accepting Jesus' suffering and death on the Cross. They just couldn't quite understand the relationship between the Cross and glory. They were willing to accept a glorified Messiah but not a suffering one.

For Peter it was better to remain in the glory of the mountain rather than return to the need of the valley. The trouble is that the vision of glory didn't last, and Christ steps down from the glory of the mountain and returns to the suffering of the valley. He goes out into a world that is diseased, where there is conflict and, yes, ultimately a cross. In Him we see an eagerness, almost an impatience for the Cross. And until His redemptive work is accomplished, He rejects His privilege for His obligation. Thus He reveals His greatest glory—that of the Savior of humankind.

What the disciples had failed to fully grasp even by revelation, they also failed to comprehend by divine demonstration. They had caught the vision of Christ's glory, but they preferred to forget the Cross. And, alas, they speak for us. For we are willing to share in Christ's glory but are perfectly willing to forget the suffering. Paul reminds us that the two cannot be separated: "We are . . .

coheirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (Rom. 8:17, NIV).

The disciples struggled in accepting this truth. They constantly misunderstood or refused to accept Christ's destiny. But Jesus left no room for doubt concerning His mission; it was one that included suffering and pain. How then can we possibly understand Jesus' mission without accepting it as the way to the Cross? It is first the Cross followed by the Resurrection that gives meaning to the Transfiguration. They provide full knowledge of who Jesus really is, and without both events, the trip to the mountaintop is incomplete. That is why the disciples were instructed, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of man is raised from the dead" (RSV). Jesus' glory could not be announced until the Cross had been accepted and experienced.

We must not be too hard in judging the disciples for their failure to understand Jesus. It is so easy to sit in judgment after reviewing the event. But would we have done any better? For the mystery of the Incarnation still defies human understanding. To multitudes it is incredible. And to the majority of us who believe it to be a fact of history, it has failed to become the commanding principle of our lives. Even those who accept the Christ of the Cross largely demand a crossless discipleship. But still the Savior patiently calls and waits for us to crucify self in a full commitment to Him: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24, RSV). Humanity ever dreams of glory, but Jesus still speaks of a cross. It is only through the cross that glory can come. There is no other way. Jesus walked that way. And if we would follow Him, so must we. "No cross—no glory!"



ADDING TO THE CHURCH DAILY

by Charles D. Crow

Christian Life Director, Northwest Oklahoma District, Church of the Nazarene

On October 16, 1983, as we celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the Church of the Nazarene, Bethany First Church took in 217 members. By the end of the '83-84 assembly year we had received 366 into the church, 206 by profession of faith. While the numbers seem large, that translates to a net growth of 13.36 percent for the year. Perhaps there is some insight to be gained from this story that could help other churches reach up to 10 percent and more.

Several years before I joined his staff, Dr. Ponder Gilliland had articulated several goals for Bethany First Church. Among them was the challenge that one year we would "add to the church daily" and take in 365 new members. A part of my assignment was outreach, and the process of bringing new persons into the fellowship. Dr. Bill Burch, then district superintendent, encouraged me to "make this the year," and I began to research the possibilities.

STEP ONE: Identify the prospects.

We began the process with a careful comparison of the official membership rolls with the list of persons who were actively participating in the life of the church at that time. When we did that, we found over 500 families or family units that were very active in the church but who had never joined as members. In addition, we found nearly 150 individuals who were married to members but were not members themselves.

STEP TWO: Identify the reasons.

There are many reasons why people fail to move into the membership of a church. We discovered that the most common in our particular situation were: (1) They didn't want to "go down in front of all of those people" to be taken in. Ours is a 2,500-seat sanctuary, and it can be a frightening experience for a shy or even normal person who is not used to being in front of a crowd. This may also be true in much smaller churches. (2) They had gotten involved and had been there for years, and since everybody assumed they were members, they were embarrassed to go through the formalities now. (3) They had never been asked. (4) They didn't see it as having importance. (5) They had been putting it off for one reason or another. (6) They really didn't know how to go about it.

STEP THREE: Use a natural decision-making process.

People make decisions every day, and they form habits in their decision-making process. In previous centuries, it was common for salesmen to make a public demonstration of their product and then invite the persons who wanted to purchase the product to come down to the front of the group where they could go over the fine details and complete the sale as

the rest of the group was leaving. This also became the common way of presenting the gospel in the frontier and is the background of our thinking about how people should make a decision about Christ and about joining the church.

It is, however, no longer a common decision-making process in American society. This short article is not about decision-making processes, but you might want to spend some time rethinking how the people around you do make decisions on a day-to-day basis.

Direct mail is both common and effective today, so I decided to sit down and write every person or family on the list a personal letter and invite them to join the church. The letter itself has been long since lost, but it contained nine things that I considered important. The following quotes are reconstructed and could be adapted in a variety of ways to suit the person doing the writing. In all, we sent three letters that year, with the second and third talking more about reasons why people had not joined the church earlier.

1. It expressed surprise that they were not on the official rolls. "As I was going about the process of checking the membership roll, I realized that your name was not on the list. If that is an error in the books, we need to get it corrected. However, if it is actually true, then I would like to talk with you about becoming a member."
2. It expressed an attitude about membership. "Membership isn't related so much to ceremony as it is to participation."
3. It assumed they wanted to be a member. "... and since you are such an active part of this church, we would really like to consider you a member."
4. It left the decision up to them. "... but are unable to do that without your permission."
5. It talked about possible reasons for their putting off joining. "People often tell me they don't want to go down in front of the church." (Since I planned to send at least two follow-up letters, I used only one reason at a time and made other reasons the focus of the follow-up letters.) I did, however, go on to talk about the anxiety created by the process and continued to emphasize that the process was secondary to the active participation in the life and beliefs of the church.
6. I removed barriers. "If I promise to find a way to do it so that it is not embarrassing to you, will you consider becoming an official member of the church?"
7. It asked for a specific response and explained exactly what I wanted them to do. "I'm sending you a simple sheet, asking you to respond. Will you take a minute—right

now—to fill it out and drop it back in the mail to me?”

8. It closed with appreciation. “Thank you so much for taking time to read this letter and for your serious consideration of the matter of membership in our church.”

9. It included a P.S. “P.S. Regardless of how you decide you feel about membership at this time, I want you to know that I appreciate your active participation in our fellowship and want you to continue to feel at home and a part of the group.” It is my experience that people may skim through the main body of a letter, but they *always* read the P.S.

STEP FOUR: Provide a comfortable way to respond.

I chose to use a 4¼ by 5½ (¼ page) sheet of paper and structured it similar to a letter. A quick survey of the “direct mail” offers received in practically every home in America today will offer several good ideas for a response form.

1. They are often in the first person. “Dear Chuck.”

2. They make the response very clear. “___ I [or we if the letter was going to a family] am already a Nazarene but would like to transfer my membership. Please write for my letter of transfer from _____ Church in _____ (City, State).”

“___ Actually I thought I was already a member. Please give me a call so that we can discuss the possibility of an error.”

“___ I'd like to be a member, but don't want to be embarrassed by the process. Please call me, and let's talk about the process.”

