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Herald of Holiness

MAY 1997

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

PAINTER OF LIGHT



Devotions for Pentecost
Peace—65 Years Later

JUNE 18-27, 1997

24th

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS U.S.A.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AND
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

*Holiness...
The Message of Hope*

Jeremiah 29:11, NIV

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FIRE!

by Christi-An C. Bennett

For a schoolkid, a fire drill is a welcome break. There is no quicker way to get out of a boring class. The more daring boys set off the alarms themselves. Whether the alarm is false or real, planned or prank, it always gets the students out of school.

The instant the alarm sounds, the students are out of their seats, into a line, and headed out the door. Spring or winter, rain or shine, a fire alarm never fails to empty the schoolhouse onto the front lawn.

Fire, real or imagined, has a way of sending people running. That's what happened on Pentecost. A small congregation of disciples sat in a house quietly praying. Then the fire fell—right on their heads. They

raced outside so quickly that Luke didn't bother to tell us how they got there. One minute they were inside praying, and the next minute they were outside preaching, and in a matter of hours, 3,000 souls had been added to the Church.

The apostle Peter was a big talker within the cozy circle of Jesus and the disciples, but when it came to facing the world, his fears closed in on him—until the fire fell. Then suddenly Peter became a courageous witness for Christ. A. M. Hills noted, "The early disciples had no wealth, no social position, no prestige, . . . no help from estab-

lished institutions. They were . . . without influence, without skill, without education, . . . without Christian literature, or a single Christian house of worship."¹

But those weak, fearful, and despised Christians prayed and waited until the fire fell. Hills continued, "Within seventy years, according to the smallest estimate, there were half a million followers of Jesus . . . In other words, with Holy Spirit power upon them, they increased more than four thousand

fold in threescore years."² Only Holy Spirit fire has that kind of propelling and compelling power.

For years a Christian locks herself up, hermitlike, away from the world, until she hardly speaks two words to anyone who is not also a Christian. Her life grows cold and

fruitless. Then she opens her heart to the Holy Spirit, the fire falls, and she races out to tell her neighbors about Jesus.

For decades a church barricades itself against the world and slowly withers. Then someone starts praying for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the fire falls. Suddenly, instead of hiding away from the world, the church is barging into the world with the good news of Jesus, and people begin to get converted in droves. The searing heat of Holy Spirit fire drives God's people out of their locked houses and into a world that needs Jesus.


Continued on page 6

A PASSION FOR HOLINESS OF HEART WAS THE PRELUDE TO THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT.



Devotions for Pentecost

by Gene Van Note



The pure honesty of children makes them lovable. Most of the time. Sometimes they make us uncomfortable with their frankness. At other times, their candor brings new freshness to old ideas. All of these happened when some boys were asked to show the church how much they had learned. Their teacher challenged them to memorize the Apostles' Creed. Now, before their parents and friends, they were to repeat the creed phrase by phrase. Listen in on how it went:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," the first boy said in a loud voice.

"I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord," the second boy followed quickly.

All went as planned until one boy finished the phrase, "From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead."

Dead silence followed.

Something had gone wrong.

Boys squirmed.

Parents began to get nervous.

The teacher showed a touch of embarrassment.

Then the next fellow in line broke the tension: "The boy who believes in the Holy Spirit is absent today."¹

The Boy Was Absent, but the Spirit Is Present

When one boy didn't show up at church as expected, some folks were disappointed. Across the centuries, people have felt that way about the Holy Spirit from time to time. It's likely they were disappointed because they had decided what the Spirit would do when He

arrived, and He didn't "perform" as scheduled. At other times in the history of the Church, the attention of the worshipers has been on something or someone other than the Holy Spirit.

However, there never would have been a Church, nor would there be a Church, without the Holy Spirit. The transforming power of the Spirit launched the movement we know as Christianity. It happened on a day the Jews called Pentecost. Like Easter, the celebration of Pentecost has been a part of the Church from the beginning. In contrast to European believers, Christians in North America consider Pentecost a relatively minor holy day. For that reason, they usually give little thought to spiritual preparation for Pentecost. Strangely, that's true even in churches where emphasis on the Holy Spirit has traditionally been prominent in theology and worship.

What follows is a one-week devotional guide that will help us prepare for worship on Pentecost Sunday.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE



Monday
Psalm 104:24-34

The psalmist is a singer, not a scientist. The skies above and the dirt below are a cathedral, not a laboratory. The ancient hymn writer remembers that the Spirit of God was present when it all began and sings a hymn to the God of creation. He expresses in poetic form

Bob Watkins

these words from Genesis: "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" (1:2).

Thus we begin our devotional walk toward Pentecost, humbly recognizing that the Holy Spirit was not created on a Jewish holy day a few weeks after the Ascension. Begin the day by reading Psalm 104:24-34 from your favorite translation.

Prayer for the Day:

Reread verses 24-26 as the opening prayer for the day. The psalmist is delighted that the Lord has filled the earth with so many creatures. But there is fear—conquered fear—in these verses also. The Hebrews were not ancient mariners; the sea was foreign and foreboding to them. Leviathan (v. 26) symbolically represents the restless waters of the sea and the chaos that could overwhelm them. Use this prayer to take the chaos of your life to the Lord.

Table Grace:

Before eating one of your meals on Monday, repeat verses 27-30 as your table grace. These words are a prayerful reminder that we are totally dependent on the Spirit of God. As Jesus prayed much later, we are grateful to God for our "daily bread."

Doxology:

At the close of the day, use verses 31-34 as a doxology. Conclude as the psalmist does with the words "Praise the LORD" (v. 35, NIV), because we have pushed the horizons of Pentecost back to the dawn of time.

Hymn:

Sing this hymn of praise, focusing your mind and heart on the Trinity.

Glory, glory to the Father!

Glory, glory to the Son!

Glory, glory to the Spirit!

Glory to the Three in One!

I will praise Him! I will praise Him!

Praise the Lamb for sinners slain!

*Give Him glory, all ye people,
For His blood can wash away
each stain.*

—Margaret J. Harris
Sing to the Lord, No. 119



Tuesday John 14:16-21

Devotional Thought:

When we divided up my father's estate following his death, I received several quite old and very beautiful quilts. Mother, who died seven years earlier, called them "comforters." That image came to mind when, as a lad, I first heard these words read in public: "I [Jesus] will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16).

Another comforter on a really cold winter night. What a cozy idea, one that promises security and serenity.

As I grew to adulthood, I learned, to my great sadness, that some of my childhood images were incomplete and sometimes incorrect. The Holy Spirit is not another blanket to ward off the chill of a hostile world. But across the years, I've come to realize that while my first idea was too earthly, it was not totally wrong.

Give your imagination wings for today's devotional moment. Picture a second-story room somewhere in the crowded city of Jerusalem on Passover evening. Shortly after Judas left, Jesus announced that Peter was a coward. Thomas expressed the fears of the small group of disciples that they were going to be abandoned. "How can we know the way?" he pleaded (v. 5). To calm their fears and give them hope for the future, Jesus spoke the words that form today's Bible passage.

Thomas could believe that the Spirit was present at creation. But now he was about to be abandoned. Now what?

Jesus answered, "I will not leave you as orphans. . . . The Spirit

[who] lives with you . . . will be in you" (vv. 17-18, NIV).

Alpha and Omega:

Read John 14:16-21 quietly at both the beginning and the end of the day. Let it bring spiritual serenity to you.

Hymn:

Let your heart rejoice with the songwriter who proclaimed the Comforter is come.

*O spread the tidings 'round,
wherever man is found,*

*Wherever human hearts and hu-
man woes abound.*

*Let ev'ry Christian tongue pro-
claim the joyful sound:*

The Comforter has come!

—Frank Bottome
Sing to the Lord, No. 291



Wednesday John 14:25-27; 15:26-27

Read today's scripture in this order: John 14:25-26; 15:26-27; and then 14:27.

Question of the Day:

Begin your Bible study with a quick review to answer the question implied in verse 25, "What did Jesus tell them?"

Tuesday we looked at the word *comforter* as Jesus used it in reference to the Holy Spirit. Today we will expand our understanding of this word, which in its simplest form means "to call alongside."

In the New Testament, this general sense disappears in favor of a far more active meaning—one who speaks in favor of another, an intercessor or a helper. Finally, it came to mean any person who helped someone in trouble, especially if that one was in trouble with the law. The word is so complex it's tough to bring it over into the English with a single word. That's the reason why modern translations use words like *counselor*, *advocate*, and *helper* along with the word *comforter*.

Meditation List:

List the ways the Holy Spirit, speaking for Jesus, has been your
Counselor
Advocate
Helper
Comforter

Daily Prayer:

Memorize John 14:27 as your prayer for the day.

Hymn:

Close your devotion by singing the following prayer:

*Holy Spirit, be my Guide;
Holy Spirit, my heart's open
wide.
Make me to know Thy will di-
vine;
Holy Spirit, be Thou mine.**

—Mildred Cope
Sing to the Lord, No. 299

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Thursday John 16:7-15

Cross-examination:

“When he [the Holy Spirit] comes, *he will prove the world wrong*” (v. 8, NRSV, emphasis added). Commonly, verse 8 is translated “convict” or “reprove.” This implies that the Holy Spirit is a judge who convicts and punishes.

The word Jesus used to describe the Spirit’s work is one used when a lawyer cross-examines a witness to prove a point. When you prove a point, you may convict, convince, or both. But the emphasis here is on the proof.

The world has its standards. It rewards those who live up to them and punishes those who don’t. Jesus said that the Spirit will expose the world and prove it wrong. In the process, He will guide His disciples into all truth (v. 13).

Daybreak Devotions:

Read John 16:7-15 at the beginning of the day. Ask the Spirit to pull back the curtain so you can see the world in its brutal reality. Be comforted by the assurance in

verse 13 that distance from the historical Jesus is no disadvantage. Ask Him to be with you in the tough reality of your world.

Hymn:

As you examine your own heart, let this hymn be your prayer today:

*Holy Spirit, Pow’r divine,
Cleanse this guilty heart of
mine.
Long hath sin without control
Held dominion o’er my soul.*

—Andrew Reed
Sing to the Lord, No. 306



Friday Acts 1:1-8

Bible Study:

Read these verses as if you are standing on your front porch watching an approaching tornado! That’s what’s happening. Of course, the disciples could not have known what we see written clearly in history. But even they understood that Jesus was saying something incredibly important.

The disciples and Jesus shared a common idea—the kingdom of God. The difference came in definition. Take a moment to write down, in one sentence, what kind of kingdom the disciples looked for. Then describe the Kingdom Jesus knew was coming.

Witness Power:

Pause again to answer this question based on the first part of verse 8: “What kind of power did the disciples hope Jesus would give them?”

Against the backdrop of that answer, read verse 8 again. Now, return to John 15:26-27 and read it along with Acts 1:8. Both before and after the Crucifixion and Resurrection, Jesus commanded the Church to evangelize the world. He also promised that they would, could, and must speak for Him in keeping with the witness of the Holy Spirit to them. That means you and me too.

Benediction:

Close the day with a simple prayer for the Spirit’s help in talking to your family, friends, and coworkers about your faith in Jesus.

Hymn:

Allow the following hymn to be your prayer throughout the day as you become His witness:

*Lord, as of old at Pentecost
Thou didst Thy pow’r display,
With cleansing, purifying flame
Descend on us today.
Lord, send the old-time power,
the Pentecostal power!
Thy floodgates of blessing on
us throw open wide!
Lord, send the old-time power,
the Pentecostal power,
That sinners be converted and
Thy name glorified!*

—Charlotte G. Homer
Sing to the Lord, No. 290



Saturday Acts 2:1-11

Bible Study:

Then the tornado struck! Read Acts 2:1-11 as if you’re still on your front porch when it happened.

Rushing wind.
Descending fire.
Transformed speech.
And the Church was born.

At the end of the cycle of worship that began at Passover, the Holy Spirit came on the disciples at Pentecost. Luke’s words tumble out as he tries to describe this dramatic event. Moments later, the fire splashes out of the locked room and sweeps through the streets of Jerusalem.

Devotional Thought:

From a human point of view, think how close the disciples came to missing out on the first Christian Pentecost. Had nothing happened, had they not prepared for the coming of the Spirit, had it been business as usual, they all would have been on their way home the next morning unchanged. But they

prayed and prepared. And nothing has been the same since!

Prayer of Preparation:

In preparation for Pentecost Sunday, read Acts 2:1-11, asking the Spirit to bring new life to you.

Hymn:

As you sing this hymn, open yourself to the Spirit in new ways:

*Breathe on me, breath of God;
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.*

—Edwin Hatch
Sing to the Lord, No. 302



Pentecost Sunday Romans 8:22-27

Early Christians:

Rise early enough on Sunday to allow time to meditate on these verses. Begin by deciding not to domesticate the Holy Spirit. Of course, no one can. But sometimes

we approach these words as if we can put a collar and a leash on them like a newly-trained puppy. Or as if the Holy Spirit is our hired hand.

It's not likely that any of us will fully understand all that the apostle Paul says here. But that's not necessary for these words to speak to us. Create a list of what they say to you.

At the very least, they say:

- God's indwelling Spirit is the first installment on the glory that will come in His "better way."

- We are saved in, by, and through this hope.

- In the meantime, and in the midst of our heartaches, sorrows, and physical problems, the Holy Spirit is with us.

- "The Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express" (v. 26, NIV).

Beyond all that we can know or understand, beyond anything we can put into words, beyond feelings and hopes and dreams, the Spirit is at work.

Life Application:

Unleash the Spirit and let the wind blow free again! Make up your mind that you will not be the absent one who believes in the Holy Spirit in church today.

Hymn:

Join in the celebration of Pentecost by singing this prayer:

*Spirit of God, descend upon my heart.
Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move.
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.
Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame;
The baptism of the heav'n-descended Dove—
My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame.*

—George Croly
Sing to the Lord, No. 298

1. Paul S. Rees, *Don't Sleep Through the Revolution* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1969), 127-28. **H**

FIRE!

Continued from page 2

That same fire gave birth to the modern missionary movement 200 years ago. When the fire fell on 18th-century Britain, farmhands and artisans were first transformed into passionate evangelists who carried the gospel into every corner of the land. But that was not enough. In the next century, the children and converts of those 18th-century evangelists were propelled across the oceans as missionaries. The Baptists, Anglicans, Methodists, and others formed missionary societies and began to send witnesses for Christ around the world.

Methodist missionary historian G. G. Findlay wrote, "The passion for holiness . . . was the prelude to the outburst of missionary enthusi-

asm in the next generation. It was the . . . eagerness of hearts overflowing with love to God and to all mankind that activated the missionary ventures and sacrifices."³ Churches transformed by the fire of the Holy Spirit could not leave the world untouched.

The Church of the Nazarene was born in the midst of a Holy Spirit firestorm. Even before the church was organized on a national basis, that fire was propelling our forefathers to distant shores. J. Fred Parker writes of Harmon Schmelenbach's 1907 exit to Africa, "He could quench the fire that burned within him no longer. . . . He had to go to Africa now!"⁴ That Pentecostal fire that burned in Schmelenbach's heart has moved the Church of the Nazarene out into 116 world areas and is still pushing us farther.

When the fire falls, God's people cannot sit still. Chairs get pushed back, door bolts get thrown back, and God's people get out onto the front lawn, then out the gate, and finally across the world. And wherever they go, they tell of Christ's victory. Open hearts respond to the message, and the world is forever changed.

Lord, our God, let the fire fall!

1. A. M. Hills, *Holiness and Power for the Church and the Ministry*, 1897, 18.

2. Ibid.

3. G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society* (London: Epworth, 1921), 33-34.

4. J. Fred Parker, *Mission to the World: A History of Missions in the Church of the Nazarene Through 1985* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1988), 115.

Christi-An C. Bennett is the wife of the pastor of the Whangarei Church of the Nazarene in New Zealand. An ordained minister, she has served in ministerial assignments in Massachusetts and England. **H**

ONE

by John A. Knight, *general superintendent*

Go make disciples of every nation. Global village. Internationalization. The family of God. The 21st-century challenge for the Church of the Nazarene is embedded in the paradoxes and contrasts of the above phrases.

In 1972 the 18th General Assembly formally recognized and accepted the challenge of evangelizing the world and making the new converts and nations a vital and equal part of the family. A historic action that created the Internationalization Commission (now the Commission on the International Church) officially began the process and became the focus of our efforts.

A distinguishing characteristic of the Church of the Nazarene historically has been its strong commitment to missionary evangelism and compassion around the world. The church now is strategically located in 116 world areas. The work has been extended in these areas by establishing new congregations wherever possible. Each church has resulted in new converts—new Nazarenes—a worldwide family of Nazarenes.

The primary question confronting the church is how to develop the results of this massive mission effort into a New Testament global family—a global family that feels ownership and can truly identify the church as “our” family, with all the privileges, rights, and responsibilities that accompany family membership.

For over 25 years our church has sought earnestly to do just that—to nurture the fact and feeling of family. Ideas have been explored and concepts tested. Nazarene representatives from around the world have worked to pass on the essential doctrine and character of the denomination in a culturally diverse global community.

The words of our founder, Dr. P. F. Bresee, have never been more appropriate in our history than now: “In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; and in all things, charity.”

We are a global family. We—every member of the family in every part of the world—are committed to maintaining our doctrinal distinctives. We will be flexible in structure and methodology. We will contextualize our strategy. We will seek ways for all to be “at home” in the Church of the Nazarene.

Praise be to God for the hundreds of thousands of per-

sons around the world who have come to know Jesus Christ as a result of the missionary work of the church. We celebrate the spread of Christian holiness along with the increasing awareness and implementation of the Great Commission.

We delight in the faith that our global fellowship in some degree reflects the “great multitude” of peoples John the Revelator saw “from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb’” (Revelation 7:9-10, NIV).

When the family gathers in San Antonio in June 1997, we will gather as “one” (cf. Ephesians 4:4-6). One body. One Spirit. One Lord. One faith. One baptism. One God and Father of all. One hope. One mission. One church. One family. One in Christ! H

SPECIAL NOTICE!

Phi Delta Lambda Members

All members of Phi Delta Lambda, the honor society of the colleges and universities of the Church of the Nazarene, are invited to attend the quadrennial breakfast on Monday, June 23, 1997, in the Hyatt Regency Hotel in San Antonio. A delicious breakfast and special program will be enjoyed.

Tickets may be purchased for \$18.00 at the International Board of Education exhibit area in the Convention Center during the General Assembly or by sending a check (payable to the General Treasurer, Church of the Nazarene) to:

Dr. Jerry D. Lambert
International Board of Education
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131

All members are urged to attend.

Charles Hastings Smith Dead at 79



Charles Hastings Smith, 79, Nazarene evangelist and poet, died March 5 in Okla-

homa City.

Smith, a Nazarene minister and evangelist for more than 50 years, was known as the "Poet of the Ozarks." He was a member of First Church of the Nazarene, Bethany, Okla. He was also a member of the Poets Association and the Southwest Chaparral.

Smith earned his A.B. and Th.B. degrees from Bethany-Peniel College, now Southern Nazarene University. SNU also honored him with a doctor of divinity degree.

He is survived by his wife, Myrtle; stepdaughter, Carol Anne Billeter; 2 cousins; 6 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Lillenas Plans G.A. Workshops

Lillenas Publishing Company will conduct a variety of workshops at General Assembly, Thursday through Saturday, June 19-21, according to John Mathias, Lillenas director. Topics will cover drama, choral, instrumental, keyboard, children, and youth. Also, a reception for ministers of music and choir directors is scheduled for June 21 at 3 P.M.

Registration is not required to attend the workshops. Details of times, titles, and leaders will be available at the NPH bookstore in the exhibit hall at General Assembly. For more information, call Paulo Barros at 816-931-1900, ext. 307.

Scottish Scholar Joins NTS Faculty

Thomas A. Noble, a native of Scotland, was inducted as professor of theology at Nazarene Theological Seminary (NTS) on March 25. He becomes the fifth professor of theology in the 51-year history of NTS.

Noble served at Nazarene Theological College in Manchester, England, for almost 20 years in a variety of positions, including dean and senior lecturer in Christian theology and church history. He holds degrees from the University of Glasgow and Jordanhill College of Education. He earned the B.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Edinburgh.

Noble has published sever-

al articles in the *Beacon Dictionary of Theology*, *New Dictionary of Theology*, *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, *Studia Patristica*, and other scholar-



ly journals. He has also written articles for *Illustrated Bible Life* and *Preacher's Magazine*, both publications of Nazarene Publishing House.

Noble served as secretary for the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research. He is a member of the Wesleyan Theological Society, the Manson Society, and the Rutherford House Fellowship.

Noble and his wife, Elaine, have four daughters.

Nazarene Missionaries in Albania Are Evacuated Safely

After 40 hours of confusion and chaos during the recent civil unrest in Albania, four Nazarene missionaries and their children were evacuated safely, according to Franklin Cook, Eurasia Region director.

David and Sandra Allison and their three children, along with Terry and Tamara Hudson and their daughter, were shuttled out of the country by Italian troops and landing craft. The rescued group included scores of other expatriate missionaries, businesspersons, and diplomats.

In Italy the Allisons and Hudsons were joined by missionary Hilary Evans, who had just returned from meetings in Kansas City and had not yet gone to Albania. The group then traveled to the Eurasia Region office for de-

briefing sessions.

"This was a close call, humanly speaking," said Cook. "We are grateful for God's protection."

The Allisons and Hudsons have returned to North America, and Evans has gone to Germany. It is not known when they will be able to return to Albania or what losses they will face to their homes and equipment when they return. It is known that they have lost two vehicles.

Louie Bustle, World Mission Division director, said, "This was truly a real evidence of God's protective hand during difficult days, and we appreciate the prayers of Nazarenes. Let's continue to remember the entire missionary team in our prayers during this uncertain time."

SNU Wins Basketball Championship

Southern Nazarene University (SNU) won a fourth-straight NAIA Division I Women's Basketball National Championship on March 25, defeating Union University of Tennessee, 78-73.

The championship was the fifth for SNU and a record fourth in a row. The five national championships tie SNU with Southwestern Oklahoma State University for the most by any NAIA women's basketball program.

Three players—Astou Ndiaye, Tonna Woolery, and Leann Bezner—made the all-tournament team. Also, Ndiaye was named most valuable player, and Woolery received the Hustle Award. Craig Wiginton was named the NAIA Coach of the Year.

SNU's Ndiaye Named All-American

Astou Ndiaye, a senior at Southern Nazarene University (SNU), was honored by being selected to the 1997 Kodak NAIA Women's All-American Basketball Team. The third leading scorer in SNU women's basketball history, Ndiaye has been a key member in the Lady Redskins' unprecedented four consecutive NAIA national championships. She was also named 1997 Sooner Athletic Conference Player of the Year.



Developing a Corporate DNA in the Church of the Nazarene

by Donald D. Owens

The Church of the Nazarene has a central core of unity, or corporate DNA if you will.

During the years of my doctoral studies in cultural anthropology at the University of Oklahoma, it was necessary to take a course in genetics. Of course this field of study and research is light-years beyond my introduction to the subject. I learned, however preliminary my studies, that deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) is the hereditary material of the cell, capable of self-replication and of coding the production of proteins carrying on metabolic functions. Together with a protein coat, DNA composes most of the chromosome. Genes are segments of chromosomal DNA molecules. Variation in the genetic coding results from the sequence in which the chain is arranged.

Thanks to God's blessings upon our missionary work around the world, the Church of the Nazarene celebrates its global saturation—now 116 world areas—and the process of mutual interdependence that acts as if boundaries are unimportant or do not exist at all. At the heart of this is our love for Christ and dedication to our mission of confronting all men everywhere with the claims of the gospel. A wave of inclusiveness has characterized our movement through several quadrennia of intentional internationalization.

Based upon relationships of trust,

the church around the world has sought to share in the merging global culture of the Church of the Nazarene while at the same time seeking to preserve important aspects of local cultures. Homogeneity in all aspects has not been expected or attempted; but we do have a

**WE HAVE LEARNED TO
CELEBRATE OUR DIVERSITY
WITHOUT MILITATING
AGAINST OUR
ESSENTIAL UNITY.**

shared culture. A shared culture means that there are shared beliefs, attitudes, values, and expectations. This is due to great work by our missionaries and loyal and devoted national leaders in every setting. We have learned to celebrate our diversity without militating against our essential unity. We have sought very hard to insure that there are no mutations in our "Crick code."

As our shared or corporate culture continues to develop and strengthen on a global basis, the consistency of our work will result in a corporate DNA that all of our members everywhere identify, recognize, and relate to. Our DNA finds its orientation around our mission "to respond to the Great Commission of Christ to

'go and make disciples of all nations'; our key objective, "to advance God's kingdom by the preservation and propagation of Christian holiness as set forth in the Scriptures"; and our critical objectives, which are "holy Christian fellowship, the conversion of sinners, the entire sanctification of believers, their upbuilding in holiness, and the simplicity and spiritual power manifest in the primitive New Testament Church, together with the preaching of the gospel to every creature."²

Our global church must act as an organic whole rather than as one with a number of disconnected elements moving in different directions. This means that we must be willing to make progress toward moving from a "mechanistic organization—where the whole of the church equals the sum of its parts—to a holistic organization—where any part of the church reflects its 'genetic code' and where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."³ Clothed with a million hours of prayer as we move toward San Antonio and General Assembly, may God and our needy world find Nazarenes united at the core of what we say we are, *a Holiness Movement*, Spirit-filled, united, and deeply in love with our Lord and each other.

1. A model for DNA was proposed in 1953 by J. D. Watson and F. Crick.

2. Taken from the Mission Statement, Church of the Nazarene.

3. John L. Daniels and N. Caroline Daniels, *Global Vision* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 12.



General Superintendents' Report to General Board Looks Toward 21st Century

Realistic optimism and recognition of a changing world characterized the annual report of the Board of General Superintendents to the 1997 session of the General Board. Delivered by Donald D. Owens, the report briefly reviewed the accomplishments of the past year but focused on the new millennium just ahead.

"As we assess the work of the past year with a view to the future, the Board of General Superintendents affirms again that we do live in *privileged times*," Owens said. "There is ample justification for realistic optimism this year and into the next century. This affirmation is grounded in our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage with its radical optimism of grace. Authentic Christianity has always affirmed that human nature and thus society can be radically and permanently changed by God's grace."

In response to changing world demographics, Owens said, "We must see the United States as part of the global mission field as never before, and we must commit ourselves to this ministry." He went on to say that, first, we [Nazarenes] must have a clear statement of mission that compels us to "go and make disciples,"

taking a new look at North America as a mission field; second, that our key objective of advancing God's kingdom by the preservation and propagation of Christian holiness is clearly in focus; and, third, by reiterating our critical objectives: "holy Christian fellowship, the conversion of sinners, the entire sanctification of believers, their upbuilding in holiness, and the simplicity and spiritual power manifest in the primitive New Testament Church" (*Manual*, paragraph 25).



Donald D. Owens

Owens mentioned that the Board of General Superintendents, after hours of prayer and thoughtful consideration, chose the quadrennial theme for 1997-2001 and the 1997 General Assembly, "Holiness . . . The Message of Hope."

In conclusion, Owens quoted Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV): "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" Owens then stated, "With this confidence ever before us, our Lord would be pleased to help us become strategists for the redemptive vision, spokespersons for biblical truth, servants of human need, and stewards of spiritual power."

General Board Actions

The General Board at its 74th session, February 22-24, took action on several significant items, including:

Budget Cap

In consultation with the Board of General Superintendents, the General Board passed a motion to recommend that the budget cap be reduced from the present 26 percent. Beginning with the 1997-98 assembly year, the cap would be 23 percent, and with the 1998-99 assembly year, it would be reduced to 22 percent. This action came following a study of referrals from the 1993 General Assembly and a review of proposed resolutions to the 1997 General Assembly.

The action also provided for a study committee to be appointed following the 1997 General Assembly to "bring a report and budget formula to the 1999 General Board with the goal of further reducing, if feasible."

Global Ministries Strategy

The General Board, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee and the Board of General Superintendents, approved in concept the proposed Global Ministries Strategy and Headquarters reorganization. Details of the strategy will be developed during 1997 and will be presented to the 1998 session of the General Board for final approval and implementation.

Missionaries Retire

The General Board at its February 1997 session acknowledged with gratitude the 24 missionaries who retired in 1996. These missionaries, who have a total of 416 years of service, are:

Paul and Charlotte Beals, 11 years in Barbados and Belize; Norlyn and Barbara Brough, 2 years in Nicaragua—Costa Rica; Elvin and Evelyn DeVore, 8 years in Haiti and Barbados; Arthur and Dorothy Evans, 16 years in Swaziland and the Philippines; Howard and Norine

Grantz, 24 years in Peru; Roy and Gloria Henck, 38 years in Cape Verde; Phillip and Darlene Kellerman, 16 years in Taiwan; Elva Morden, 24 years in Swaziland; Denny and Betty Owens, 16 years in the Philippines; Harry and Marion Rich, 14 years in Haiti and Rwanda; Donald and Bonita Scarlett, 16 years in South Africa; Thomas and Linda Spaulding, 22 years in Bolivia, Mexico, Panama, and Paraguay; and Wanda Terry, 26 years in Swaziland.

Nazarene Bible College's Accreditation Reaffirmed

According to Nazarene Bible College (NBC) President Hiram Sanders, the college's accreditation has been reaffirmed by the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges (AABC) for a 10-year period. The announcement, made at the recent AABC meeting in St. Petersburg, Fla., comes at the end of the third decade of NBC's history. The accreditation culminates a two-and-a-half-year process of self-study and an extensive evaluation by AABC. NBC has been accredited since 1976.

Highlights of 1997 General Board

The following represent items of significance that were mentioned in the reports for 1996 presented to the General Board during its 1997 session.

World Mission Division

Louie Bustle, director

- Three new countries (Burkina Faso, Congo, and São Tomé and Príncipe) entered for a total of 116 world areas
- 382 new churches started for a total of 6,563 churches in world areas
- 593,864 total members in world areas, of which 36,199 are new Nazarenes
- 665 missionaries, including NIVS and Tentmakers
- 446 Work and Witness teams with 7,868 participants
- Almost \$2.5 million combined income for NCM and Child Sponsorship
- NCM coordinated over 200 projects in 60 countries

NWMS

Nina G. Gunter, director

- NWMS membership totaled 677,999, an increase of 15,316
- NWMS income totaled \$52 million
- 67 percent of churches in the U.S. and Canada overpaid their General Budget
- Mission education credits totaled more than 1,202,000, an increase of 201,000 over the previous year
- First Nazarene World Week of Prayer, which will become an annual event
- Alabaster giving was \$2,384,000, an increase of \$133,000
- 80th Anniversary Project raised \$360,000 for ministerial student scholarships in world mission areas
- Casa Robles 50th Anniversary Offering provided \$150,000 for new furnishings and new minibus

Communications Division

Michael R. Estep, director

- Media International produced full-length documentary on Larry and Addie Garman, missionaries to Peru
- Publications International underwent a major redesign and refocus, with business aspects returning to NPH
- NCN introduced the development of NCN Internet, NCN Program Development, NCN RadioNet, and NCN Satellite Broadcast System
- Over 600 pages and 2,500 hits per day

on the denomination's web site

- Worldwide communications centers were upgraded

Church Growth Division

Bill Sullivan, director

- 105,441 new Nazarenes received, with 93,847 by profession of faith
- 11,857 fully organized churches, an increase of 375
- Resource materials for NewStart were developed. The strategy will be fully implemented in 1997.
- 651 chaplains, including 206 full-time
- 671 certified evangelists, including 36 certified in more than one area
- 700 congregations identified as Good Samaritan churches, an increase of 300
- 100 compassionate ministry centers, an increase of 12 in the past year

Sunday School Ministries

Talmadge Johnson, director

- Weekly average of 698,833 in Sunday School, an increase of 5,887
- 1,330,301 on SS responsibility list, a slight decrease of 0.6 percent
- 36,951 CLT credits earned
- VBS curriculum, "Go for the Gold," broke all records for sales/participation
- 50th birthday for Caravan ministry
- TEACH conferences concluded
- 7 SoloCons, ministering to about 1,000 single adults
- About 2,000 senior adults attended one of six NIROGAs

NYI Ministries

Fred Fullerton, director

- Nazarene Youth Conferences/Congresses held on all six world regions
- Nearly 70 U.S. college students participated in Youth in Mission
- More than 2,000 participated in Encounter, a mission effort in Mexico
- Developed TEAM NYI to train and equip youth workers
- Participated in TEACH conferences in cooperation with SS Ministries

General Secretary/Headquarters Operations Officer

Jack Stone

- 1,216,657 full and associate church members, an increase of 45,367
- 340 districts, an increase of 2
- 245 elders ordained in the U.S. and

Canada and 216 in other world areas

- 34 elders' credentials recognized from other denominations
- 27 deacons ordained

General Treasurer/Headquarters Financial Officer

Robert Foster

- \$571,671,129 raised for all purposes
- \$59.4 million in total income for the general church
- \$35.2 million in General Budget giving
- Almost 4,200 persons received "Basic" Pension Plan benefits
- More than \$11 million in benefit payments
- Planned Giving assisted more than 1,100 families; 53 percent plan to leave part of their estate to the church
- 11 new loans added to General Church Loan Fund, for a total principal amount of \$912,000

International Board of Education

Jerry Lambert, commissioner

- 26,144 students enrolled in 59 Nazarene colleges, universities, or seminaries worldwide
- 7,672 students enrolled in extension centers
- Property and assets worldwide valued at \$330 million
- Plans made for Korea Nazarene Theological College to become a university
- Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary authorized to offer master's degrees
- European Nazarene Bible College and Caribbean Nazarene Theological College pursuing graduate degree programs
- Nazarene Bible College in Papua New Guinea authorized to award degrees
- The Samoa Nazarene Bible College was approved to become South Pacific Nazarene Theological College

Nazarene Publishing House

Bob Brower, president

- 45 new titles published in 1996
- Book sales topped \$2.25 million, an increase of 12 percent
- 3,000 Nazarene churches enrolled in Priority-Plus in less than two months
- WordAction curriculum totaled \$8.8 million in sales, an increase of 8.4 percent
- Novel *A Time to Dream* by Ruth Glover was first-ever NPH book on Christian Best-seller List

MidAmerica Nazarene College Becomes a University

The Board of Trustees voted at its annual meeting in March to make MidAmerica Nazarene College a university, effective May 4 following commencement. The only change will be in the use of the word "university." The name MidAmerica will remain the same, as will the school colors and mascot. The school will use the initials MNU when an abbreviated form is used.