3. They provide a way to turn down the offer graciously. “Thank you for your interest in me (or us), but I really don't believe this is an appropriate time for me to consider joining the church.”

4. They ask for correct information.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

5. They make mailing easy. We provided a “postage paid” business reply envelope. With a smaller list of prospects, a self-addressed, stamped envelope might be less expensive, and the response would probably be a bit higher.

STEP FIVE: Follow up on the responses.

Not everyone will respond, but in our case, a strong percentage did. The next step can be quite time-consuming, but

will prove very rewarding. Get on the phone and call the people. They have already made some kind of decision, and in many cases you can do most of the work by phone that needs to be done. Set up an appointment to meet with those who need more time and a more personal touch.

Membership classes were especially easy to arrange and to fill with people during this emphasis. We provided more than one kind to meet the varying needs. One of the most popular was an extended session with Pastor Ponder Gilliland doing the teaching. You might try an evening together that starts with a potluck dinner and then moves to an extended time of teaching and sharing. In some cases an in-home visit is the best; and, of course, we also did a four-week course.

STEP SIX: Make the process comfortable and memorable.

We were planning to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Pilot Point. Our local church was founded the same weekend, exactly one year later, so we were also celebrating the 74th anniversary of the founding of our church. We planned the day around the theme and structured the reception of members like the starting of a new congregation. Like the district superintendents of old, Dr. Gilliland preached a strong message on the nature and mission of the Church of the Nazarene and then invited all those who were prepared to become a part of this church to come to the front for the reception of members. Over 200 people walked forward. It was really an exciting experience. We had an old-fashioned “dinner on the grounds” meal following the service.

We prepared a special Certificate of Membership signed by the general superintendent in jurisdiction, the district superintendent, the church secretary, and the pastor. Because it was not possible to introduce every person individually that day, we printed in the worship folder for the following Sunday the names of those who had joined.

Not every church can do that kind of thing every year. However, the process should be considered important and exciting as well as comfortable for the people.

STEP SEVEN: Plan ahead.

This process is an excellent way to find the loose ends in the membership records of any local church. It is also the beginning place for a great ongoing membership emphasis. It

Life in the Fisher Bowl

BOY IT WAS GREAT TO SEE SOME NEW FACES THIS MORNING; SOME REAL POTENTIAL FOR OUT REACH!



WHO WAS THE YOUNG FAMILY SITTING WITH SISTER ROBERTS?

THAT WAS HER NEPHEW, VISITING FOR THE WEEKEND.



WHO WAS THE RED HEADED FELLOW WITH THE BIG BIBLE?

THAT WAS REV. MCGILVRA, ON VACATION FROM MONTANA.



WELL, WHO WAS THE YOUNG GUY THAT SLIPPED IN LATE AT THE BACK?

THAT WAS THE PAPER BOY. HE CAME BY TO GET ME TO RENEW MY SUBSCRIPTION.



R. GREEN

MIRACLES AND PROVIDENCE

by J. Kenneth Grider

Professor of Theology, Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City

We hear much these days about "miracles" that are actually instances of God's providential help. If money comes in, it is a miracle. If land for a church building is donated, we call it a miracle. If growth in a ministry, a local church, an institution, is phenomenal, we often call it a miracle. All such, however, are instances of God's providence, not miracles.

Miracles occur when God intervenes by setting aside natural laws. We used to know that this is what miracles consist of. We knew that Christ's miracles included the setting aside of natural laws. Thus water was turned into wine, 5,000 people were fed with five loaves and two fish, the diseased were healed, the dead raised.

It is only rather recently that we began to designate God's various providential helps as miracles. No doubt this error has arisen in considerable part because various popular religious radio and tele-

vision programs often designate as miracles God's providential helps. Buildings, institutions, and the increasing acceptance of the ministries themselves are called "miracles."

Calling providential helps miracles seems to sound better. It makes us appear to be exceedingly favored by God. Yet it is not appropriate.

Miracles do occur. Natural laws are sometimes set aside on our behalf. But they are rare.

One problem, then, with this mind-set of looking for at least one miracle a day is that it probably means we are viewing God's various providential helps as miracles.

Another problem with it is that it tends to make "nice" Christians of us, so that we expect various benefits from serving Christ, whereas we are supposed to deny ourselves daily in order to follow Christ.

The principal single problem

with designating God's various providential helps as miracles is that this proliferation of miracles tends to downplay the place of the two miracles on which our redemption is based. These are the miracles of conception through which Christ entered our world, and the miracle of physical resurrection (and ascension) whereby He existed in our world. In this connection, Jesus scorned the seeking of signs, that is, miracles, saying, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:39-40, NIV).

If the reader receives any benefit from these Sunday afternoon thoughts, it was not a miracle but perhaps a providential help. 

can be repeated every year and perhaps even twice a year.

It focuses attention on the details of membership and also on the process. The most obvious correlating insight is that the step just before this is to plan programs and activities that bring people into active participation in various programs of the church so that the next time you do this, you have an expanded pool of prospects.

SUMMARY

Many of the people who responded and became members remarked, "No one had ever asked me before." That response highlighted three facts for me.

1. *The announcements inviting people to join* were not considered an invitation. What we consider as obvious may not seem so obvious to the people with whom we are working.
2. *A letter from me* was considered a personal invitation.

Personal mail, particularly when handwritten, is more and more uncommon in our society. In many cases it carries more weight than the spoken word. Such is the case when we are planning a birthday party. A spoken invitation is more likely to be forgotten or ignored than a written one.

3. *Intentional membership recruitment* is critically important to the ongoing growth of the local church. The greater the commitment made, the more likely it will be kept. Failing to intentionally recruit persons into membership will leave them in a low-commitment relationship that will allow for drifting in and out of active participation.

It is my belief that too often congregations are content to make periodic announcements about membership, and too few have a specific process for intentionally recruiting persons into membership. 

MONDAY MORNING DEVOTIONS

by Reuben Welch

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

For Monday, December 5

WHAT LIES AHEAD?

Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:13-14, RSV).

Strange, isn't it? Here is a man in prison with dim hopes for any future at all, who says he is "straining forward to what lies ahead." It is a good thought for an Advent Monday. If we interpret "what lies ahead" in terms of future events, we have missed the point. In that case, what is ahead for us, we hope, is good health, good family, good success, long life, and eternal joy in heaven.

Paul was not thinking of getting out of prison and starting more churches and encouraging more saints when he said he was straining to what was ahead. He was thinking of unplumbed depths of the unsearchable riches of Christ. He was contemplating the wonder of knowing Christ in "the power of his resurrection," of sharing "his sufferings," of "becoming like him in his death," and of attaining "the resurrection from the dead" (3:10-11, RSV).

It was, in fact, this intensive view of the future in terms of relationship with Christ that gave Paul such intensity of vitality and hope for his ministry with people. He could minister in prison or out of it because his future was not a hoped-for series of good happenings, but a growing relationship of limitless possibility and unsurpassed worth.

What "lies ahead" for you, what shapes does the future take? Is it formed only of external goals and achievements and fulfillments? Or is the straining of our efforts "toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"?

For Monday, December 12

I PRESS ON

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:14, RSV).

Advent season speaks to us of the gift of God's Son and reminds us of free grace extended to us in our weakness. These words of Paul convey a sense of straining like a runner to reach his goal.

It may be appropriate to reflect on this tension today. We are preaching about a "wondrous gift" silently given; yet our days and nights are filled with the strain of program preparation, gift buying, and party going, to say nothing of calls to be made on new people, sick people, and lonely people—especially lonely people.

Remember, Paul was as helpless in his prison as Jesus was in His manger. So what was his straining forward and pressing on? It wasn't rushing around to get things done. It must have been a pursuit of heart and spirit for God. It must have been an inner hunger to reach the goal for which he had been grasped by Christ.

It was, in fact, his inner striving for the knowledge of Christ that gave him peace and strength to endure

his discouraging situation. It was a striving for God born of peace with God and motivated by a hunger for God. I think there is no other way to know the silent joy of Christmas while we are running to meet the noisy demands of Christmas.

For Monday, December 19

"OTHERWISE" MINDS

Let those of us who are mature be thus minded; and if in anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal that also to you (Phil. 3:15, RSV).

This is not your basic Monday-before-Christmas text, but I think there is a connection between the verse and the season.

Paul obviously believes that those who are mature will think the way he thinks about the real prize and the real goal of our striving. But some are otherwise minded. What about them? That is a good question, because there are those not only in your town but in your church who are "otherwise minded" about Christmas—what it means and how it should be observed. And we ourselves are caught between the need for praise to our Lord and the need for presents for our families.

Here is a good word. If the way we are thinking is mature, whether or not others agree or disagree, God will reveal that to us. All kinds of motives and all kinds of questions are working these busy days. How did I do yesterday? What do the people think? How much Christmas should we have? The implicit invitation of the text is to open them all up to the

revealing and cleansing presence of God. He will reveal what is "otherwise minded," both within ourselves and in others. Not everyone agreed with Paul. Not everyone will agree with us. The problem is, we don't always even agree with ourselves!

But we are known to God the Revealer, who will make known to us what we need to understand, what we need to accept, and what we need to change. In our "dark streets shineth / The everlasting Light."

For Monday, December 26

LONG OBEDIENCE IN THE SAME DIRECTION

Only let us hold true to what we have attained (Phil. 3:16, RSV).

It is amazing how quickly we revert to "normal" when Christmas is over. I think the speed of return is inversely proportional to the degree of commercialism. The more Santa Claus, the more quickly the season fades; the more Christ centered, the longer the beauty and aroma linger.

The real season isn't over, but today turns us to the future, to another year of reaching "toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (3:14, RSV). Is there any new word for the journey? Yes and no. The new word is the old word that we have "had from the beginning" (1 John 2:7, RSV; cf. v. 8). It is this: What it took to get us to where we have come is what it will take to get us all the way!

Whatever the levels of our attainment, hold true to it. *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction* is the title of a great book by Eugene Peterson, and it expresses the point precisely. We all have points of church belief or policy or practice about which we are "otherwise minded." All right. But if there are things you don't believe, are you really living in what you do believe? If you are "otherwise minded" about some things, are you "wise minded" about what you do affirm?

Paul's point is really a significant one at the turning of the season and the turning of the year. No surprises, no magic formulas, no new principles; "Tis grace hath brought [us] safe thus far." Let's hold true to that good old grace. It will lead us home.

For Monday, January 2

DO AS I DO

Brethren, join in imitating me, and mark those who so live as you have an example in us (Phil. 3:17, RSV).

It is one thing, as we begin a new year, to say to our people, "I have words from the Word for you to live by." It is something else to say, as Paul did, "Everybody get together now, and imitate me."

It may help to remember that early Christians had no written New Testament. They had the apostles' remembrances of the life and teachings of Jesus, and they had the lives and the teachings of the apostles. That's all. Their understanding of how to live the Christian life came from the demonstration of the Christ life in the apostles.

I wonder how different it is now that we have the life and teachings of Jesus in the Gospels and the teachings of the apostles in their letters? Not much. Do we know many people who actually form their Christian behavior on the basis of their reading of the New Testament? When it comes down to it, we are all imitators!

Life-style is bound up with gospel proclamation. Our words say, "This is what the gospel is." Our life says, "This is how the gospel works." My prayer for us all this new year is that our words and lives may be one—and we may say, "Follow me as I follow Christ" (cf. 1 Cor. 11:1).

For Monday, January 9

ENEMIES OF THE CROSS

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things (Phil. 3:18-19, RSV).

The words are radical. There are those whose words and lives do not match up. They are enemies of the Cross. Paul is not talking about sensual and vulgar sinners, but about Christians who have disjoined their belief in Christ and their lives in Him. His words, then, are serious and probing for us.

What if "Their god is the belly"

does not mean gluttony (or what if it does!) but the idolatry of our bodies and our senses? What if "They glory in their shame" means that they are proud of what they ought to be ashamed of—our position, our non-conforming attitudes? Do you know anyone who holds to a critical spirit or engages in sarcastic jibes as a sign of sophistication or intellectual superiority? Know anyone who flaunts the disciplines of the church and takes pride in their free and lax life-style?

Such behaviors are not expressions of freedom in Christ, they are expressions of bondage to the god of this world. They are not funny; they are not clever. They put us at enmity with the cross of Jesus. So our call is to repentance, to return to the Cross for the healing of our sick and disordered selves. Apart from that judging, saving, healing Cross there is only destruction.

I believe God wants to do such a judging and saving work among us in this year of our Lord. We must not apply these words to lustful sinners and lose their radical word to us about our own subtle sensuality and self-centeredness. The good gospel word is that whatever the Spirit reveals to us that is contrary to the Cross, we can bring to the Cross for His forgiveness and cleansing.

For Monday, January 16

WE ARE A COLONY OF HEAVEN

But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:20, RSV).

Philippi was a special city in the empire, a little Rome away from Rome, and proud of it. Paul doesn't reject or attack their national pride. He shifts their center of gravity to their real and abiding citizenship. The "enemies of the cross" (3:18) belong to this world and are attached to it. Our capital, our judicial order, our native city is in heaven. We have another country and "another king, Jesus" (Acts 17:7, RSV).

Colonial living is not always easy. We live in a place where we don't quite belong and the supreme attachments of our lives are not shared by the persons around us. Loyal colonists that we are, we seek

to live by the constitution of our homeland—a “manner of life . . . worthy of the gospel” (1:27, RSV, where the same Greek root for “commonwealth” is used).

It is good for us to remember on this Monday that we do not belong to this world. We need to say yes again to the fact that we will always be at odds with our environment even as we are committed to its redemption; always out of step with the rhythm of our culture. It is good to remember that we *do* belong to heaven's order. That order is authoritative for us. We look to it for guidance, and we trust it for protection. So we are resident aliens committed to a way of life worthy of our citizenship. And Jesus is our King!

For Monday, January 23

HOPE FOR LOWLY BODIES

But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body (Phil. 3:20-21).