MidAmerica currently offers two graduate degrees as well as professional programs in areas such as education, business, and nursing. In addition, it maintains an international affiliation with European Nazarene



MidAmerica Nazarene University Board of Trustees in front of MNU library.

Bible College, where, in Europe, the word "college" is often used to refer to high-school level studies. Therefore, MidAmerica became a good candidate for university status.

"We've been operating under the model of a university for some time now," said President Richard Spindle. "This change of name simply reflects what our institution has become."

PLNC Conducts Writers Symposium

Storytelling is still important. That was the most recurring message delivered by a diverse group of writers at the recent Writers Symposium by the Sea at Point Loma Nazarene College (PLNC).

The symposium was designed to include Christian writers as well as

writers outside the Christian faith to acknowledge that "good writing still matters to everybody," said Dean Nelson, the symposium director and PLNC journalism professor.

Symposium speakers included Steve Rabey, former religion editor for the Colorado Springs *Gazette Telegraph*; Lois Mowday Rabey, a popular speaker and author; Noel Riley Fitch, former PLNC literature professor and now a full-time biographer; Joseph Wambaugh, best-selling author; and Dennis Morgigno, broadcaster.

Steve and Lois Rabey spoke of their experiences in Christian publishing. "There is great openness today among editors to consider material about God," Steve said. "As one editor told me recently, 'God is hot!'"

According to Nelson, the storytelling theme was emphasized in each presentation. "The world desperately needs people who can communicate the Truth," he said. "This is one of the ways people can get better at that communication."



Author Joseph Wambaugh signs books for PLNC students Michelle Stevens (left) and Jemeli Tanui.

WordAction Announces New Adult Curriculum

WordAction Publishing Company introduces a new adult curriculum for the Church of the Nazarene with the fall '97 quarter, according to Mark Gilroy, director of WordAction.

The new product line, titled *Adult Bible Fellowship*, is the first complete revision of Nazarene adult curriculum since 1976. It will offer exclusive features not available from any other publisher in a single product line.

"*Adult Bible Fellowship* is a response to the changing landscape of adult education," Gilroy said. New features include a stronger emphasis on life application with two complete teaching plans; new, improved format for ease of use; a large-print student book; a young adult leader's satellite for college and career classes; and a creative presentation packet with color transparencies, reproducible handouts, posters, and video.

"I applaud the work of Randy Cloud and the entire Adult Ministries staff in creating curriculum that will meet a broader range of needs found in today's adult classroom, but retains our heritage of providing excellent Bible study resources from a distinctly holiness perspective," said Talmadge Johnson, director of Sunday School Ministries.

Cloud, who serves as executive editor for adult curriculum, is assisted by Larry Morris, editor; Ev Leadingham, Dialog Series editor; Judi King, associate editor; and David Felter, editor of young adult materials.

P&B Luncheon Tradition Continues

Pensions and Benefits USA continues its tradition of hosting a retirees' luncheon at General Assembly. Honored guests will be retired Nazarene ministers on the U.S. Pensions roll and spouses or widowed spouses who receive retirement benefits from P&B. This year's theme, "Dinner on the Grounds," recalls the early ministry experiences of many retirees.

Women's Ministries General Council Meets

The annual meeting of the Women's Ministries General Council was held recently, according to Linda Hardin, Women's Ministries general coordinator. The council is composed of women's ministries leaders from each U.S. educational zone as well as repre-

sentatives from several non-U.S. areas.

The focus of this year's meeting was finalizing the new *Women's Ministries Handbook*, scheduled to be released during the Sunday School Ministries Convention, June 18-20. A new Women's Ministries logo will be released at the convention. According to Hardin, these two products will assist Women's Ministries leaders as they look toward the 21st century.

Other planned events for the convention include a women's ministries luncheon on June 19 with Jeanne McCullough speaking. Also a number of workshops will be offered for those involved in ministry to women.

For more information, contact Linda Hardin at 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131 or call at 816-333-7000.



Women's Ministries General Council. (Row 1, l. to r.) Juanita Lemaster (NNC), Cisca Verwoerd (International), Linda Hardin, Aletha Hinthorn (editor of *Women Alive!*). (Row 2) Nita Evans (consultant), Jamie Johnson (TNU), Judy Fox (NNC), Betty Bowes (MNU), Tamara Tanner (ONU). (Row 3) Elnor Small (Caribbean), Pam Meador (ENC), Cheryl Roland (SNU), Kerrie Palmer (NNC), Jayne Taylor (Canadian). (Not pictured) Norma Brunson (Hispanic), Cindy Smith (PLNC), Alice Piggee-Wallick (African-American).

Severe Weather in the U.S. Affects Nazarenes

Tornadoes in Arkansas and flooding in the Ohio Valley have had devastating effects, causing deaths and destroying property, according to J. V. Morsch, Nazarene Disaster Response field director.

In Arkansas, 14 tornadoes, some with winds over 250 m.p.h., touched down on March 1. Hardest hit was Arkadelphia, where the Church of the Nazarene was leveled and two church families lost their homes.

Abigail Brian, a teen who became a recent Christian through the ministry of the local Nazarene youth director, James Horton, was killed in her home, along with her mother and stepfather. Also killed was a friend, Reeda Coffee, who was visiting Abigail when the tornado hit. Abigail had invited Reeda over so she could share her newfound faith with her.

"The power of God is bringing people together," said Mel Vail, Arkadel-

phia Nazarene pastor. "We have felt God's presence in this disaster, and people are coming to me requesting prayer and finding Him."

In the Ohio Valley Nazarene families and church properties have been flooded throughout the area. Known damages include: the church and parsonage in Rutland, Ohio; churches in New Richmond and Manchester, Ohio; the parsonage in Aberdeen, Ohio; and the churches in Falmouth and New Middletown, Ky.

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries and the Nazarene Disaster Response team are heading up relief efforts. In addition, teams of students from Southern Nazarene University and Mount Vernon Nazarene College have assisted with cleanup.

Donations, qualifying for 10 percent credit, should be sent to the general treasurer's office in Kansas City earmarked for U.S. disaster relief.

NCN to Broadcast General Assembly Via Satellite



The Nazarene Communications Network (NCN) has announced that it will broadcast the 1997 General Assembly evening services June 20-24 and the Sunday morning service June 22. The services, which will be broadcast live from the Alamodome in San Antonio, can be viewed only on the EchoStar's NCN Dish TV Network satellite system.

The standard satellite system with an 18-inch dish costs \$499. The price includes EchoStar's first year of programming. The premium system, which is equipped so additional receivers can be added to the same dish at the same location, costs \$599. A minimal monthly fee to receive the NCN channel in a church is based on church membership. A residential fee is also available for those installing a system in the home.

To purchase the NCN Dish TV Network satellite system, call toll free 1-888-663-8975.

Salvation Army Chooses WordAction Curriculum

The Salvation Army has endorsed WordAction as its primary Sunday School curriculum in the U.S., effective with the December 1997 quarter, according to Mark Gilroy, director of WordAction Publishing Company.

"We are very pleased with the educational design, quality of resources, and theological perspective found within WordAction," said Lt. Col. Sharon Ulyat, national consultant for Christian education for the Salvation Army. "We look forward to a long, mutually beneficial relationship with WordAction."

Bob Brower, president of Nazarene Publishing House, said, "The decision of the Salvation Army confirms what Nazarenes everywhere are already aware of: WordAction now provides the finest curriculum materials available."

Devotion and Duty in Deuteronomy

What Price Purity?

ROGER L. HAHN



Roger L. Hahn is professor of New Testament at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

*You will not heed the words of that prophet or that interpreter of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul-life. You will walk after the LORD your God and you will fear him, you will keep his commandments and heed his voice. You will serve him and you will cling to him. And that prophet or interpreter of dreams shall be put to death because he spoke rebellion against the LORD your God (Deuteronomy 13:3-5a).**

OUR AGE IS A TIME OF TOLERANCE and openness to almost any point of view. It seems that the only sin our society is willing to condemn is single-minded commitment to absolute truth. Deuteronomy 13 describes a standard of devotion to God that is even hard for most of us to imagine. It is easy for us to be caught up in the harshness of God's demands and to forget the devotion He desires.

Three times Deuteronomy 13 calls on Israel to put to death people we rarely consider guilty of any crime. Verses 1-5 speak of prophets and interpreters of dreams whose prophecies and dreams come true. Such spiritual power impressed ancient peoples and impresses many today. But if they should suggest that Israel follow any god or gods other

than the Lord, those powerful spiritual figures were to be put to death. Verse 5 states, "Thus you shall purge evil from your midst." No claims or evidences of spiritual power can stand above the first commandment of single-hearted devotion to the Lord.

Verses 6-11 speak of the closest personal relationships: brothers and sisters, parents and children, loving spouses, and even best friends. Should one person in the relationship entice the other to idolatry, that person was to be killed without mercy. Verse 9 commands that the person who had been enticed was to be the first to seek the other's death. Such violent devotion to God is repulsive to most modern people. Perhaps it should be, but the casualness of modern religious tolerance that militates against genuine commitment is even more repulsive to God. The point of such violence, according to verse 11, is to extinguish blatantly idolatrous temptation by those who claim to belong to God's people.

Verses 12-18 speak of neighboring towns turning from the true worship of the Lord to idolatry. Once again the prescribed penalty is annihilation—not only of every person in that neighboring town but even of animals. Verse 14 provides that a thorough investigation is to be made to establish the truth of the matter. Condemnation of innocent victims of slander is not God's way. But it is interesting that these verses extend the responsibility of a people beyond their own community. The purity of the whole community of faith is the concern of every part of the community of faith.

The severity of the response in Deuteronomy 13 does not reflect the grace that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. But verse 3 points out that

every time the enticement to disobey God comes—whether from so-called spiritual leaders or our closest friends or the town in the next county—we are being tested. The enticement to compromise our commitment to God tests whether we love the Lord with all of our heart and every bit of our life energy. In the light of New Testament revelation, execution of the tempters is not acceptable. Neither is indifference to the presence of such temptation. Unless we are willing to pay the price to purge evil from our midst, it will only increase.

Verse 4 sums the matter positively. It calls for obedience, reverence, and service to God. But the final phrase is most powerful. The reader of Deuteronomy is commanded to "cling" to God. The Hebrew word for "cling" is that same word used in Genesis 2:24, where God calls on a man to leave his parents and "cling" to his wife. The intimacy and devotion of the biblical concept of a "one flesh" marriage is the picture Deuteronomy 13:4 holds up for us in our relationship with God. When our relationship with God is characterized by that kind of intimacy and devotion, we will be intolerant of any competition for our commitment. But the God whom we love will surely teach us the most gracious way to express that intolerance.

For further study: (1) Study Matthew 5:29-30 and 18:8-9 in the context of

"Thus you shall purge evil from your midst."

their surrounding verses. Even if they are understood figuratively, what do these verses say about the price for purity? (2) Compare and contrast the message of Deuteronomy 13 with that of 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 and 6:14-7:1. (3) Write a prayer asking the Lord to reveal areas of your life in which you are too tolerant of temptation. Ask Him to show the way to gracious intolerance of those temptations.

*Scripture quotations are the author's own translation.



Child Abuse

Congratulations on your fine article about child abuse (Jan. '97). I read the article and passed it on to the mental health organization in my community. It's time we as churches are aware of the problem and are educated about this touchy subject. It does happen, and in our Christian society. No longer can we pretend it can't happen in "our church."

Why do I feel so strongly about this subject? Many years I was a victim of sexual abuse. I turned to my church. They would not listen nor help. Come, Christians, it does happen, and we need to have a listening ear, a loving heart, and a praying heart. If they cannot turn to the church, we are failing. Many . . . hear verbal abuse. We need to be there for them. . . . Abuse does exist in Christian homes. We need as churches to be aware and educated as how to deal with it. And yes, we do need more articles on these tender subjects. Christians, wake up, it does happen, and in your community. It can and does happen in our churches.

*Helen Wittung
Van Wert, Ohio*

One Book

Thank you for your timely reminder to carefully savor and consume the Word of God ("Reading for Holiness," Oct. '96). In this day and age glutted with self-help books and a plethora of religious titles, it's refreshing to again hear the call to be a people of one book. God help us to, as you suggest, *metanoia* (turn back) to the Word and take the time to chew on its inspired texts.

*Steve Brown
San Bruno, Calif.*

Cosmic Dividends

Thanks! I needed that! I'm referring to "Cosmic Dividends" by Dr. Paul G. Cunningham in the January 1997 issue.

After being faced with all the hype about church growth and the categorization of people groups that we must reach along with the "if your church is over 50 years old . . . it's dead" thinking, it is refreshing to see that there is value in the established church. I know the one I pastor has been a producing church, and there is no room on annual report forms to list all the moves and changes that my church goes through in a year's time.

No, it's "just the facts, ma'am" on the annual report, plus give or take 60 seconds to give a meaningful report about your ministry. Now, I'm not bitter, it's just the facts as I see them.

I appreciate Dr. Cunningham's sharing about the value of the local church. It's nice to know the smaller church is truly remembered and shares a vital place in the ministry of the church.

It made my day!

*Duane Vaughn
Fallon, Nev.*

ADHD Articles Still Helping

I have recently learned something wonderful about the use of the articles from the June 1996 issue concerning the ADHD child. I just had to let you know about it.

One of our newest Christians has an ADHD son and had been called to her son's school for a conference concerning her son's behavior. She loved the article in the *Herald* so much that she shared it with her son's teachers. It was then copied and circulated among the faculty. The woman has also shared the article with friends and family who have ADHD children.

We are just a small home mission church, but it is great to see the results of what can happen when one person shares with another. . . . The *Herald* has been a wonderful outreach tool.

*Lisa Tuemler
Cherokee, N.C.*

Simple Sanctification

Thank you for printing the article "Entire Sanctification: The Questions You Asked" by Frank Moore (Mar. '97). I cannot tell you how refreshing it was for me, as a lifelong Nazarene, to actually see the experience of sanctification put in simple terms. My husband and I are involved in ministry with thousands of teens in our denomination every year and witness firsthand the misunder-

Continued on page 41

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Bangladesh

MICHAEL R. ESTEP



Michael R. Estep is director of the Communications Division, Church of the Nazarene.

SUKAMAL BISWAS IS AN AMAZING leader. He is district superintendent of one of our newest evangelism efforts in South Asia. His district covers the country of Bangladesh, with a population of 132,219,000. What a harvest field!

District Superintendent Biswas has developed a leadership core of lay pastors to evangelize the villages in an effort to bring his people to Christ and to meet their needs through compassionate evangelism.

It takes a total commitment to be a leader in Bangladesh. Once you have come to Christ, District Superintendent Biswas believes you should immediately express your commitment in the stewardship of your life and possessions, especially if you are going to be a lay pastor.

Andreas Mahali is one of these dedicated and committed leaders. Pastor Mahali gave 10 percent of all he owned when he came to Jesus, including 10 percent of the land he and his family owned in his village. Mahali, having heard about his responsibility as a Christian to tithe, felt he should

give God all that he had accumulated up to the time of his conversion. That is stewardship!

Arlen Jakobitz, South Asia field director, and Rev. Biswas attended a Nazarene Compassionate Ministries rally in one of the villages where Mahali is taking the message of Christ. They were there for a dedication service of a new Alabaster chapel that was built on the land given to the church by Pastor Mahali and his family.

Little did Missionary Jakobitz know that he and District Superintendent Biswas would baptize 300 new converts into the fellowship of believers. Five house churches had produced these new believers, as the church is spreading rapidly under the leadership of Pastor Mahali.

The leader of the village was there to greet them. Months before, Mahali had approached him to ask if he could share Christ with the people of his village. The village leader was not sure at first but finally agreed. The leader told the lay pastor that he and

his wife had hoped for a baby to be born into their family, but after 14 years, nothing had happened. Pastor Mahali asked if he could pray to the God who could hear and answer their prayer for a baby. Permission was granted.

Now, months later, the village leader and his wife were present in that same service to have their new baby dedicated to God. The "miracle" baby has become a sign of the God who has brought hope to their village. Now hundreds of people have come to Jesus. And hundreds more will.

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**The
"miracle" baby
became a sign
of the God who
brings hope.**



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Some Things You Don't Forget

WESLEY D. TRACY



THIRTY-SIX YEARS HAD SWISHED and plodded by since we had all been together. But a few weeks ago, all five of the Tracy kids assembled in Nampa, Idaho. Like dark chocolate, the occasion tasted both sweet and bitter. Hovering over our delight in seeing each other was the grinding reality of what had brought us together. We had come to put our mother in a nursing home.

"Alzheimer's," the doctor said. So we had gathered to catch up on old times, examine the options, and to hug our 86-year-old, 97-pound mom and try to help her with a permanent change of address.

With Alzheimer's you forget things like dates, appointments, and whether or not you have taken your medication. At first Mom didn't recognize one of her daughters, but she soon got all of us straightened out. She was overjoyed at seeing all of us at once. "I'm so happy," she said, "I could just tell the Lord to take me home to heaven."

With Alzheimer's you forget things. During one of our sorties into the treasured past, Mom accused me of an ornery stunt that my kid brother (Rev. Jim Tracy) had done. A few minutes later she did it again. With Alzheimer's you forget things.

We went through old photographs and talked of things past and pleasant. We spoke of when Mother used to

read to us at night. We lived in a fairly primitive home in the Missouri Ozarks. Reading material was scarce. We never read anything just once—we never read anything just three times. From somewhere we had obtained a few volumes of the *Book of Knowledge*. One long poem, "The Arab and His Steed," touched me every time Mom read it to us. It was about loyalty being stronger than the lure of gold. I asked Mom if she remembered that poem. She did not. With Alzheimer's you forget things.

But it was while I listened to Mom read some of those stories and poems more than half a century ago that I found myself saying, "Someday I want to write like that." Just one more thing that I owe to my mother.

I have never gotten over that drive to write. In fact, when I was seeking sanctifying grace, writing was one of the things that had to go on the altar. I had to promise the Lord that I would never write again. But after I relinquished it, the Lord found ways to give it back.

We gathered around my sister Imogene's table for lunch. There we were, five kids, Mom, and my brother-in-law, Al Morton. We joined hands for the table grace. Al was our host. He called on Mom to pray. Didn't he know that with Alzheimer's you forget things? What if?

Mom began at once, "O Lord, we praise Thy holy name and thank Thee for every person at this table . . ."

Oh, good, in a proper theological prayer, one is supposed to start with praise and thanksgiving—though you don't have to use King James English.

Next, she moved to the petition part of the prayer. "Help each one here at

this table to live for one thing, and one thing alone—the glory of God."

Wonderful, perfect theological prioritizing. Had Mom been reading the Westminster Catechism? You know, the part about the "chief end of man" being "to glorify God." It took me several theological degrees to discover where this went in a prayer. But that was not only a theological priority—she knew what her kids needed as the supreme life value.

At the end of the prayer she came to a personal request—that's where personal petitions go in a proper prayer, you know. We are not supposed to just butt into the Divine Presence and start bawling out our latest felt need. Last of all, Mom prayed, "And, O Lord, help me get through this [Alzheimer's]. O Lord, You know what I need."

Speaking as a theological professional, it was a perfect prayer.

With Alzheimer's you forget things. But when you have lived in almost

Why would anyone call on an Alzheimer's patient to lead in prayer?

constant dialogue with God for more than 65 years, maybe, even with Alzheimer's, you don't forget how to pray.

Or even if you can't say the words, don't your prayers become (according to Romans 8:26-27) "groanings which cannot be uttered" that are winged to the throne by the Holy Spirit, where they are understood perfectly? **H**

Adventures in Christian Parenting

A Lesson from Balking Computers

JERRY AND LYNDA COHAGAN



Jerry Cohagan is one half of the comedy-drama duo, Hicks and Cohagan. Lynda is a high school English teacher in Olathe, Kansas.

A DOZEN YEARS AGO, when Jerry purchased his first personal computer, he lugged the Tandy home, hauled it out of the box, plugged in all the tentacles, and proceeded to read the first sentence in the concordance-sized manual that simply stated to “boot it up.” Looking around for a stirrup or a foot pedal and finding neither, the man from Wyoming decisively boxed up the Tandy and toted it back to Radio Shack. If they couldn’t say “turn it on” in plain English, then Jerry wasn’t ready for the electronic age.

Three computers later, not much has changed. Always ready to look for a bargain, we ventured out to buy a new computer just after Christmas. We found a place that was offering a free monitor with a PC purchase, and we readily bought the last one—the floor model—along with an extended three-year warranty. This time, thoroughly versed in the techno-language of modern day (and having a six-year-old who can explain any term we don’t understand), there was no hesitation “booting up” our new computer. At least not on our part.

The computer, however, didn’t seem to like being “booted.” Instead, it responded with short, encrypted mes-

sages, such as, “Error: Hardware Problem” or “Error: Auto-Ready Detection.” We immediately turned to the convenient toll-free, 24-hour-a-day help line that came with our warranty. After going through several recorded menus and being channeled to more recorded menus, we eventually arrived at yet another cyber-voice informing us that all their operators were busy and to “please try back later,” followed by a dial tone.

After a week of this, we packed up the computer and headed back to the store. They smiled and greeted us warmly and informed us that we couldn’t return it to this store. However, if we would like to drive 45 miles (which was way out of our way) to their other store, they would be happy to exchange it for us. Having nothing better to do with our weekend, we nodded like sheep led to slaughter and headed north.

To make a long story even longer, the replacement computer “booted up” just fine but refused to shut up. Instead, it proceeded to do what can only be described as “coughing.” Sometimes it sounded more like it was trying to clear its throat. But, more often than not, it was a consistent, dry, hacking kind of cough. Chase said it had caught a virus, obviously.

After another week of toll-free roulette, we once again trooped into the store, this time demanding our money back. The smiling faces looked slightly injured and informed us that they had a two-week return policy and our time was expired. Hagglng time. Victory!

Trudging back home with our third computer, feeling much like the wandering children of Israel in their 40th year, we unpacked and plugged in. Our ears were greeted with the sound of sizzling bacon. Jerry immediately laid his hands

on the demented tower and cried, “Evil spirit of the Pentium, come out!” It continued to cook breakfast. He sighed, shut it off, and we all went to bed.

The next morning at 5:00, Lynda snuck up on the phone and dialed the toll-free help line. Without a hitch, she found herself speaking to a living, breathing human being! With plenty of wailing and gnashing of teeth, she explained our torment. The voice said, “You need to shut off the power management option.” Four mouse clicks later, our problem was resolved. The voice then informed Lynda there would be no charge since we had wisely purchased the three-year extended warranty. “If you have any questions, don’t hesitate to give us a call.” Click. Dial tone.

Whenever we go near the computer these days, we “hesitate.” Chase and Tori boldly go where neither one of us has gone before. It’s true, “You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.” Therefore, the tricks you already know better be good ones, and they better last you a lifetime. We want our kids to know God better than they know how to “drag and drop.” We want them to cling to a loving God who will help them maneuver their way through external options, having made an internal choice. And we

Kids need a relationship with Jesus—a warranty that never expires.

want them to have a relationship with Jesus—a warranty that never expires. Oh, yeah—you can always get through too.

Well, Tori just came in and asked us to “boot up the bathtub” for her. We know what that means now, so I guess we’ve conquered our fear. After all, this article was written using our new computer. It’s really pretty simple once you knoo wht ururi dindgn asdktp^e dkd-ksoe!~jj&\$!!!

HH

1997 General NYI Convention

General NYI Convention brings together youth representatives from around the globe to celebrate our heritage and set the direction for our future. A highlight of the convention is always the exciting "late nite" activities and meal functions sponsored by NYI. This year is no exception—you and your youth will want to participate in these fun activities:

NYI World Party

Wednesday, June 18

Following the Opening Service, NYI will host this international fiesta, with each world area sponsoring a portion of the party by decorating it in the styles of their respective cultural traditions. Music, food, and "souvenirs" from different cultures around the globe . . . what a way to kick off the week!

Celebration Rally & Planet Pizza

Friday, June 20

Celebrate the work God has done in San Antonio through the "One Heart—Many Hands" service project. We will also announce the host city for Nazarene Youth Congress '99 . . . and eat pizza 'til we pop!

Roam the River

Thursday, June 19

Roam the fabulous San Antonio Riverwalk, home to hundreds of restaurants and shops and affordable riverboat cruises for groups. You'll want to gather at the Villita Assembly Hall where NYI will be sponsoring hot dogs, hamburgers and great Christian bands.

Fiesta Texas "Fun in the Sun"

Saturday, June 21

Spend a day with your family and youth group at this awesome Six Flags amusement park in San Antonio.

DISCOUNT ACTIVITY TICKET PACKAGES!

If you order tickets for all four Late Nite Activities by May 1, you'll receive your tickets at a discounted rate of \$40! Take advantage of this opportunity! All single ticket orders must be received by June 1 in order to qualify for the advance purchase rate. Don't wait . . . order your tickets now!

Late Nite Activities & Meal Functions

District NYI Council Luncheon

Thursday, June 19 / 12:15PM / Marriott Rivercenter

District leadership is essential to an effective youth ministry. All District NYI Council members are invited to this special lunch.

Teen Bible Quizzing Reunion Dinner

Friday, June 20 / 5:30PM / Institute of Texan Cultures

If you've ever been involved in this exciting program throughout the years, you'll definitely want to be at the first-ever Quizzing Reunion Dinner! See old friends, enjoy a good meal, and celebrate the rich heritage of the teen Bible quizzing program.

Professional Youth Ministers' Luncheon

Saturday, June 21 / Fiesta Texas

All professional youth ministers are invited to join NYI for lunch at Fiesta Texas. More information will be sent directly to professional youth workers.

Youth In Mission Reunion Dinner

Saturday, June 21 / 5:00PM / Marriott Rivercenter

Attention all Youth In Mission alumni! Anyone who's ever participated in Youth In Mission or Student Mission Corps will want to help celebrate the past 30 years of Nazarene college-age missions.

Order your tickets now!!

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Make checks payable to "General Treasurer, Church of the Nazarene"; return this form, with your check or money order, to:

1997 NYI CONVENTION ACTIVITIES
NYI MINISTRIES
6401 THE PASEO
KANSAS CITY MO 64131

ADVANCE TICKET SALES

All advance ticket orders must be postmarked by 6/1/97

# OF TICKETS	NYI MEAL FUNCTIONS	COST	TOTAL
	District NYI Council Luncheon	\$18	
	Teen Quizzing Reunion Dinner	\$15	
	Youth In Mission Reunion Dinner	\$25	
# OF TICKETS	LATE NITE ACTIVITIES	COST	TOTAL
	NYI World Party	\$8	
	Roam the River	\$8	
	NYI Celebration Rally and Planet Pizza	\$7	
	Fiesta Texas "Fun in the Sun"	\$22	
	DISCOUNT TICKET PACKAGE (all 4 events) <small>*all discount package orders must be postmarked by 5/1/97</small>	\$40	

TOTAL DUE _____



THE UNHERALDED



by J. Wesley Eby

Maria Rodriguez— Blessed to Be a Blessing

God has blessed us so much!" Maria Rodriguez, a wife and mother of five, cannot speak without giving a praise offering to her Lord. Her family's story is one of miracle after miracle after miracle, and she delights in sharing the wonders of God's grace and blessing in their lives.

Five years ago, the Rodriguezes lived in Mercedes, a small town in the southern tip of Texas on the Mexico border. Raised in a Nazarene home, Maria strongly desired that her children receive a Nazarene education. She dreamed of her kids attending Southern Nazarene University, a dream that persisted even after she suffered a stroke requiring physical and speech therapy. "I believe every Christian parent should strive to give their children a Christian education," Maria stated. "Even when it seems impossible, you just have to trust in God."

Trust was—and *is*—a way of life for Maria. She and her husband, Roy, sold everything they had, cashed their last paycheck, packed their few belongings, squeezed their five children into their car, and started on a journey of faith. Leaving their home in Texas, they made the 12-hour trip to Bethany, Oklahoma, to enroll their oldest daughter, Lissa, in school. "We had little money, but God said go, so we went," Maria confessed.

Arriving in Bethany, the Rodriguezes had no prospect of house or job. Yet they had a big faith in God, and the miracles began. Within a week, the Rodriguezes were in a home, utilities turned on, appliances hooked up, furniture in place, cooking utensils in the cupboards, and curtains on the windows—all gifts from God's family. "God blessed us so much that we were overwhelmed," Maria declared.

That miracle took place in 1992. Today, and dozens of miracles later, Maria's faith

has been rewarded and her dreams realized. Not only her daughter Lissa, but her husband and all her children are students at Southern Nazarene University (SNU).

Let's meet Maria's family. Roy Sr., a junior, business major. Roy Jr., 26, a junior, Spanish major. Lissa, 22, a senior, Spanish major. Roberto, 20, a junior, church music and religion major. Lili and Lori, 19-year-old twins, sophomores, premed majors. In addition, Roy Jr. is married, and his wife, Kristine, is also a student.

"And now I'm a grandmother too." Maria lovingly spoke of Ariana, her first grandchild and Roy Jr.'s daughter. "How God has blessed my family!"

Scholarships. Loans. Jobs. And, of course, *miracles*. That's how six people—all from one family—can attend SNU at the same time.

Yes, *miracles*. Let me relate three more.

The Rodriguezes were down to their last dollar, and Roy Sr. used it for gasoline to drive to a job interview. The Rodriguezes had been in Bethany three weeks. Although God had provided a home, and even some school supplies, there was no job. Still, their faith did not waver. "It's funny, I guess. I don't even remember being worried. I just remember thinking, God has taken care of us this far, and He'll provide today." Out of 80 applicants, Roy Sr. was selected for the job, creating a grin as big as his faith.

One time Lori and Lili did not have enough money to buy needed texts. Then a \$500 check arrived in the mail, enough for books—and more!

One year Roberto had been saving money for a car so the family of seven would have another mode of transportation to school and work. However, he felt God impress him to give the money to missions, and, in obedience, he donated the money to the church.

**SIX PEOPLE—
ALL FROM
ONE FAMILY—
ATTEND SNU
AT THE
SAME TIME.**

Three days before Christmas, the Rodriguezes looked out their front window and spied a little blue Chevy with a huge red bow on the hood. In their mailbox they found the vehicle title made out to Roberto. To this day the generous giver remains anonymous.

"We came with nothing but faith," Maria testified. "And now we have more than we could have ever imagined. Just see how God has blessed us."

Mom Rodriguez cannot talk for long—no more than 60 seconds at most—without referring to her children. They are more than important to her—they seem to be the very essence of her life. "God has continued to bless my family in every way," she said.

For example, Lissa is spending the 1996-97 school year in Spain, working with Nazarene tentmaker missionaries in Barcelona. She helps with children's and youth programs as well as tutoring the pastor's child in English. "It's been hard on me to have Lissa so far from home, but I'm so proud of what she is doing," Maria admitted. Lissa's future plans include returning to SNU for her senior year, graduating in 1998, and then pursuing a call to missions.

Three more of the Rodriguez family—Roberto, Lili, and Lori—also plan to be missionaries. Roberto, who received a mission call as a seven-year-old lad, feels led to go to Russia. Lori and Lili, both premed majors, believe God is directing them into medical missions as doctors.

"By a miracle," Maria reported, "God helped our whole family to be a part of Encounter '96 in Mexico. Before that, the twins were majoring in animal science and agriculture, but after Encounter '96 they changed to medicine." The Lord of the harvest used a mission trip to call two of Maria's children to help reap the harvest.

While pursuing their studies, the Rodriguezes stay busy in other activities. Roberto has been a member of the University Singers since his first year at SNU, which is an honor for anyone and a rarity for a freshman. Lili and Lori serve as managers for the women's basketball team. "Our children share their faith

I GIVE ALL THE GLORY TO GOD. HE HAS BLESSED ME FAR MORE THAN I DESERVE."

wherever they are and whatever they are doing," Mom Rodriguez said. "How blessed we are that they know the Lord."