This whole paragraph relates to our bodily lives in this world as citizens of another. This might be a good Monday to think about it.

Paul in prison must face squarely the reality of his own weakening body. And so must we. If we are carrying on our ministries in ways that are dependent upon youthful vitality and energy, we are living by the rules of this world and have guaranteed our own eventual failures. This is a serious matter. We are victims of the cult of youth, and so are our churches.

But we are not citizens of this world, and our futures do not depend upon perpetual youth. Even as we become aware of our fading strength, we eagerly await our Savior, the Lord Jesus, “who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body.”

Millard Reed tells of an overweight youth camper who ran for camp queen. She lost, of course. Her response was wonderful. “Wait ‘til I get my glorified body!” Those words express a profound understanding of the warped values of this world and its competitive systems. They also reflect our hope for a glorious future for our embodied

selves—the benefits of which we experience now, while we wait for the day we are glorified! That is a good word for a tired body on a Monday.

For Monday, January 30

MIGHTY POWER

. . . We await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself (Phil. 3:20-21, RSV).

The final clause of this marvelous paragraph is almost hidden, but it is fundamental to our continuing vitality and hope in ministry. The power that will change our lowly bodies is “the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself.” This sounds like Paul's great prayer in Ephesians 1: “And what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe, according to the working of his great might which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places” (vv. 19-20, RSV). Please read the entire prayer.

The Lordship of Jesus is over the whole created world. That means that our frail bodies participate in the redemptive purposes of God for His fallen universe! And the guarantee is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Can we believe, on this Monday, that Jesus is Lord of all? Can we realize that all the forces of our foes will finally bow before Him, subdued by His mighty power? We are not thinking only of wonderful things to come, but wonderful things in the present.

That power is now at work in our own bodies, lowly as they are, as we labor to bring life and hope to those we love and serve. So we can keep going; we can keep loving; we can keep on keeping on because mighty power is working through our weakness.

For Monday, February 6

NO ONE STANDS ALONE

Therefore, my brethren, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown,

stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved (Phil. 4:1, RSV).

Preachers are people who help other people stand firm. They are the care-givers, the love-givers who keep people on their feet. But sometimes they feel their own feet on shaky ground and wonder how they are going to make it.

I wonder if you feel that way today. You have been giving until you are given out; you have been standing until you are ready to fall. What you do *not* need is for someone to say to you, “Stand firm, hang in there, hold steady,” even though that is precisely what you need to do.

But not by yourself! I think the thing most difficult for us pastortypes is to receive help for our own standing while we are helping others to stand. Paul was able to keep standing because he lived in close and loving relationship with those he helped to stand. Look at these phrases: “my brethren,” “whom I love,” “long for,” “my joy,” “my . . . crown,” “my beloved.” All in one verse!

May I ask some pre-Lenten Monday questions? Do you love your people? Are you proud of them? Are they your beloved brothers and sisters? Is their spiritual growth your victory crown? If so, you can and will stand firm with them. If you are a professional concerned with your own agenda, living and serving “over against” them, your legs will not hold you. Are you trying to stand alone? Give it up for Lent!

For Monday, February 13

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. And I ask you also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life (Phil. 4:2-3, RSV).

These Monday morning paragraphs are intended for devotion, not instruction. In this case they are one and the same.

“Odious” and “Soon-touchy” were in disagreement serious enough for Paul to mention them by name. Two strong women in con-

tention—"Sometimes it causes me to tremble!"

Tension between members of the body is not self-contained. It spills over on us and settles in the pit of the stomach. Is there disagreement in the church that is eating at you? The word of Paul may be the word of God for you: Go and seek to make peace.

Actually, Paul may have had some small sense of relief that he couldn't go himself to resolve tension between these two women. He could lay the burden on his "true yoke-fellow." This much we know, it is better to go to those who are in opposition and seek for reconciliation than to live with the weight of unresolved conflict. We also know that such resolution takes more than a Valentine's Day card; it takes the surrender of ourselves and our rights at the cross of Jesus.

And if there is disagreement between yourself and someone in your church, the Word entreats you, "Agree in the Lord"! Give up your rights, let the peace of God rule. We have to keep together, "striving side by side for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27, RSV)

For Monday, February 20

REJOICE IN THE LORD

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice (Phil. 4:4, RSV).

Paul's joy is expressed all through Philippians. We have met it again and again on our devotional journey through the book. On this Lenten Monday, let's reflect on the way this imprisoned apostle rejoices in the Lord, in the gospel, and in his beloved Philippians.

He prays for them with joy (1:4), rejoices that Christ is proclaimed (1:18-19), and is concerned for their progress and joy in the faith (1:25). His joy is fulfilled as they share the mind of Christ (2:2) and can rejoice even if he is sacrificed on the altar of their faith (2:17-18). They will rejoice when they see Epaphroditus again, and are to receive him with joy (2:28-29). They are to rejoice in the Lord (3:1) and rejoice always (4:4). Finally, he rejoices in their renewed care for him (4:10).

These joyful phrases are all the more remarkable because along-

side them are potential division of the church, personal uncertainty, and opposition. So many problems—so much joy! Paul's exhortation in 4:4 is a command in the present tense: Keep on rejoicing! We cannot say, then, that joy is automatic if our hearts are right! It is a deliberate choice, and its source is not in the outer conditions but in the inner decision to joy in Jesus who is Lord.

This command probes us. We can complain enough when things are fairly good; what would we do in prison? If the joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh. 8:10), no wonder we are so weak! But Jesus is Lord, and we can rejoice in Him. No, we *will* rejoice in the Lord because He is Lord indeed!

For Monday, February 27

THE LORD IS NEAR

Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand (Phil. 4:5, RSV).

Today is a good day for rejoicing, not because it is a good day, but because Jesus is Lord. The One who has suffered and died for us has risen again with a name above every

name and is our Sovereign (Philippians 2).

Today is a good day for forbearance, otherwise known as "considerateness," "humility," "reasonableness," "courtesy," or "magnanimity." Not because those around us are intelligent, refined, and gracious, but because the Lord, before whom we bow and by whose Spirit we live, is "at hand."

The word Paul uses means "near" (NASB, NIV). The Lord is near in terms of His coming again. Do you believe that? If we know that Jesus is coming again to manifest His sovereignty over all things, we can live in hope and rejoice in the face of interim hardship.

Our soon-coming Lord is also near in terms of His presence. He is not just "up there," waiting to come "down here" and take us back "up there." He is here, He is near. The One for whom we wait is present with us in the waiting. In this sense His coming will not be an intrusion but a revelation! His near coming means that the veil will be lifted to reveal His sovereign nearness.

It is Monday, but Jesus is Lord; let us be glad before Him. It is Monday, but Jesus is near; let us be lenient before men.





TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics. Volume 1, *Prolegomena to Theology*, by Richard A. Muller (Baker Book House, 1987), 365 pp., paper, \$12.95 (PA080-106-2144)

This is not a book for the theologically uninitiated! or is it intended for use in parish ministry. It is, however, an excellent resource for an analysis of how the initial pulse of the Reformation very quickly became more of an exercise in rationalistic theological codification rather than energetic preaching and exegesis.

Professor Muller is well aware of the tendencies toward rationalism and scholasticism that became apparent in the years following the Reformation. It is this very tendency toward "stratification" and "codifying" that has proved to be the legacy of Reformed orthodoxy in subsequent generations. Muller points out that the theology of Charles Hodge, A. A. Dodge, and Louis Berkhof reflect the methodology of this period with very little modification. This acknowledgement is important because it recognizes that the theological method of the 16th- and 17th-century Reformed orthodox theologians has continued to exert a profound influence on the theological development of fundamentalism in the 20th century.

The insights of Muller are familiar to scholars who have studied the 16th and 17th centuries along general lines. But there are several significant corrections he offers to the general opinion that has usually been maintained. Perhaps the most important of these is that it has not been a preoccupation with the doctrine of predestination that shaped Protestant Reformed orthodoxy, but

rather an emphasis on the doctrine of the Word and the doctrine of God. These are obviously related to the doctrine of predestination, but the point Muller wishes to make is that these take precedence over the doctrine of predestination in setting the agenda for Reformed Protestant orthodoxy.

The implications of Muller's work are important for scholars in the Wesleyan tradition because he has clearly delineated that the theological method of Protestant Reformed orthodoxy is to be contrasted with the theological method of Wesleyanism. The uncritical acceptance of a rationalizing scholasticism on the part of Wesleyan theologians and preachers at the turn of the 20th century has bequeathed to the modern Wesleyan and holiness movements a tendency toward fundamentalism that is alien to the spirit of the Wesleyan movement. One very practical ramification can come from a close reading of Muller's work: namely, that the presuppositions of Reformed scholastic theological method cannot be incorporated into a Wesleyan context without changing the essential contours of theology!

—W. Stephen Gunter

When Children Suffer: A Sourcebook for Ministry with Children in Crisis, ed. Andrew D. Lester (Westminster Press, 1987), cloth, \$14.95 (PA066-421-3278)

This book comes as a relief to anyone who ministers to children. It is intended to help understand the children who walk into our Sunday Schools and church services carrying unimaginable pain. Various au-

thors with experience in working with children introduce the reader to the kinds of situations facing our children. After each chapter, a list of suggested readings and resources for further study is given.

Lester divides this work into three main divisions: understanding children (a background to their needs and development); ministering to children in specific crises; and resources available for helping troubled children. Perhaps the most important section of this book for pastors is the middle one, dealing with specific crises. It deals with almost every conceivable subject, including children of divorce, bereaved children, hospitalized and terminally ill children, abused children, children with physical and learning disabilities, and more. Each author gives practical ways to handle the situations under consideration.

The value of this book is twofold. First, it is a resource written from a Christian perspective. There are many works available on the subjects discussed, but few are geared to help the Christian minister in this vital field.

A second value of this book is that it provides a concise overview. The pastor has many demands on his time. He doesn't always have time to read extensively in all fields. This book thus provides the pastor with a quick background, aids in determining the problems, and suggests methods of working with those children.

While the writers are Christian in their perspectives, some of them carry biases that are not always in agreement with our theological understanding. These flaws are minor,

however, compared with the overall value of the book.

—James W. Thompson

Helping Women in Crisis: A Handbook for People-Helpers, by Kay Marshall Strom (Zondervan Pub., 1986), 170 pp., paper, \$7.95 (PA031-033-6414)

It may be a reflection of the times in which we are living, it may even be a testimonial to the dedication and sincerity of those in church leadership, but the fact remains that when faced with a crisis, many women will turn to their pastor, Sunday School teacher, or other person in leadership in the local church. It is for this reason that this book was written.

Dealing with a broad range of subjects from alcoholism to domestic violence to teenage pregnancy, this book offers sound, basic information necessary in dealing with these crises. It offers brief descriptions of these crises, underlying causes, "dos and don'ts" for the counselor, suggested readings, and names, addresses, and phone numbers of relevant agencies and support groups. The areas of child abuse, incest, and domestic violence, which involve legal aspects, have also been briefly addressed.

We often make the mistake of thinking that alcoholics, rapists, and child molesters are the down-and-out, the uneducated, and the unchurched. But as Mrs. Strom notes, "Many fathers in incestuous relationships are religious men and regular church attenders." Granted this is only one area, but it serves to dispel the myth to which we often fall prey. Since church leaders most often deal with church members, the subject of God's healing power will inevitably come up. The writer is very careful not to discount God's power to heal, but cautions that oftentimes people will claim to be healed, only to repeat their previous actions. So while not denying God's power, we must also protect the victims of past or repeated crimes.

The final chapter deals with the ever-present question of "Why did God cause/allow this?" Forgiveness, which does not come easily or instantaneously, is a major key in resolving crisis. We are encouraged to guide the individual away from asking "Why?" to asking, "What will I do with what has happened to me?"

As Strom states, "It is easy to condemn the sin that led to the crisis, but much harder to put that issue aside and deal with the question of where to go from here." This book gives you the necessary starting point.

—Connie Disney

A Betrayal of Innocence, by David Peters (Word, 1986), 166 pp., cloth, \$11.95 (PA084-990-5028)

The subtitle to David Peters' book provides a brief and accurate review of the contents: *What Everyone Should Know About Child Sexual Abuse*. Peters deals with one of society's most difficult and painful problems in a thorough, direct, compassionate, and professional manner. At the outset he shows the frequent incidence of child sexual abuse both within families and perpetrated on children by people outside their families. He cites figures showing that at least one out of every four children in the U.S. will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday—most of these will be abused time after time by someone they love and trust. Child sexual abuse occurs in the homes of church people as often as in other population groups.

Peters writes about the effect of abuse on children and adults, the causes of abuse, and how victims and their families should be treated. One particularly helpful chapter alerts people how to recognize that molestation has taken place. He also writes to parents regarding how such abuse can be prevented.

The book is aimed at three groups of people: (1) Christian parents, (2) Christian adults abused as children, and (3) those who do counseling. I recommend it to all three groups and to anyone interested in learning about a problem that one might easily choose to avoid. The book discusses a genuine problem in a balanced and realistic manner. I think a person who had been abused as a child might find new insight into their own adult understanding and behavior as a result of reading Peters' treatment of abuse. His intention is not to shock, though some of the cases reported are shocking, but to inform and help people deal honestly with a real problem. Pastors and church people, particularly

those inclined to think that child sexual abuse is not a problem among professed believers, should find this volume insightful and useful.

It might not be too strong to say that *A Betrayal of Innocence* should be required reading for all parents, teachers, pastors, counselors, Christian workers, and concerned adults.

—Don W. Dunnington

Practicing Marriage, by Lucy and William Hulme (Fortress Press, 1987), 93 pp., paper, \$4.95 (PA080-061-9579)

This is an excellent dual view of marriage from a husband/wife perspective. The title is based on the premise that we have plenty of information on marriage but need to put that knowledge into practice. "The promises of God depend on our coming to grips with our conflicts and other growth challenges."