The Rodriguezes are active members of Bethany First Church of the Nazarene. Regularly, Maria and her children visit hospitals, nursing homes, and shut-ins. By word and song, they share the message of hope and faith that brought them to SNU. Roberto, with his guitar, sings about God's grace while his siblings support him on any number of instruments—flute, clarinet, French horn, trombone, or trumpet. "I have kids who know God," Maria proudly said. "It's wonderful to see all that you've taught your children bounce back and hit you."

Several SNU students have adopted Maria as their away-from-home mom. "Many of them call me Mom," she commented, "and I'm honored they feel that way." Maria willingly shares what she has with university students, just as others have shared so much with her family. For the past two Thanksgivings, she has prepared a holiday feast for students who are unable to go home. She secured permission from Loren Gresham, SNU president, to have the dinner on campus. This past year, 25 students joined her family and shared in the Thanksgiving celebration. "The Lord blessed us and provided the food," she remarked.

Loving mother. Adopted mom. Devoted wife. Stroke victim. Enthusiastic witness. Faith-filled Christian. Humble servant. Unheralded saint. All these phrases appropriately describe Maria Rodriguez.

Yet, one more demands to be mentioned: *eager student*. Maria is looking forward to becoming a student too. With a goal to become a counselor, she hopes to join her family this fall as a collegian.

Maria is one of the unheralded who deserves to be heralded. But she is the first one to say, "I give all the glory to God. He has blessed me far more than I deserve." **HH**



The Rodriguez family on the campus of Southern Nazarene University (l. to r.): Lili, Roy Sr., Lori, Maria, Roberto, Lissa, and Roy Jr.

Appreciation is extended to Toby Rowland, SNU media relations director, for sharing this story.

THE NAZARENE CHURCH SPARKS THE Painter of Light

by Marlo M. Schalesky

Thomas Kinkade, raised in the Placerville, California, Church of the Nazarene, has become the most published artist in the world.

Nearly 30 years ago, a small boy named Tommy sat beside his mother at the Placerville Church of the Nazarene. With his hands clasped to a worn sketchbook and his feet swinging beneath the pew, he listened as Pastor Hughes spoke about the Light of the World. Behind him, two old saints muttered their heartfelt “Amen” as families flipped through their Bibles, eager to find the pastor’s reference. And all the time, Tommy watched, and listened, and learned.

Little did those Nazarenes know that God was using them to raise up for himself a minister unlike any other of our day. That little boy grew up to be Thomas Kinkade, who, in his 12th year as a published painter, has already become the most published artist in the world. Dubbed “The Painter of Light,” Kinkade uses a style called luminism, a means of taking light that is reflected on the surfaces of the paint and literally crafting the painting so that it glows from within. And that light, Kinkade believes, draws people to Christ. “If a painting is in-

fused with the light of Christ,” he says, “it can be a contact point for the gospel. When people see the Painter of Light, I am quick to point them to the One who said, ‘I am the light of the world’” (John 8:12).

This year alone, through the sales of Kinkade’s work, that Light will enter roughly one in every 20 homes in America. Even now, Kinkade receives over 200 letters a

month from people who tell him how his work has imparted the peace of the Lord into their lives. Over a dozen of those letters include testimonies of people who were led to a saving knowledge of Christ in front of a Thomas Kinkade painting.

And it all started in that little Nazarene church almost three decades ago. From when he was 7 years old until he left for college 11 years later, Kinkade attended the Placerville Church of the Nazarene with his mother and siblings. “The thing that impressed me as a child,” he says, “was that there was a real love of the Word of God among the people within the fellowship, and there was also a passion to serve God. This caught on to me very deeply, and I began to view myself as a servant of God, as someone whose life was really dedicated to the Lord. And so I think that’s where my ministry as the Painter of Light was really born.”

Through seeing Nazarenes whose walk with God was the central thing in their lives, Kinkade began to understand that, even as an artist, he was to be a messenger of the





Hyde Street and the Bay, San Francisco

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gospel. He says, “I began to formulate in my mind that we are all parts of the Body of Christ, full-time. [So, after] I really came to a saving knowledge of Christ . . . I realized that God had called me to paint for the Kingdom. I didn’t know what that meant, but I had in

my heart this knowledge that I was a minister of the gospel through the talents God had given me.”

Today, Kinkadee’s light-infused cottages, quiet countrysides, idyllic gardens, and romantic city streets fill homes and businesses. They have become his “frontline

ministry for Christ.” “When people see the light,” he says, “I believe it is an outgrowth of Matthew 5:16: ‘Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven’” (NKJV).

Kinkadee points out that many

people will not pick up a book by Billy Graham or listen to the latest Sandi Patty tape, but they will buy a painting. As he asserts, "Art is a universal language. Its beauty is a universal tool, and people can be drawn to it. They can be warmed by the light they see within those paintings. And we know that light points them to Christ."

His work also points to a philosophy of life that flies in the face of the '90s rat race. "We live in an era," Kinkade says, "where the basic humanity God intended us to have is robbed because of the frenzy that takes our lives and turns us

KINKADE RECEIVES OVER 200 LETTERS A MONTH FROM PEOPLE WHO TELL HIM HOW HIS WORK HAS IMPARTED THE PEACE OF THE LORD INTO THEIR LIVES.

into creatures who are striving, rather than at peace. We have been fed a message that if we just get enough technology into our lives, if we can get on the Internet and get our kids computer literate by age six, and get enough televisions in the home, and a portable fax machine clipped to our belt next to our portable phone—once we get all that technology into our lives—then we'll have 30 seconds to sit and enjoy the sunshine, watch our children play, and have a moment of peace. The fact is, that 30 seconds is not coming."

But, through his paintings, Kinkade hopes to change that. He says, "I try to paint a lifestyle of



peace, hope, faith in God, faith in your family, faith in one another, and a return to the simpler way of living."

For him, the keys to this simpler life are "a walk with God and a committed, loving relationship with your family. Those two things

put everything else in perspective" (*Paintings of Radiant Light*, 23). Here again, Kinkade's Nazarene background laid the foundation for his life's philosophy.

As a child of divorced parents, Kinkade says, "Another thing that really struck me about my affilia-



Sunday Evening Sleighride

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tion with the Nazarene church as a child was its emphasis on family. There were a lot of large families in our church at that time. And they had something I never had, which was a complete family—a

father, a mother, and children, all together. And I just had this vision painted in my heart that, despite the fact that my parents had messed up and ruined their marriage, there was no reason that in-

sanity had to continue. I had this desire to have a God-centered, Christ-centered marriage that lasted forever. And God has gracious-

Continued on page 32



Peace—65 Years Late

by Lynn Woods as told to Marion Duckworth

Anger, bitterness, and resentment against the people who'd spoken against my dad turned me to stone inside.

Can I help you?" I explained to the woman in the office of vital statistics I was seeking information about my parents and thought they might have lived in this part of Minnesota 65 years ago. She disappeared into a vault and returned, hauling an armload of record books.

A former employee, who just happened to be visiting that day, knew everything about the records. When she came up with my father's death certificate, I kept asking myself if it could be an accident that the one person who knew where to look just "happened" to be there.

After I returned home to Oregon, the manager of the vital statistics office sent me a letter. "I've been thinking about you since you left." When I read that she thought she'd found out my mother's name, I became excited.

I'd been on a long, often painful journey. My biological mother had left me with relatives when I was an infant; she wasn't able to keep me. Later, she discovered that I was being neglected and released me to the state of Minnesota for adoption. I lived in foster homes and orphanages until I was adopted as a four-year-old lad.

My first recollection is being carried on a doctor's shoulders down a hospital corridor. He turned to my adoptive mother and, because I was so severely malnourished, said, "I'm not sure this boy will live." I was terrified.

My adoptive parents, Lloyd and Bertha Williams,* lovingly nursed me back to health, and I settled into the comfortable life of a Min-

nesota country boy—until July 30, 1931, when I was 10 years old, that is.

Before that memorable day, Dad had been quieter than usual. I'd find him sitting and looking out the window a lot—something he didn't usually do. He didn't have time. In addition to being a deputy sheriff in our little town, he owned and operated a garage and had recently added a service station. He was also clerk of the school board and the one who ran a farm that the school district owned.

NO MATTER HOW HARD I PULLED, I WAS UNABLE TO EXTRICATE HER. SHE DIED IN THE FIRE!

One evening in mid-July, my mother took me to the school, where a board meeting was going on. We sat outside and listened through the open windows. I was shocked to see person after person criticize my father for not making payments on the farm.

How can they talk to him like that? These people are his customers. They've bought cars from him. I thought they were his friends.

Dad only spoke once. "If you'd pay the money you owe me, I could pay my bills." I was sick with embarrassment and sorrow.

The morning of July 30, Dad called me into the kitchen. "I've heard rumors that you're telling people I'm going bankrupt." I was

shocked, speechless. I didn't know anything about it.

He sent me back outside to play. About 15 minutes later, I heard a loud bang from the house, raced in, and found Mother hysterical. Dad was in the living room, dead. He'd put his sheriff's pistol to his head.

Anger, bitterness, and resentment toward the people who'd spoken against my dad turned me to stone inside. Mom and I had to sweat to survive. Nearly every minute that I wasn't in school, I had to help run the service station, assist with chores at home, or go with Mom into the country to try to collect money owed us so we could stay in business. I barely had time left to eat and sleep.

In spite of my schedule, I graduated from high school with honors. Then I joined the marines.

In 1945 I learned that Mother had terminal cancer. She died in the middle of the night on December 21 as

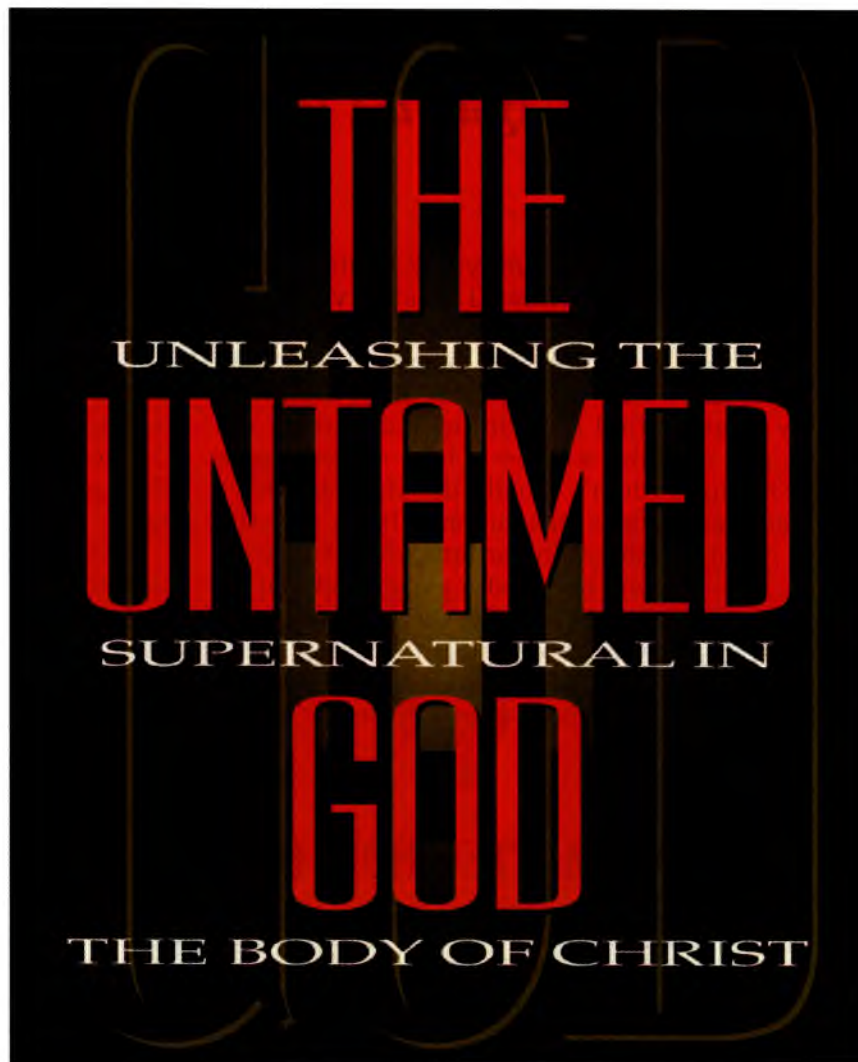
I held her in my arms.

Exactly one month later, I was working in the service station—now I was out of the Marines—when I heard the fire siren. Flames were shooting from the family home a block away. Firefighters were helpless to put it out because the water in the hoses was frozen.

My grandmother was in the house. I ran inside and up the stairs, yelling for her, but the fire drove me back. Rushing outside, I saw her, screaming and looking from an attic window. Grabbing a ladder, I climbed up and pulled on her as hard as I could. Flames billowed behind her white hair, and she begged me to help her. But no

Continued on page 35

*Names have been changed to ensure privacy.



by Neil B. Wiseman

A fascination keeps growing in our society about the supernatural. In response, newspapers, magazines, and TV often focus on the mystical and mysterious and on crystals and Eastern meditation. Since the supernatural has been the sphere of the people of God for generations, this seems like a good time to take back what we lost. With his usual energy, Neil B. Wiseman challenges the Church of Jesus Christ to rekindle a radical dependence on God. This article is excerpted from *The Untamed God: Unleashing the Supernatural in the Body of Christ*, a new book from Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City.

W Why do we need more emphasis on the supernatural in the church now?

Consider the spiritual sterility and inner dryness all around us. We are confused by institutions that disappoint us, like hospitals, schools, churches, government, and welfare programs. We are bankrupted of values. We are disappointed by leaders. We worry about how crippled our churches have become. We are disillusioned by the mistaken promises

of science. We need God. We need His enablement for serving, His guidance for decisions, His anointing for preaching, His presence for caring, and His majesty in worship.

• Dr. John C. Maxwell, in the preface of this book, writes: “Sadly, too many contemporary churches have lost their grip on the power that makes them a unique force in the world today—the supernatural, transforming, life-changing power of Christ. That’s a perilous mistake.”

In spite of the search in society, too much of the church world is silent about the supernatural, miracu-

lous, and transcendent. Too often, any force, experience, or happening that cannot be seen, touched, or defined is downplayed or ignored. As a result, creation, the Incarnation, miracles recorded in Scripture, and the Resurrection—all awesome wonders of biblical faith—are lost to a new generation and no longer create joyous awe in the people of God.

Let's define supernatural.

In day-by-day operational terms in any congregation, the supernatural means enablement from God to shape thoughts, challenge wills, win affections, nurture emotions, and cherish fellowship so as to develop an ongoing maturity in Christ. "Supernatural" describes any Kingdom event that goes beyond human ability—it is the "surprising plus" God adds to our best efforts.

Supernatural means allowing the divine enablement to so saturate every phase of our ministry that the people we serve will be molded into Christlikeness, that we will be personally challenged to invest our best efforts in the Kingdom, and that the Church will be restored to being a distinctive righteous force in contemporary culture.

Is the supernatural spectacular or sensational?

Of course, care must be taken not to label every strange, eccentric, or peculiar notion as "supernatural" and "miraculous." Some mistakenly believe any weird action or position taken by a strange friend of Jesus is supernatural. But I recently heard a powerful preacher declare, "The supernatural need not be spectacular. It might be common and ordinary, like a baby's birth, a sunset, a beggar helping another find bread, or God's supernatural transformation of a human being."

Just because some mistaken follower of Christ journeys to the outer edge is no reason to ignore or even scorn a balanced and biblical view of what God wants to do through people like us in our time, in our setting. Church leaders sometimes settle for spiritual iciness because they fear wildfire.

Like the laws of gravity or electricity or hydrogen energy, the supernatural exists even when I do not fully understand it. Long ago, Augustine shed light on this issue: "Miracles do not happen in contradiction of nature, but in contradiction of what we know about nature." The supernatural isn't irrational, just sometimes beyond our rational abilities.

The supernatural Presence enriches ministry.

With the Presence, service becomes amazingly exciting work with eternal implications and resourced by Resurrection power. Though the setting or situation may appear unchanged, we are different when the Presence is near, and that makes everything else sparkle with meaning. C. S. Lewis called it a "whole world crowned with God." Consequently, when the servant of Christ takes the Presence into the details of his or her service, that believer becomes a Christ-energized magnet that attracts spiritually needy people.

Our frightening and confusing world requires that

the long centuries of care of souls be resuscitated and reenergized. People want God when their babies die, when medical reports are bleak, when jobs are lost, and when the unexplainable makes life desperate. Care of souls, as Mother Teresa has shown the world, is the way we give ministry a face and a heart—the face and heart of Jesus. We must become so satu-

rated with intimate Christ-centered living that people see Him in us. This means we live out the spirit of Christ with people in their problems, pains, and victories too.