Writing from their own mature marital experience, the authors show how interdependence and mutuality can be cultivated through difficulties. Pastors can benefit by their distinctly Christian emphasis on reconciliation for the healing of hurts through forgiveness. They describe how practicing forgiveness leads to intimacy. Sex role conflicts present a current challenge in practicing marriage. They encourage decisions that will be satisfactory to both the husband and wife for their own growth.

Since every marriage goes through periods of prosperity and adversity, they suggest ways to develop sensitivity in order for the marriage to survive. The Hulmes share insights gleaned from their workshops and retreats into what helps as well as what hinders the practice of marriage. Young readers will see the way their present is related to their future. Middle-aged readers can reflect on both their past and their future as they see their marriage in their own stage of life. Older readers will find encouragement as they grasp the challenge and rewards of their mature relationship and bonding. "Knowing, appreciating, and relating to each other are never-ending challenges." Many practical marriage reminders in an easy-to-read book.

—Donna J. Hubbard 

SERMON OUTLINES



Sermon Outlines for Advent and Christmas

by David Vardaman

ELIZABETH'S SONG

Luke 1:39-45

Introduction: Relate the situation of Zacharias and Elizabeth: she barren, he a priest. An angel appeared to him and announced that a son would be born. In the fifth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, Mary came to visit.

- I. **Elizabeth Blessed the Savior** (v. 42)
 - A. Even before His birth
 - B. She called Him "Lord," not knowing the full importance of her words.
 - C. We, knowing His position as we do, ought to lift up the name of Jesus Christ.

- II. **She Who Was Barren Bore the Forerunner** (vv. 41, 44)

- A. Barrenness was considered a sign of God's displeasure.
 - 1. Sarah—Isaac
 - 2. Hannah—Samuel
- B. Her barrenness was not a hindrance to faith (v. 6).
- C. Her child fulfilled prophecy (Mal. 4:5).
- D. Her child prophesied fulfillment (John 1:23-27).

- III. **She Believed God**

- A. Abraham believed and was counted righteous.
- B. We are justified through belief (Gal. 2:15-16).

Conclusion: Elizabeth's song is an example of Christian behavior. It contains praise and blessing; hope in the face of discouragement. Most of all, it expresses faith, not just in what is, but that what God has promised He will deliver.

ZACHARIAS' SONG

Luke 1:67-80

Introduction: Prophecy did not end with Malachi. John the Baptist, Jesus, and John the Revelator all prophesied. And in this passage, we find the priest Zacharias prophesying of a prophet yet to come, His forerunner, and the forerunner's message.

- I. **Salvation** (v. 71)

This quote (Ps. 106:10) shows Zacharias' knowledge of Jewish literature—a poem dealing with deliverance from Egypt.

- A. Salvation promised from the house of David (v. 69)
- B. Salvation by mercy, not law (v. 72)
- C. Salvation without fear (v. 74)
 - 1. Holiness (v. 75)
 - 2. Righteousness (v. 75)

- II. **Preparation** (v. 76)

In preparing for the Promised One yet to come, John would act as:

- A. Prophet (v. 76)
- B. Forerunner (v. 76)
- C. Teacher (v. 77)

- III. **Illumination** (v. 79; cf. Isa. 9:2)

Christ is the sunrise in verse 78.

- A. Dispels the darkness
- B. Lights the way through death
- C. Guides to eternal peace

Conclusion: The song of Zacharias tells us of *salvation* that is ours, preached by the forerunner and delivered by the Fulfillment. He tells us of *preparation*, not in piety but in righteousness, to receive Christ. And he tells us of the *illumination* that Christ brings, lighting the way to everlasting peace.

GABRIEL'S SONGS

Luke 1:13-20, 26-38

Introduction: In the first two chapters of Luke, we find the angel Gabriel as God's messenger, making the announcement of the ages. This is a substantial portion of biblical material describing angels' function as God's messengers. Observe the two announcements described here.

- I. **Song of the Forerunner:** "To Make Ready"

Announced to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist

- A. Announced a miraculous birth
- B. Announced an answer to a personal prayer
- C. Announced a restoration of true religion

- D. Announced a prophecy of the Savior

- II. **Song of Fulfillment:** "To Reign Without End"

- A. Announced a miraculous conception
- B. Announced an answer to a nation's prayers
- C. Announced a restoration of David's throne
- D. Announced the fulfillment of promise
 - 1. Fulfillment of Abrahamic covenant
 - 2. Fulfillment of the Virgin Birth (Isa. 7:14)
 - 3. Fulfillment of a new government (Isa. 9:6)

Conclusion: These songs remind us that God fulfills His promises, not as we expect them but as He wills them. Zacharias and Mary both believed God's promises; but Zacharias did not believe that he would be a part of them, whereas Mary accepted God's choice unreservedly. We need to believe and to be willing to participate in God's plan.

MARY'S SONG

(The Magnificat)

Luke 1:46-55

Introduction: Response to a visitation from God

- I. **A New Awareness of God's Holiness** (v. 49)

- A. Isaiah's response (Isaiah 6)
 - 1. Awe
 - 2. Surrender
- B. Egyptian deliverance (Exod. 15:11) Holiness seen
- C. John saw victors newly aware of God's holiness (Rev. 15:4).

- II. **A New Awareness of God's Work** (v. 51)

- A. Israel recalls Egyptian deliverance.
 - 1. Numbers 20
 - 2. Psalm 106
- B. Prophets predicted a new work.

- C. Mary was the first of a new "Christian" awareness.
- D. First-century Church (Stephen).

III. A New Awareness of God's Mercy (v. 50)

- A. Jewish legalism left no room for mercy.
- B. Mercy, "loving-kindness" (Ps. 103:17)—Kindness shown not out of duty, but out of love, undeserved.

IV. A New Awareness of God's Faithfulness (v. 54)

- A. God had always been faithful; Mary was more aware because of fulfilled promises.
- B. Abraham became aware in the fulfillment of promises.
- C. Psalm 99.

Conclusion: A visitation from God produces a new awareness of who God is: (1) holy; (2) at work through us; (3) merciful to and through us; (4) faithful concerning His promises.

ANGELS' SONG

Luke 2:8-14

Introduction: This passage contains the announcement of the ages and a song of praise for the Gift announced.

I. Announcement of the Ages (vv. 10-11)

- A. Fear is gone (v. 10)
Pagans fear their gods. The Jews had often kept the law because of fear. Fear was a way of life. "Fear not" ushered in a new age.
- B. All people
It would be several years before the gospel was available to Gentiles, but this is a forecast. Prophets had told it (Isa. 11:10-12; 42:6). It was now being delivered.
- C. Good news—joy—gospel!

II. A Host of Angels Praising

- A. Glory to God
 1. Such high praise had been all but lost amid the legalism of the Pharisees.
 2. Such high praise had been all but lost under Roman occupation.
 3. Such high praise may be lost if we fail to consider the wonder of salvation. "Oh, the wonder of it all, / Just to think that God loves me."

B. Peace on earth

The promise of peace has not been forgotten. The failure of peace between nations does not overshadow spiritual peace on earth or eternal peace beyond. These are the possession and promise of those on whom God's favor rests—His children.