For 2,000 years, conscientious preachers have believed authentic preaching demands much more than human energy, mental sharpness, or competent speaking skills. Preaching needs a holy touch and a divine approval if it is to achieve what God intends it to do. Real anointing demands that a preacher allow a biblical passage into the intricacy of his or her own thoughts and character.

Power gluttony sabotages Kingdom results.

An "I'm in charge" power monster is choking contemporary Christianity to death. The problem reaches from the Vatican to the rural crossroad church where Aunt Sally always gets her way. Destructive power use doggedly pursues position, prominence, pride, and control. On the contrary, authentic use of kingdom power pours itself out in service, sacrifice, surrender, and selflessness that produces amazing results and provides incredible satisfaction. The self-centered kind of power intoxicates with self-importance; the Christ-centered inspires devotion and energizes lasting achievement. The first disappoints; the second satisfies.

THE SUPERNATURAL NEED NOT BE SPECTACULAR. IT MIGHT BE COMMON AND ORDINARY, LIKE A BABY'S BIRTH, A SUNSET, A BEGGAR HELPING ANOTHER FIND BREAD, OR GOD'S SUPERNATURAL TRANSFORMATION OF A HUMAN BEING."

Greed for power, even when dressed in Sunday clothes, is only a well-dressed rascal. But revitalized spiritual and numerical growth flow like life-giving oxygen into the Body of Christ when we yield all authority to His Lordship. Paul uses six short words to nail down the issue: "Strength is for service, not status" (Romans 15:2, TM). All authority, great or small, in the church is a sacred trust that must be used thoughtfully, redemptively, and selflessly. I believe Alexander Solzhenitsyn is right: "The meaning of earthly existence lies not, as we have grown used to thinking, in holding power but in the development of our soul."

Jesus put a new meaning on authority when He traded splendor for servanthood. The Bible says He "made himself of no reputation" (Philippians 2:7). That short phrase has serious implications for our service.

Let's get serious about Christian service. Its effect lasts beyond our lifetime and goes on into eternity. I trust this certainty with my whole self—body, mind, soul, and will. And I recommend that you put your spiritual weight down on this promise too: "I tell you

the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40, NIV). We are partners with God in serving others.

The contemporary challenge of the supernatural for every believer.

Author Tom Sine inspires and warns us, "If we don't begin in our lives, professions, and churches to anticipate both the new challenges and opportunities the 21st century brings us, we will quite literally be buried alive in the onrushing avalanche of change. No longer can we drive headlong into the future with our eyes fixed on our rearview

mirrors. We must learn to take the future seriously." But how?

As a wholehearted response, why not affirm that the Christ whose mission we seek to fulfill has an effective game plan for our time, accurate understanding of our situation, and power to turn our contemporary world around. The Christ who resources mission and vision and provision gives us the lofty privilege of being architects of the enduring.

HH

THE PROBLEM REACHES FROM THE VATICAN TO THE RURAL CROSSROAD CHURCH WHERE AUNT SALLY ALWAYS GETS HER WAY.

Q Where do I start if I'm interested in being part of a new church start?

A Once the Lord has begun to lay a vision for starting a new church on your heart, *the* place to begin is prayer. Whether you are the pastor or layperson in a congregation considering sponsorship, a minister feeling a call to start and pastor a new church, a prospective core group member, or a financial supporter of new church starts—now is the time to increase your prayer life.

Satan will leave those people alone who are content with a status quo of doing little if anything to build God's kingdom; but he ferociously—as well as subtly—attacks those who wish to accomplish something great for Him.

Bottom line: Even if you're not certain that God is leading you to help start a new church, begin right now to pray for His direction, protection, and blessing.

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IT'S TIME TO SEEK THE SOURCE . . .

*T*he supernatural—the mere mention of the phrase conjures up images of emotional excess or New Age heresy. A scary thought? Author Neil Wiseman is frightened for a different reason. He sees a dangerous trend in the prevailing tendency of Christians to downplay or simply ignore the supernatural power and workings of God. The resulting powerlessness of a people who attempt to survive on their own finite strength is all too obvious—especially to the unbelieving world.

Author and teacher Neil Wiseman calls the Church back to a ministry linked with Omnipotence. "God never intended that ministry be done with human strength or finite wisdom. He had something incredibly stronger and loftier in mind when He promised empowerment from beyond." Wiseman believes that our preaching, pastoral care, decision making, and ministry will pulsate with miraculous effectiveness when we **seek the Source.**

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"The Untamed God could revolutionize your ideas about the Church of Jesus Christ. Wiseman calls us back to the truth that without holy empowerment all our competence, preparation, programming, facilities, and sacrifices produce inadequate results."

—John Maxwell, President, INJOY Ministries

"Neil Wiseman sounds a wake-up call for the slumbering Church to unleash the supernatural power of the living Christ in her midst. Only then will the prophetic promise of Jesus, 'Greater things than these,' be fulfilled."

—Dale E. Galloway, Dean, Beeson Center,
Asbury Theological Seminary

**THE
UNLEASHING THE
UNTAMED
SUPERNATURAL IN
GOD
THE BODY OF CHRIST
NEIL B. WISEMAN
FOREWORD BY JOHN MAXWELL**

Sayings by Famous Painters

Pablo Picasso:

"I came not to create beauty, but to destroy it."

Salvador Dalí:

"The only important thing to me, is me!"

Thomas Kinkade:

"When I got saved, my art was saved."

PAINTER OF LIGHT

Continued from page 25

ly given me my childhood sweetheart to marry."

Now, Kinkade has realized his dream of a God-centered family life. He and Nanette have been married for 16 years. Even as he works in his studio, called IvyGate Cottage, his three daughters come to play at his feet and spend time with Dad. Moments like that, Kinkade says, are the essence of the simpler times he paints.

"When we come back to things that really matter," he adds, "then peace begins to settle into our lives like golden sunlight sifting to a forest floor. And somewhere deep down inside we know that simpler times are better times."

A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAVE BEEN LED TO A SAVING KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST IN FRONT OF A THOMAS KINKADE PAINTING.

Not too long ago, one woman who discovered those "simpler times" approached him at one of his galleries. "Mr. Kinkade?" she began. "I just wanted to tell you what this painting did for me, because I feel as though it saved my life." She pointed to a print of a

cozy, thatched cottage surrounded by bright gardens. Then she told him that her life had been so filled with hopelessness that she had decided she couldn't go on living. But as she sat in a doctor's office awaiting a dangerous form of electric shock therapy, she looked up and saw a painting,

the same one she was now holding. "When I saw that painting," she said, "I got a glimpse of hope, of a world where I could be happy again." At that moment, she left

Fascinating Facts About the Painter of Light

Did you know that . . .

1. More than 5 million Thomas Kinkade items will be sold in the United States this year.

2. For the first time in history, an artist has swept the National Association of Limited Art Dealers awards two years in a row by winning the Artist of the Year, Lithograph of the Year, and first and second runner-up awards for 1995 and 1996. And that artist is Thomas Kinkade.

3. Kinkade's company, Lightpost Publishing, has grown to be the largest company of its kind any-

where in the world, a fact that Tom calls "a testimony of God's grace."

4. Kinkade met and fell in love with his wife, Nanette, when he was 13 and she was 12.

5. In addition to their three daughters, Merritt, Chandler, and Winsor, the Kinkade family is expecting a new baby in 1997.

6. Because of the deep love for Scripture instilled in her by the Church of the Nazarene, Kinkade's mother is currently compiling a manuscript that analyzes Scripture from a woman's perspective.

7. Kinkade pays loving tribute to his family by hiding their initials in his paintings.

8. After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley, Kinkade attended the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, the most prominent art school in America at that time.

9. In 1982 Kinkade coauthored the best-seller *The Artist's Guide to Sketching* with his longtime friend James Gurney (now famous for his "Dinotopia" creations).

10. After college,

Kinkade created over 600 background paintings for the animated feature film *Fire and Ice*.

11. While working on the film, he and Gurney adventured across America aboard railroad boxcars.

12. Born in 1958, Kinkade is about six feet tall, of Scottish/Irish descent, and is left-handed.

13. A small "ichthus" (Christian fish symbol) and the Scripture reference John 3:16 appear above Kinkade's signature in all his paintings.

the doctor's office and never returned. "My whole world is brighter now," she concluded.

Stories like that, of people whose lives have been changed, are far more important to Kinkade than any award he's received, although he has won many. As he says, "My most important legacy,

I GOT A GLIMPSE OF HOPE, OF A WORLD WHERE I COULD BE HAPPY AGAIN."

the one that can carry my little light onward toward the stars, will be the contribution I make to the lives of other human beings because my faith in God affirms that human souls are the only things in this life that continue forever" (*Simpler Times*, 105).

Therefore, Kinkade says, "Our future for the Painter of Light is an ever expanding attempt to touch the unchurched world with a product that they are drawn to. We know the Lord draws people to himself through amazing things. If people can be healed in the New Testament by anointing a piece of cloth, we know that these paintings, which are in essence pieces of cloth, will go into people's homes and touch lives." Then, he adds, "I pray about this thought: I'm sending these millions of messages into the future—messages proclaiming Christ, proclaiming the light of the Savior."

So, for generations to come, Thomas Kinkade's "cloths of light" will shine in our dark world to bring hope and peace to all who see them. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5, RSV). **H**

IN A WOMAN'S VOICE

Hopeless?

SUSAN HANSON BATES



Susan Hanson Bates is a freelance writer and a frequent speaker at Christian Women's Clubs. She attends First Church of the Nazarene, Flagstaff, Arizona.

RECENTLY I ATTENDED A WONDROUS wedding that will forever remain in my memory. It wasn't the gowns or the flowers or even the ceremony that made it so spectacular. It was the presence of hope—God's hope.

You see, it was the wedding of my sister, Lexa. The man she married was none other than her former husband. With them stood their children, including their precious nine-year-old daughter, Lauren, who had prayed without ceasing for this moment.

I'll never forget the night three years ago when I was visiting their home. As Lexa and I were tucking Lauren in bed, the child looked into her mommy's eyes and, with a tear, asked, "Mommy, why can't Daddy live with us anymore?" With a lump in her throat, my sister tried once again to explain divorce to an uncomprehending six-year-old. Nevertheless, when Lauren said her prayers, she ended with, "And God, please bring my daddy back home." From that night on, she never stopped praying for her daddy.

Lexa and I knew the situation was hopeless. But Lauren believed differently. She didn't know to look at all

the problems and impossible complications. Her father, Jim, lived in a different city now. He had a relationship with a woman and was thinking about marrying her. He didn't want anything to do with Lexa and her "fanatic" faith in Christ. But Lauren didn't think about any of that. She simply fixed her hope on Jesus and prayed. Slowly, but surely, Jesus drew Jim unto himself and then back home to Lexa and their children.

When we find ourselves feeling hopeless and it becomes difficult to pray, it is critical that we focus on the Overcomer instead of the obstacles. For in Jesus, there is always a reason to have hope. But what happens when we lose sight of that hope? When Satan comes in and steals our belief that God will answer our prayers? We simply stop praying. And where there is no prayer, there is no power.

As I walk through this world, the problems and sorrows of life threaten to overwhelm me with their magnitude. And a voice whispers to me, "Forget it. Don't even waste your time praying about that. It's hopeless." That is the voice of the enemy of our souls, who will stop at nothing to keep us mired in depression and discouragement.

Remember, Satan wants you to give up hope.

In the midst of a dark time in his life, the psalmist recognized this and questioned, "Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me?" Immediately he firmly reminds himself, "Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God" (Psalm 42:5-6, NIV).

Are you feeling hopeless about something or someone in your life? Don't give up. Don't stop praying. Put your hope in God and wait on Him. You will yet praise Him, for He is your Savior and God. And where there is God, there is hope. **H**

**We need to focus
on the Overcomer
instead of the
obstacles.**

Sacraments

ROB L. STAPLES



Rob L. Staples has made a career of teaching the Christian faith as a pastor and as a professor at Southern Nazarene University and Nazarene Theological Seminary.

THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE believes in two sacraments, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper. But what is a sacrament?

John Wesley defined a sacrament as "an outward sign of inward grace, and a means whereby we receive the same." Centuries earlier, in a short and almost perfect definition, Augustine referred to sacraments as "visible words." Preaching and teaching are audible words that convey a message through the hearing of the ear. But a visible word is any sign or action that conveys a message by being *done* and *seen*.

Roman Catholics believe in seven sacraments. Most Protestants affirm only the two mentioned above, mainly because in the New Testament only those two are directly related to the forgiveness of sins, which is grounded in Christ's atoning death (see Romans 6:1-4 on baptism and Matthew 26:28 on the Lord's Supper).

The word "sacrament" is thought to have come originally from the Latin *sacramentum*, which in ancient times referred to a sum of money that both parties to a lawsuit deposited with a third party—something like putting money in escrow, as we would say today. This foreshadowed one aspect of

a Christian sacrament, especially as understood by Protestants, namely, that a sacrament involves the use of some physical element as a "sign" or "symbol."

Later, *sacramentum* came to refer to the oath of allegiance taken by a Roman soldier as he promised to serve and defend the empire. This anticipated yet another element inherent in a sacrament, namely, the word of promise that accompanies the sign and without which the sign would not have its sacramental character. Taken together, these two early meanings of the Latin *sacramentum* convey two important aspects in the idea of a Christian sacrament—an action involving a physical element used as a symbol (water, bread, wine) and a word of promise accompanying the use of the symbol, namely the new covenant promise of grace.

Thus the English word "sacrament," deriving from the Latin *sacramentum*, came into use in the language of faith to indicate certain religious actions or events. The term was "baptized" into the Christian vocabulary! Although the word "sacrament" is not found in Scripture with the specific meaning assigned to it in Christian history, it is a legitimate term for the actions that the Church has found to be practiced in Scripture and commanded by the Lord. The idea behind the word has been at work in the Church from the beginning (although at different levels of intensity) as the response of the believing community to the grace that it receives from God and is called to mediate to the world.

Sacraments are not the same as "ordinances." The latter word denotes a religious rite that has been command-

ed—something we are to *do*. Sacrament has a richer meaning. It denotes something that is *done for us*. The Nazarene Articles of Faith refer to baptism and the Lord's Supper as sacraments, not as ordinances.

What, then, do sacraments *do* for us? In keeping with most of Christian history, John Wesley, our theological and spiritual "grandfather," classified sacraments as "means of grace," by which he meant "outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God . . . to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey. . . preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace" (Wesley's *Works*, 5:187).

In short, sacraments convey grace if we come to them in faith—grace for whatever our need may be. Our God is a God who acts. In the waters of baptism, and at the table of the Lord when we receive the bread and the cup, we become the beneficiaries of the action of God, who imparts His grace to us here and now.

Sacraments safeguard the biblical doctrine of creation against the early heresy of gnosticism, which was a dualistic theory holding that all matter was evil. Whenever we submit to being baptized with water (matter) and

What do sacraments do for us?

drink the fruit of the vine (matter), we are affirming something about our redemption. But also—and admittedly secondary to it—we are saying something about the creation. We are combating all forms of dualism. We are affirming that these material elements are a vehicle, a "residency," of divine grace. We are saying that this physical world is essentially good. And that is what God said about it in the beginning!

PEACE—65 YEARS LATE

Continued from page 27

matter how hard I pulled, I was unable to extricate her. Apparently her feet were stuck in the makeshift attic flooring. She died in the fire.

For a long time, I sank into depression and seriously considered suicide. Nightmares haunted me, and I'd wake up covered with sweat.

When the opportunity came to go into the insurance business in Oregon, I jumped at it and rose in the ranks fast. I was bent on proving that I was important and valuable, not just an unwanted, illegitimate child. I wanted to crowd out the pain surrounding my adoptive parents' and grandmother's deaths and the loss of my youth. A divorce made me feel even worse.

Through the years, I wondered why my biological parents gave me away, wondered if they'd cared about me. *What would it be like to meet them?* I didn't ever expect to know.

Most of my life I'd been active in church. I knew that Christ was my Savior, but Christianity had little effect on my life.

After I retired in 1985, I began to think seriously about looking for my birth parents. *Would I be able to handle it if they didn't want a relationship with me?* I decided that I could.

My search revealed that my mother had been married to a man named Green. Although several Greens with the same first name were listed in the directory, I reached the right one immediately.

I spoke with his second wife, now a widow, and she gave me the name of the brother of my mother's former business partner in Canada who might know where my mother was.

I reached him the first time I dialed. I'd lived in the corporate world and knew that things didn't

happen this way ordinarily. God really was leading in my search.

"She's in a nursing home here," her business partner's brother told me on the phone.

"Do you have a phone number where I can reach her?"

"Sure. My wife stopped by last month to see her. She's blind, you know."

That evening I called the nursing home and talked to the nurse. "Ellen Sweet has lived here since 1980."

When I finally talked to my mother on the phone, the first



thing she asked was, "When are you coming?"

My second wife, Carol, and I had a trip to Niagara Falls already planned, and my mother was only 30 miles from there. If God hadn't helped us find her, we would have been that close and never known it.

"I'll be there to see you the first part of October," I answered.

"That's just before your birthday." I couldn't believe it. She hadn't forgotten.

I was excited and anxious as I walked down the second-floor corridor of the nursing home and

turned in at her room. There in front of me was an 86-year-old lady, four feet seven inches tall, standing by means of a walker, wearing a Toronto Bluejay's baseball cap to protect her light-sensitive eyes. *That's my mother.*

She never for a moment doubted that I was her son. A Christian, she told someone later, "I've been praying daily for two years that if my son was alive, he'd find me." She'd needed to find peace with the past, and God enabled her to find that peace.

On the way back from one of my trips to see her, Carol and I decided to make a side trip to my boyhood town. I phoned the only man still alive who was at the school board meeting where my adoptive dad had been so badly hurt.

"Can I come see you?"

"Sure."

We visited with him and his wife for over two hours. At no time did I tell this gracious, 83-year-old man how bitter I'd been all my life about what happened. The strange thing is I hadn't fully realized it myself.

As we talked, that elderly man represented all those who had hurt my dad, and I found myself letting go of my bitterness and being healed. I'm only sorry it took over 50 years.

Knowing that my mother loved me and had wanted to keep me healed my wounded self-esteem and gave me identity. Every Sunday afternoon until she died at 88, I phoned her.

Now that my bitterness is gone, Christ's love has become real to me. I'm learning how to love back. My values have changed. Success to me means serving the Lord by helping people the way He's helped me.

I found my biological mother after 65 years, and in doing so, I found peace.

Lynn Woods is a member of First Church of the Nazarene, Salem, Oregon.

THE FIVE LARGEST SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE FOR THE 1995-96 ASSEMBLY YEAR U.S. AND CANADA



Sunday School Ministries Director Dr. Talmadge Johnson reports the following official worldwide Sunday School statistics for the 1995-96 assembly year in the Church of the Nazarene. The responsibility list stands at 1,330,301. The extension ministries responsibility list is 33,714, and the outreach attendance is 24,327. The average attendance is 698,833. This represents an increase of 5,887 over last year in average attendance.

Below are the top five churches in regular Sunday School attendance on the U.S. and Canada districts. These lists are compiled from reports submitted by district secretaries to the general secretary as reported by pastors in the "Annual Report of the Pastor to the District Assembly."

AKRON

- 363 Canton First
- 197 Warren Champion
- 195 East Liverpool First
- 178 Warren First
- 168 Hubbard

ALABAMA NORTH

- 261 Huntsville First
- 246 Birmingham First
- 224 Cullman First
- 204 Jasper First
- 122 Gardendale

ALABAMA SOUTH

- 142 Lanett
- 127 Tuscaloosa Holten Heights
- 122 Dothan First
- 113 Tuscaloosa Woodhaven
- 105 Sylacauga First

ALASKA

- 120 Anchorage Hillcrest
- 108 Soldotna
- 94 Nikiski
- 94 Wasilla Lake
- 92 Palmer

ANAHEIM

- 346 Santa Ana First
- 339 Cerritos
- 241 Long Beach First
- 233 Rancho Cucamonga
- Highland Avenue
- 231 Ontario First

ARIZONA

- 454 Phoenix Orangewood
- 399 Glendale First
- 358 CrossRoads
- 211 Yuma First
- 204 Oro Valley

CANADA ATLANTIC

- 104 Oxford, N.S.
- 103 Amherst, N.S.
- 97 Sherwood, P.E.I.
- 94 Trenton, N.S.
- 82 Lutes Mountain, N.B.

CANADA CENTRAL

- 128 Brampton
- 127 Toronto Emmanuel
- 114 Toronto Rosewood
- 97 Egypt
- 83 Hamilton First

CANADA PACIFIC

- 161 Guildford
- 94 Victoria First
- 82 Abbotsford
- 78 Vancouver First
- 59 Penticton

CANADA QUEBEC

- 121 Montreal St.-Michel
- 80 Montreal Centre
- Evangelique
- 71 West Island
- 69 Franklin Centre
- 58 Montreal Rocher des
- Siecles

CANADA WEST

- 302 Calgary First
- 175 Edmonton Southside
- 114 Calgary New Life
- Fellowship
- 95 Rocky Mountain House
- 90 Medicine Hat Glenview

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

- 588 Bakersfield Olive Knolls
- 530 Porterville
- 357 Visalia First English
- 249 Bakersfield First
- 185 Fresno Grace

CENTRAL FLORIDA

- 539 Lakeland Highland Park
- 405 Lakeland Lake Gibson
- 396 Orlando Central
- 386 Orlando Metro West
- 327 Winter Haven First

CENTRAL LATIN AMERICAN

- 104 Mercedes
- 101 San Antonio Emmanuel
- 94 Houston Primera
- 93 Laredo
- 91 Oklahoma City Primera

CENTRAL OHIO

- 760 Grove City
- 273 Circleville
- 270 Gallipolis
- 242 Columbus Shepherd
- 204 Marietta First

CHICAGO CENTRAL

- 726 Kankakee College
- 649 Kankakee First
- 380 Chicago First
- 255 Chicago First Spanish
- 250 Danville First

COLORADO

- 1,299 Denver First
- 645 Colorado Springs First
- 438 Denver Westminster
- 315 Colorado Springs Trinity
- 309 Denver Lakewood

DAKOTA

- 130 Mandan
- 127 Minot First
- 122 Mitchell First
- 111 Jamestown First

96 Valley City

DALLAS

- 430 Richardson
- 236 Texarkana First
- 228 Carrollton
- 204 Grand Prairie First
- 184 Dallas First

EAST TENNESSEE

- 172 Chattanooga First
- 162 Estill Springs
- 152 Crossville
- 152 Shelbyville
- 151 Monterey

EASTERN KENTUCKY

- 202 Ashland First
- 156 Covington First
- 148 Ashland Plaza
- 138 Richmond First
- 128 Maysville

EASTERN MICHIGAN

- 541 Warren Woods
- 472 Flint Central
- 422 Richfield
- 315 Howell
- 271 Plymouth

GEORGIA

- 268 Battlefield Parkway
- 243 Atlanta First
- 210 Sandersville
- 190 Dublin First
- 186 Mount Olive

HAWAII PACIFIC

- 128 Kaneohe
- 125 Maili Samoan
- 92 Honolulu First English
- 85 Wahiawa Filipino
- 78 Kailua English

HOUSTON

- 373 Houston Spring Branch
- 210 Houston Northwest
- 193 Nacogdoches First
- 193 Pasadena First
- 169 Houston First

ILLINOIS

- 205 Decatur First
- 194 Pittsfield
- 184 Springfield First
- 176 Decatur Parkway
- 167 Decatur West Side

INDIANAPOLIS

- 563 Indianapolis Westside
- 439 Indianapolis First
- 348 New Castle First
- 290 Martinsville First
- 255 North Vernon

INTERMOUNTAIN

- 841 Nampa First
- 504 Nampa College
- 440 Boise First
- 401 Meridian Valley Shepherd
- 310 Baker City

IOWA

- 515 Oskaloosa First
- 243 Des Moines Eastside
- 199 Council Bluffs First
- 165 Burlington First
- 158 Cedar Rapids First

JOPLIN

- 253 Carthage
- 183 Independence
- 181 Parsons
- 178 Pittsburg
- 170 Lebanon

KANSAS

- 1,056 Wichita First
- 332 Wichita Linwood
- 296 Hutchinson First
- 277 Salina First
- 276 Newton First

KANSAS CITY

- 1,849 Olathe College
- 650 Kansas City First
- 367 Kansas City Central
- 252 Kansas City Shawnee
- 242 Topeka First

KENTUCKY

- 276 Lexington Lafayette
- 188 Science Hill
- 176 Georgetown
- 164 Monticello
- 133 Frankfort Capital

LOS ANGELES

- 1,378 Pasadena First
- 545 Pismo Beach New Life
- Community
- 312 San Luis Obispo
- 294 Lompoc Trinity
- 274 Glendora

LOUISIANA

- 140 Shreveport Huntington Park
- 106 Vivian
- 98 Ebenezer
- 96 Baton Rouge First
- 90 Blanchard

MAINE

- 148 South Portland
- 136 Bangor
- 85 Auburn
- 85 Skowhegan
- 83 Dover-Foxcroft

METRO NEW YORK

- 650 Brooklyn Beulah
- 325 Living Word
- 235 Bronx Bethany
- 190 Maranatha
- 188 Brooklyn Miller Memorial

MICHIGAN

- 352 Lansing South
- 285 Jackson First
- 262 Grand Rapids First
- 238 Owosso First
- 235 Chapman Memorial

MINNESOTA

- 159 Fergus Falls
- 137 Brainerd
- 114 Osseo
- 111 Minneapolis Southwest Community
- 95 Litchfield

MISSISSIPPI

- 202 Meridian Fitkin Memorial
- 197 McComb First
- 127 Jackson Emmanuel
- 99 Pascagoula
- 90 Grenada First

MISSOURI

- 266 Harvester
- 226 St. Louis Overland
- 216 St. Louis Trinity
- 167 Farmington
- 161 St. Louis Bridgeton

NAVAJO NATION

- 81 Leupp
- 71 Chilchinbeto
- 65 LeChee
- 60 Dilkon
- 45 Ramah Navajo

NEBRASKA

- 218 Lincoln First
- 140 North Platte
- 136 Hastings
- 133 Omaha Central
- 104 Omaha Heritage

NEW ENGLAND

- 338 New Bedford, Mass., International
- 273 Nashua, N.H., Community Chapel
- 205 Quincy, Mass., Wollaston
- 200 Dorchester, Mass., Amis de la Sagesse
- 199 Lowell, Mass., First

NEW MEXICO

- 282 Albuquerque Sandia
- 259 Clovis First
- 254 El Paso Open Gate
- 202 Albuquerque Heights First
- 130 El Paso First

NORTH ARKANSAS

- 203 Conway First
- 191 Rogers First
- 170 Bentonville
- 169 Springdale
- 167 Jonesboro Forest Home

NORTH CAROLINA

- 327 Charlotte Pineville
- 284 North Raleigh
- 231 Raleigh First
- 229 Asheville First
- 223 Hendersonville

NORTH CENTRAL OHIO

- 1,342 Cleveland "Heaven Train" (CTM)
- 651 Marion First
- 535 Mount Vernon First
- 341 Bucyrus
- 268 Coshocton First

NORTH FLORIDA

- 216 Jacksonville University Boulevard
- 214 Pensacola First
- 179 Jacksonville Oak Hill
- 172 Hernando
- 157 Gainesville First

NORTHEAST OKLAHOMA

- 315 Tulsa Central
- 297 Bartlesville First
- 240 Tulsa Regency Park
- 207 Broken Arrow First
- 205 Sapulpa

NORTHEASTERN INDIANA

- 410 Fort Wayne Lake Avenue
- 377 Huntington First
- 334 Anderson First
- 294 Elkhart Northside
- 265 Muncie South Side

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

- 323 Santa Rosa
- 198 Concord
- 189 Santa Cruz
- 187 Napa
- 175 Eureka First

NORTHERN MICHIGAN

- 135 Alanson Lakeview
- 123 Beaverton
- 112 Clare
- 111 Cherry Grove
- 111 Reed City

NORTHWEST

- 438 Moscow
- 423 Spokane First
- 385 Spokane Valley
- 377 Yakima West Valley
- 313 Lewiston First

NORTHWEST INDIANA

- 432 Portage First
- 424 Valparaiso
- 308 Kokomo First
- 172 Fairmeadow Community
- 172 South Lake

NORTHWEST OKLAHOMA

- 1,601 Bethany First
- 474 Oklahoma City First
- 223 Guymon
- 174 Woodward
- 166 Oklahoma City Lakeview Park

NORTHWESTERN ILLINOIS

- 318 Pekin First
- 311 Sterling First
- 231 Ottawa First
- 203 Rock Island First
- 201 Galesburg First

NORTHWESTERN OHIO

- 557 Lima Community
- 238 Mount Sterling
- 233 Springfield High Street
- 219 Springfield First
- 197 Findlay First

OREGON PACIFIC

- 1,394 Salem First
- 478 Medford First
- 475 Portland First
- 379 McMinnville
- 308 Newport

PHILADELPHIA

- 624 Fairview Village
- 441 Ephrata
- 269 New Holland
- 269 Selinsgrove
- 261 Mifflinburg

PITTSBURGH

- 228 Pittsburgh South Hills
- 217 Waynesburg
- 204 Warren

- 141 Oil City
- 128 Norwin

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

- 135 Kalispell, Mont., First
- 121 Cheyenne, Wyo., Grace
- 110 Casper, Wyo., First
- 101 Great Falls, Mont., First
- 99 Bozeman, Mont., First

SACRAMENTO

- 371 Sacramento Liberty Towers
- 361 Redding First
- 355 Auburn
- 280 Oroville
- 240 Sparks First

SAN ANTONIO

- 268 San Antonio First
- 263 Waco First
- 135 Odessa First
- 134 Harlingen First
- 133 Austin South

SOUTH ARKANSAS

- 269 North Little Rock First
- 200 Little Rock First
- 186 Hot Springs First
- 153 North Little Rock Friendly Chapel
- 143 Little Rock Calvary

SOUTH CAROLINA

- 457 Greenville First
- 392 Columbia First
- 345 West Columbia Central
- 289 Midland Valley First
- 283 Winnsboro

SOUTHEAST OKLAHOMA

- 229 Choctaw
- 173 Henryetta
- 141 Midwest City First
- 115 Ada
- 103 Durant First

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

- 533 San Diego Mission Valley
- 327 San Diego First
- 246 Riverside Arlington Avenue
- 236 Bloomington
- 180 Redlands

SOUTHERN FLORIDA

- 1,541 Princeton Good Samaritan
- 334 North Miami Haitian
- 318 Bradenton First
- 298 Lake Worth New Life
- 296 Pompano Beach

SOUTHWEST INDIAN

- 60 Parker
- 55 South Tucson Community
- 54 Albuquerque First Indian
- 49 Needles
- 36 Cocopah

SOUTHWEST INDIANA

- 481 Seymour First
- 215 New Albany Eastside
- 206 Terre Haute First
- 192 Evansville Diamond Valley
- 189 Bloomington First

SOUTHWEST LATIN AMERICAN

- 125 Chandler Primera
- 110 El Paso Primera
- 89 Phoenix Primera
- 49 Tucson West
- 45 Tucson Primera

SOUTHWEST OKLAHOMA

- 341 Bethany Calvary
- 285 Oklahoma City Trinity
- 225 Yukon
- 215 Oklahoma City Western Oaks
- 166 Oklahoma City Pennsylvania Avenue

SOUTHWESTERN OHIO

- 688 Cincinnati Springdale
- 455 West Chester
- 377 Dayton Beavercreek
- 322 Vandalia
- 320 Dayton Parkview

TENNESSEE

- 951 Nashville First
- 343 Nashville College Hill
- 307 Clarksville First
- 240 Memphis Calvary
- 233 Nashville Whispering Hills

UPSTATE NEW YORK

- 244 Owego
- 182 Rochester Grace
- 172 Syracuse Immanuel
- 150 Watertown
- 120 Rochester Calvary

VIRGINIA

- 748 Richmond Southside
- 318 Annandale Calvary
- 242 Woodbridge
- 178 Hampton
- 176 Virginia Beach First

WASHINGTON

- 456 York Stillmeadow
- 252 Marley Park
- 231 Bel Air
- 224 Salisbury
- 207 Laurel

WASHINGTON PACIFIC

- 1,332 Puyallup
- 710 Seattle Aurora
- 359 Kent First
- 305 Gold Creek Community
- 305 Olympia First

WEST TEXAS

- 655 Metroplex Chapel
- 382 Lubbock First
- 337 Hereford
- 254 Arlington First
- 254 Big Spring

WEST VIRGINIA NORTH

- 252 Parkersburg Broadway
- 248 Weirton
- 185 Parkersburg First
- 158 Elkins
- 132 Paden City

WEST VIRGINIA SOUTH

- 379 South Charleston First
- 206 Charleston Elk River
- 198 Huntington First
- 176 Charleston Davis Creek
- 165 Charleston Calvary

WESTERN LATIN AMERICAN

- 351 Los Angeles Belvedere
- 167 Los Angeles Boyle Heights
- 136 Rancho Cucamonga
- 114 National City
- 108 Sacramento

WISCONSIN

- 125 Racine Community
- 108 Racine Taylor Avenue
- 106 Mattoon
- 104 Richland Center
- 91 Baraboo

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THE QUESTION BOX

CONDUCTED BY WESLEY D. TRACY, *Editor*

Q. My baby died at three months. I know my little girl went to heaven. Will she always be an infant there? Will I be able to hold her in my arms again in heaven?