Conclusion: We are given both instruction and example by the angels' song: instruction to cast off fear and receive the good news of Jesus Christ; example to praise the God who has delivered such a gift here and in the life to come.

What Kind of Heart Is Yours?

Scripture: Acts 1:1-8

Text: Acts 1:8. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

I. The unsanctified heart is a weak heart.

- A. A pulled heart
- B. An undecisive heart
- C. No fortitude

II. The unsanctified heart searches for grace.

- A. Needs peace
- B. Waits for peace
- C. Asks for peace

III. The unsanctified heart receives the Holy Spirit.

- A. Receives power
- B. Receives unity
- C. Receives usefulness

—D. Keefer

PERSEVERING IN HOLINESS

Scripture: Jude 17-25

Text: Jude 21. "Keep yourselves in the love of God."

I. Keep the Faith (v. 20).

- A. Lay a good foundation.
 1. In communion with God
 2. In Scripture study
 3. In church attendance
- B. Continue building on a good foundation.
 1. In a daily walk
 2. In a lifelong process
 3. In the Holy Spirit

II. Keep Loving (v. 21).

- A. Present environment of love—God
 1. He is the Source.
 2. He is the Maintainer.
- B. Future environment of love—God
 1. Guarantee of a triumphant life
 2. Guarantee of eternal life

III. Keep Sharing (vv. 22-23).

- A. With those wavering in judgment
- B. With those falling away
- C. With those in sin

—D. Keefer

AFTER A LONG JOURNEY

Scripture: Heb. 4:9-11

Text: Heb. 4:11. "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

I. Holy Rest Comes by Living.

- A. In works
- B. In faith
- C. In both

II. Holy Rest Comes for Eternity.

- A. For God's people
- B. For rewarded labor
- C. For happy bliss

III. Holy Rest Comes from God.

- A. Provided by His sovereignty
- B. Provided by His love
- C. Provided by His Son

IV. Holy Rest Comes by Probation.

- A. Conditional faith
- B. Conditional heaven

—D. Keefer

WEIGHED IN GOD'S SCALES

Text: Dan. 5:27

I. The Scales. God Has a Standard.

1. His scales are just.
2. His scales are accurate.
3. His scales are final.

II. The Weighing, God's Weighing Processes.

1. Life's emergencies
2. Man's conscience
3. God's law, the Bible
 - a. The Ten Commandments
 - b. The new commandment

III. The Results of the Weighing.

1. Condemned—for not meeting the standard
2. Rewarded—how to meet the standard

—J. B. Galloway 

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS



IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED . . .

A young man ran for the Illinois legislature and was badly swamped. So he entered business, failed, and spent 17 years paying the debts of his worthless partner.

He was in love with a beautiful woman. They became engaged; then she died.

Reentering politics, he ran for Congress and was badly defeated. He then tried to secure an appointment to a federal office, but failed. He became a candidate for the U.S. Senate and was miserably beaten. Two years later, the same.

The young man suffered one devastating failure after another, many great setbacks. Yet in the face of it all, he kept on trying. You've probably heard of him. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

SOURCE

George M. Bowman, *Here's How to Succeed with Your Money* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1960).

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

The importance of perseverance

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Gal. 6:9; Eph. 4:15

—Sue Nishimura

NO SUCH THING AS OBLIGATION

Columnist George Gurley, Jr. tells of his friend, Perry the farmer. Whenever Gurley has messed up a job, he calls on Perry. Perry works patiently until he has fixed whatever Gurley has boggled. The only emotion he expresses when something refuses to be fixed is a kind of quiet amusement. When he is done, Gurley tries to pay him. But Perry always politely refuses.

Perry runs his business in cooperation with three other farmers. They team up to do their farm chores together. When one of them is sick or

needs help, the others drop everything to help out. When Perry needed a new roof recently, the others said, "We'll put it on."

For Perry and his friends, work is a social occasion. They serve each other, not out of obligation, but because they enjoy helping their friends.

SOURCE

The *Kansas City Times*, May 12, 1987

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

The mutual dependence and responsibility of the family of God. We are to rely on each other, to encourage each other, and to lift each other up.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

1 Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:1-13

—Brian Blankenship

LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE

In the early days of rail travel, crossing guards warned travelers of approaching trains. These men were especially important at night. When trains came, they stood in the middle of the road, swinging a lantern to warn coach drivers of the impending danger.

One night, there was a terrible accident at a particular crossing. A coach collided with a train, killing a family of six. An inquest by the railroad authorities subpoenaed Ben, the guard on duty that night.

"Ben," the chairman of the review board asked, "were you on duty the night of the accident?"

"Yes, sir, I was," Ben replied nervously.

"Did you know the train was coming?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Did you take your place in front of the crossing?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Did you have your lantern with you?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

Then the chairman thanked Ben and

told him to step down. The inquest closed the case without knowing the cause of the accident. Speculation was that the coach driver was drunk or blind.

Many years later, Ben lay on his deathbed, surrounded by his family. Softly he began to moan, "Those poor people. Those poor, poor people."

His oldest son leaned down to hear his father. "Are you talking about the people in that coach, Dad?"

"Yes. Those poor, poor people."

"But, Dad! Don't you remember? There was an inquest. You were cleared; it wasn't your fault!"

"They forgot to ask one question," Ben gasped.

"What didn't they ask?"

"They forgot to ask," Ben whispered "if my lantern was lit!"

SOURCE

Thom Schultz, *Get Off My Roof and Other Faith Building Stories* (Loveland, Colo.: Thom Schultz Publications 1987).

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

The importance of letting our lights shine

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Matt. 5:14-16; Mark 4:21-23

—Chris Wiley

THE TWO BAGS

Every man is born into the world with two bags suspended from a cord around his neck. A small bag in front is full of his neighbor's faults, and a large bag behind is filled with his own faults. Hence men are quick to see the faults of others, and are often blind to their own failings.

SOURCE

Aesop's Fables

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

We are too often oblivious to our own

shortcomings while quick to see faults in others.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Prov. 14:21; Luke 18:9-14

—Curt Lantz

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

Eustace was an obnoxious child, a real beast. His ugly temperament and deceitfulness made him quite unlovable. Of course, like so many unlovable people, Eustace had a persecution complex. He just couldn't understand how the rest of the world could be so stupid. Why couldn't they recognize him as the valuable asset he was?

Then one day, something strange happened. By some fantastic metamorphosis, Eustace was actually changed into the literal dragon he had been all along! He finally saw for himself how ugly and unlovable he really was. No longer happy with himself, he was desperate to change. But regardless of his remorse, Eustace could not change himself back.

In despair, Eustace cried out to Aslan the Lion, lord of the kingdom of Narnia, for help. And Aslan, because of his love for all his subjects, came to the rescue.

It wasn't easy to change Eustace back. Being a dragon, he had to shed his skin, much as a snake sheds its skin. It was a terribly painful process. Nor was shedding one layer enough. Layer after layer, each one more painful to shed than the one before, Eustace laid himself bare to Aslan. And with each successive layer, he became more dependent on Aslan's help to be rid of the skin.

Finally, after the last layer of dead skin was gone, Eustace stood, free of his dragon-dungeon, fully exposed to Aslan. Only then could Aslan bathe him and soothe his tender new skin.

SOURCE

C. S. Lewis, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (New York: MacMillan, 1952).

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

Transformation is at the heart of our encounter with Christ. Because of the ugliness of sin, the depths to which it reaches, we cannot be satisfied with a superficial surrender; Christ must help us rid ourselves of all our sin. Only then can He comfort us with His Holy Spirit.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

John 3:1-15; Col. 3:9

—Bill Murray

THE THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE

Lynette was a typical teenager with typical teenage wants and needs. And

like most typical teenagers, she felt an overwhelming need to be loved. But that need went unmet at home. There was no love there, and the longer Lynette went without it, the more she craved it.

The relationship between Lynette and her parents deteriorated until one day Lynette ran away from home. Ending up on a street corner in California, she decided that whoever loved her first could have her. And that's how Lynette's need for love was met. Before long, someone did come up to her on that street corner. He put his hand on her head and told her that he would take care of her. True to her ideals, Lynette devoted the rest of her life to that man.

What a beautiful story this could have been if only it had been a Christian who had found her first, someone who would have told her about God's love for her. Instead, the person who found her was Charles Manson. Currently, Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme is serving a prison sentence for demonstrating her devotion to Manson. At his request, Lynette attempted the assassination of President Gerald Ford in 1975.

SOURCE

Ron Hutchcraft, director, in a fundraising letter for Metropolitan Youth for Christ, Wayne, N.J.

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

People who are searching for answers and for love will respond to the truth of the gospel and to the love of Christ if Christians will make the effort to reach them.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Matt. 9:37-38; John 4:35

—Bob Potemski

NO PROBLEM?

A woman wrote Abigail Van Buren, expressing concern over her daughter's homosexual life-style.

"Dear Abby" replied, "If your daughter is happy, she has no problem. If you can't accept her, then you have a problem. Don't look for a miracle and don't hope for a reversal."

But according to the Bible, the "happy" daughter does indeed have a problem!

SOURCE

Undated "Dear Abby" column from *The Daily Oklahoman*

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

Homosexual activity, despite what the world says, is a sin. We can hope for a miracle even as we love the sinner for Jesus Christ.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

1 Cor. 6:9-11; John 8:1-11

—Mike Ward

UNNATURAL GARDENING

The tare of the King James Bible is the darnel, a wheat look-alike allowed to grow along with the wheat until harvesttime, when it is winnowed out with the chaff. It is also defined as "the seed of the vetch."

As good gardeners, we have traditionally thought of weeds as enemies to be fought and uprooted, banished from the garden, leaving neat rows of "good" plants in a garden to be exhibited with pride.

Some plants formerly considered weeds are now encouraged in gardens for the contributions they make to the fertility of the soil or for their qualities as insect repellents. The vetch, a leguminous plant that fixes nitrogen in the soil, is often planted along with other crops or as a cover crop to be plowed under as "green manure."

In the human garden in which we live, we are too prone to decide for ourselves which ones of us are the "tares." We feel the neatness and order of our lives threatened, our pride attacked, by those whose ideas, dress, language, manners, or customs differ from ours. Our impulse is to root them out and banish them, to leave our peaceful garden undisturbed.

SOURCE

Tom Page, ed., *The Upper Room Disciplines* (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1983).

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

The decision of who in our "garden" are "tares" is not ours to make. The Master Gardener will, at harvesttime, do the sorting out. Meanwhile, we can grow together and perhaps be of mutual benefit.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Matt. 13:24-30

—Mark Graham

TRUTH

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth; from the laxness that is content with half-truths; from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O God of Truth, deliver us."

SOURCE

Ancient prayer quoted in "The Doctrine of Sin in the Theology of John Wesley," a thesis by William J Strickland

TRUTH/CONCEPT/ DOCTRINE ILLUSTRATED

The God of Truth requires truth of us.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

John 8:32; Eph. 4:15

—Phil LaFountain



THE ARK ROCKER

IT
TAKES
CHARISMA

A minister without charisma isn't going to make it big in religious circles," our pastor explained last Sunday. "The neutral, middle-of-the-road minister had his day in the 1950s. Today churches clamor for the colorful language of a Jesse Jackson, the persuasive salesmanship of a Jerry Falwell, or the aw-schucks, down-home style of an Oral Roberts.

"Unfortunately I travel in the slow lane, but I take comfort in the fact that most of you do too. Our work, my friends, is cut out for us. How can we sell lackluster religion in a time of the bright and shiny? Who needs us?"

"Some years ago a woman called, asking me to come and visit her brother dying of cancer. She met me on her porch with a surprise announcement: 'Reverend, he's in the chicken coop.'

"'My brother,' she went on, 'is an alcoholic and has given us a lot of trouble across the years. My husband barred him from our home but finally agreed to let him stay in the chicken coop.'

"Who cares about such a man? His sister and I were the only people to attend his funeral.

Our pastor went on to say "Two of our members work in an adoption agency. Recently, after months of putting together seemingly endless amounts of detail, they finally succeeded in bringing an unwanted infant girl and her new parents together. There were no cheers or confetti.

"I complimented one of our parish mothers on the wise handling of her children. 'It wasn't anything,' she told me. But measured against what I often see, it is everything. She wasn't awarded a plaque.

"We nonexciting types get our wisdom the old-fashioned way: We pray for it. 'The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective' (James 5:16, NIV). We're the tail assembly that saves the plane from slamming into the mountainside.

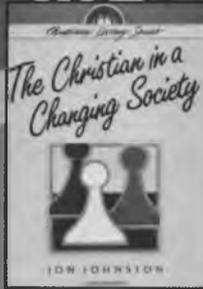
"I hope you'll forgive me this self-serving sermon. It was either this or sequins on a chartreuse robe. I didn't think you were ready for that. Neither am I."

The Ark Locker

8

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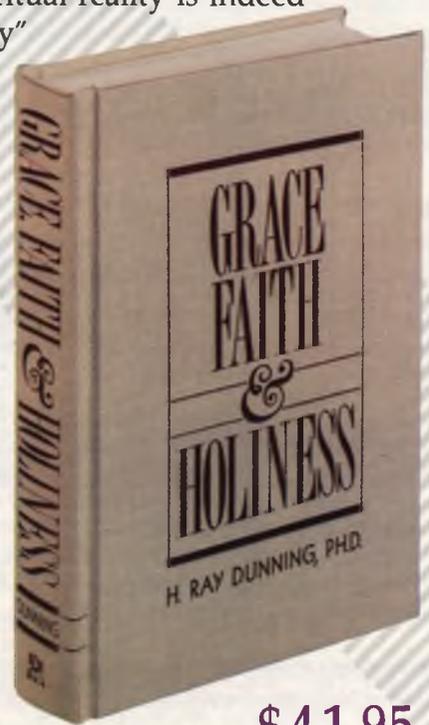
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