A. There's good news and bad news—but the good far outweighs the bad. The bad news is that we don't know enough about the next world to speak with certainty. The Bible gives us hints but not a very clear picture. We do know that much of the human way of being will be changed. Jesus told us that there would not be husbands and wives in heaven (Matthew 22:23-33). If there are no marriage relationships in heaven, many other things may also be different. We also believe that the spiritual or heavenly body that the Bible speaks of in 1 Corinthians 15:35-49 will be different from the human body. And that's good. A friend of mine died recently who had been crippled and confined to a wheelchair for years. If I am fortunate enough to make it to heaven, I am certain that his handicaps will be gone when I greet him in heaven.

We also believe that persons grow and develop in all the elements of the divine image that exist in our personalities now as mere seedlings. That is, an expanding knowledge, holiness, and spirituality await us all in heaven. (See *The Question Box*, April 1996).

The good news is that in heaven all suffering, disappointment, and loss will be banished in favor of true joy and fulfillment beyond what we can now imagine. Thus, if the mother-infant relationship is different in heaven, it will be a difference that magnifies the joy that mothers and babies share on earth. Whatever awaits you and your baby in heaven will be better than all that you have missed here.

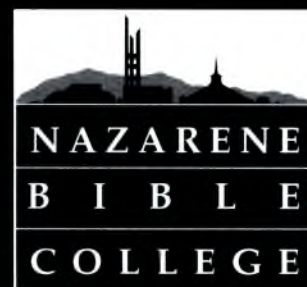
Q. I heard that abortion victims will be given a chance to be born and grow up during the millennial reign of Christ. Is there biblical evidence for this?

A. If there is, I missed it altogether.

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Mom to Moms

C. ELLEN WATTS



C. Ellen Watts is a freelance writer living in Nampa, Idaho.

TO THE FIVE WHO CALL ME MOM—

It's hard to say if Oliver Wendell Holmes had anything in mind other than classroom instruction when he wrote that "a child's education should begin at least 100 years before he was born." If so, and the spectrum of Oliver's thinking included Christian mothering, then you need to know that your mom began closing this gap in your heritage quite a few decades in arrears.

How God could drop five who were destined to become mothers themselves into the lap of one so new to the faith remains a mystery. That all of you survived and are making significant contributions toward this family's 100-year pursuit of Holmes's ideal is little short of a miracle.

Having been blessed with better vision in hind- than in foresight, given the chance, there are things I would do over. I would give more hugs, issue fewer ultimatums, be more lavish with encouragement, and admit more readily to being wrong.

Saturdays would be less task-oriented (a trait you can blame on my mother) and more geared to

fun with your father. I might even learn from *his* mother how to "seize moments" more readily than mom handles.

I would be more faithful with family devotions and in saying, "I love you."

Sundays would stay the same.

You would still be without Barbie dolls.

It's been fun to observe the different ways in which you've all learned from my mistakes. Our grands and greats will one day profit from yours.

When you were kids, we did not always see eye to eye in matters of child rearing. We still don't, and it's all right. Michael Green (*The Work of an Evangelist*) has said it well: "Each of us will have our own different way of expressing love and care for the family. But unless that is a high priority, we will find that we may gain the whole world and lose our own children."

No contest. That family is as important to you as it is to your father and me is evidenced by the fact that career and other demands so seldom precede the needs and

dreams of your children. That they are involved in Christian training and activities, and consider the Christian bookstore a cool place to shop, gives regular testimony to your careful attention to their spiritual needs.

As the children grow older, that some of you are financially strapped is commendable; tuition paid to a Christian college is an

expense you will never regret. Of equal value has been your careful nourishing of the biblically sound sort of relationships that made the icing on one grandson's wedding cake last June especially sweet. You are good mothers, and I am proud of you.

But be forewarned. While God obviously made mothers for a lot of good reasons, one reason was not (as the Jewish proverb says) because He could not be everywhere at once. The truth is, "He lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:17, NIV). In spite of attempts to deify motherhood through T-shirts and greeting cards—in case you've never guessed so before—it is God who is the "eyes" in the back of a Christian mom's head!

Now that you know the last of my secrets, I've thought of something else. In God's way of figuring things, a thousand years is but a day (Psalm 90:4). Using that kind of math, if we're faithful and make sure we enlist all the kids when their time comes, we can probably wipe out that 100-year deficit in record time.

It is God who is the "eyes" in the back of a Christian mom's head!

Happy mothering!
Love,
Mom

P.S. It has been said that children's behavior toward their aging parents is determined by the way the kids have seen their parents honoring their own mom and dad. If that is so, then you are someday in for a ripe old treat!



Nazarenes Elected to Public Office

Harrison Reelected to West Virginia Legislature



Steve Harrison was recently re-elected to a third term in the West Virginia House of Delegates. At age 30, he is one of the youngest members

of the state legislature.

Harrison is a longtime member of Calvary Church of the Nazarene in Charleston, W.Va. He has served on the church board, and he teaches in children's church with his wife, Kristen.

Gilmore Elected President of Kansas Board of Education



Kevin Gilmore, 35, was recently elected president of the Kansas State Board of Education. Gilmore was first elected as a member of the board in

1994.

A 1984 graduate of MidAmerica Nazarene University, Gilmore is chief financial officer of a bank in Olathe, Kans.

Gilmore, his wife, Julie, and three sons are members of College Church of the Nazarene in Olathe.

Jon Johnston Recipient of Angel Award

Jon Johnston, Nazarene layman and professor of sociology and anthropology at Pepperdine University in California, received an Angel Award from the Hollywood-based Excellence in Media organization for his book titled *Stuck in a Sticky World: Learning to See God's Best in Life's Worst*.

The award was presented during the 20th award ceremony of the organization, which honors each year's best in "moral and social impact" in media productions.

Other recipients of the Angel Award this year included Billy Gra-



Angel Award winner **Jon Johnston** (center), with fellow award winners **Tom Poston** (left) and **Dean Jones**.

ham, Tom Poston, and Dean Jones.

Johnston serves as chairman of the Association of Nazarene Sociologists of Religion (ANSR), which held its annual conference in Kansas City in March.

Nazarene Couples Celebrate 60th Wedding Anniversaries



Mr. and Mrs. Barclay with their pastor, **Rev. Chris Girvan** (on left).

The Robert Barclays

Robert and Ella Barclay of Port Glasgow, Scotland, received a telegram of congratulations from the Queen of England in celebrating 60 years of marriage.

The Barclay family has been in the Church of the Nazarene for five generations, going back to the 1920s.

Robert Barclay has ordered and sold the *Herald of Holiness* for more than 40 years, according to his son, James. "At age 87 he is still enthusiastically selling it."

The Barron Haney

Barron and Ruth Haney were honored by their church on their recent 60th wedding celebration. The Haney's are longtime members of the Marin Church of the Nazarene in Novato, Calif.

Mr. Haney's parents were charter members of the Church of the Nazarene, joining in 1908 at Pilot Point, Tex.



standing and miscommunication handed down to them through their homes and churches on this subject.

Lisa Diehm
Goodlettsville, Tenn.

Five Years in Jail

Susan Hanson Bates's article "The Recorded Word" (Jan. '97) did a good job of pointing out the harm that can be done by carelessly spoken words. She relates how a friendship was destroyed by a tape recording of words spoken behind someone's back. . . .

I would offer another warning based on the story. The woman who left the voice-activated tape recorder in her pack, intending to pick up the conversation when she was absent, committed a felony.

Tape recordings, even if made for "fun," are an area of legal danger. Recordings can only be made with the knowledge and consent of those present, unless there is a search warrant. In Oregon, that action is punishable by up to five years in jail. The person would also be subject to suit for civil damages.

Two wrongs don't make a right. The actions of both women destroyed the relationship. Gossip hurts people, and recordings violate the unsuspecting.

Tom Mahon
Oregon State Legislature

Pulpit and Cross

Two questions in the February "Question Box" brought up modern-day issues that disturb me: (1) removal of the cross from church decor, and (2) removal of the pulpit. Without the Cross, there would have been no Resurrection. Jesus' blood sacrifice was necessary to atone for man's sin, and justification *cannot* be overemphasized.

As to the use of the pulpit obstructing the preacher from view, John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease" [John 3:30]. Preachers used to pray "Hide me behind the Cross" and "Speak through me; let the people see only Thee." The Holy Spirit is the most dependable communicator of the message, anyway.

The Godhead is unchanging, so need the church drop sacred symbols to coddle contemporary thinking? Some methods of presentation must change, but meaningful sacred symbols? I don't think so.

Janice Tyler
Rockford, Ill.

Spell Check

In the January 1997 *Herald* in the article "Haircut," the shoe brand mentioned is misspelled. Correct: Allen Edmonds. The articles were wonderful.

W. E. Rothman
Saint Joseph, Mich.

Are You All Right?

DEAN NELSON



Dean Nelson teaches journalism at Point Loma Nazarene College.

MANY OF YOU KNOW WHO ERNIE PYLE is. To people who were in the United States during World War II, he was the link between that terrible war and their hometowns. To the people serving their country, he was also that link. He wrote about people, mostly in newspapers. He was one of the best-loved war correspondents in our history.

Edward R. Murrow was known for taking listeners to the scene of the action. Ernie Pyle put a human face on it.

Sometimes I write book reviews about journalists and about the broader field of writing. I just finished one on a book called *Ernie Pyle in the American Southwest*. My reviews tend to concentrate on whether the book is readable, whether the author did a credible job of research, and whether the book contributes to the greater body of knowledge on the subject.

Something in that book has stayed with me well past the answers to the previous three questions, though. It was the circumstances around Pyle's death.

In April 1945, Pyle had just arrived in Japan to do his war reporting and was traveling in a jeep with some GIs on a rural road. They came under fire from a sniper. The driver quickly stopped the jeep to let the passengers dive into the roadside ditches for safety. The men were pretty safe if they hugged the ground and waited for help to arrive.

But Pyle looked up to locate a comrade, smiled, and asked, "Are you all right?" The sniper killed Pyle.

Pyle was no great spokesman for God. Nothing in his life tells me that he had a faith as I want to have. It is his response to danger that I find attractive. Rambo would have jumped up, heaved a few grenades, unstrapped the bullet belts from around his sculpted chest, charged into the sniper's lair, and then accepted the acclaim from fellow soldiers.

Pyle looked up from the ground to see if everyone was all right. That kind of instinctive response—of looking out for the people around us—is what could make followers of Jesus distinct. If the commandment is to love God

and to love our neighbor (which it is), then the focus of our lives is on God and on others. Not just *other* believers. *Others*.

I would love to have the journalism instincts of Ernie Pyle. But I would love even more to have the compassion instincts he showed in his last words. When you are under fire, which question comes to mind first: "How could this happen to me?" or "Are you all right?" Careful, though. There's a price. Just ask Ernie Pyle. Or Jesus.

**Our focus should be
on God and others.
Not just *other*
believers. *Others*.**

VITAL STATISTICS

Deaths

IDA EMMA BAILEY, 95, Gwynneville, Ind., Jan. 7. Survivors: daughters, Norma Carter, Roberta Listenberger; brother, Fletcher McDaniel; sisters, Sylvia Larison, Mary Bridges, Bessie Emholt; 6 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; 9 great-great-grandchildren.

CLAYTON L. BRUBAKER, 77, Topeka, Kans., Jan. 15. Survivors: wife, Louise; son, Ken; daughter, Linda Pink; three granddaughters.

GLADYS D. BURCH, 88, Richmond, Va., Dec. 18. Survivors: daughter, Helen Hess; sisters, Annie Lee Jones, Viola Shook; three grandsons; three great-grandchildren.

REV. RICHARD E. COIL, Goshen, Ind., Feb. 21. Survivors: daughters, Shirley Klingler, Jo Ann Saunders; brother, Mel; sisters, Hazel Folk, LaVaughn Sheehy; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren.

GRETA E. DOMMER, 90, Ottumwa, Iowa, Jan. 30. Survivors: husband, Wilfred; sons, Will, Dewane; daughters, Elaine Miller, Arline Thomas, Joy Dommer; brother, John Ours Jr.; several grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren.

RICHARD DALE EATON, 63, Overland, Mo., Nov. 17. Survivors: wife, Patricia; daughters, Jeanene Martin, Lori Amato; mother, Gertrude; brothers, Rex, Ronald; two grandsons; three granddaughters.

RALPH O. ELLISON, 87, Thayer, Nebr., Feb. 15. Survivors: wife, Elsie; sons, Ronald, Gerald, Gaylord, Dale; daughters, Sharon Odle, Joyce Kelley, Laura Fox, Jeannette Cronan; sister, Deloris Baker; 22 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren.

REV. WILLIAM C. EMBERTON, 76, pastor in Texas for 35 years, Nashville, Ark., Jan. 26. Survivors: wife, Bettie; daughters, Nelda Ronnekamp, Sharon Gilbert, Georgetown Stanford, Johnnie Kay Rhoads, LaDonna Duncan; five grandchildren.

JENNIFER METCALF GORSKI, 23, Greenwood, Ind., Feb. 21. Survivors: husband, James; parents, William and Bonnie Metcalf; sisters, Kathy Lamb, Debbie Biehl, Dale Christine Buck.

DR. ROBERT I. GOSLAW, 78, Victorville, Calif., Feb. 4. Survivors: wife, Marjorie; sons, Glen, Orval; brother, Ralph; sister, Marilyn Feller; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Dr. Goslaw pastored in California and served as superintendent of the New York and Pittsburgh Districts. He also served as administrative assistant on the Southern California District.

REV. JOHN R. HIEFTJE, 76, Muskegon, Mich., Feb. 22. Survivors: wife, Doris; son, Brad; sisters, Mary Cooper, Ruth Hieftje, Delores Hattis, Loretta Coffey; one grandson.

NORMA M. JOHNSTON, 82, Falmouth, Maine, Feb. 16. Survivors: sons, James, David; daughter, Marilyn Towne; six grandchildren.

REV. DAVID J. JONES, 51, Oklahoma City, Okla., Jan. 17. Survivors: wife, Peggy; sons, Patrick, Scott, J. J.; mother, Beryl Jones Walker; brother, Kerry; sister, Pamela Maulding.

REV. RALPH LACHANCE, 83, pastor of 40 years, Fredericktown, Mo., June 29. Survivors: wife, Alice; son, P. J.; daughter, Sherry; sister, Lavida Young; 3 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren.

REV. CHARLES C. LANGFORD, 78, Bourbonnais, Ill., Nov. 9. Survivors: wife, Becky; daughters, Annette Howard, Mary Alice Hillman, Beth Dattilo, Esther Henderson; 10 grandchildren.



WILFORD L. LEWIS, 86, Fort Worth, Tex., Feb. 5. Survivors: wife, Vera; sons, Darrell, Gary, Jim; daughters, Geneane Martin, Shelly Hedgpath; stepsons, Roger and Larry Kromer; stepdaughter, Phyllis Schneider; brother, Aubrey; sisters, Lida Mae Caudle, Merlene Lewis; 20 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren.

BERT LUNDY, 89, Escondido, Calif., Feb. 9. Survivors: wife, Dessie; sons, Ronald, Russell; daughter, Beverly Jones.

MARGRETH E. NYSSSEN, 81, Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 1. Survivors: sons, Gerard, Daniel, Dale; seven grandchildren.

GLEN E. PARKS, 74, Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 10. Survivors: wife, Fern; son, Carey; daughter, Glenna Stamps; four grandsons.



REV. ALLEN M. PARLEE, 75, York, Pa., Feb. 6. Survivors: daughters, Virginia Coleman, Sandra Drayer; sisters, Leona Nault, Marguerite Mauri; three stepchildren; one grandson.

JAMES C. PAULEY, 54, Bethany, Okla., Feb. 9. Survivors: wife, Joy; daughters, Jennifer Hanson, Jamie Pauley; mother, Mary Ellen; brother, David; four grandchildren.

MARY RUTH PORTER, Orlando, Fla., Sept. 2. Survivors: husband, Cecil; sons, David, Jeff; daughters, Allison, Jan Queen; four grandchildren.

HARDY POWERS, 71, retired minister, died Jan. 30 in Oklahoma City following an extended illness.



At age 17, Powers enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served his country for three-and-a-half years during World War II.

He was a graduate of Olivet Nazarene College and Nazarene Theological Seminary.

Powers and his wife, Toni, served over 40 years in the ministry with the Church of the Nazarene. He pastored churches on the Washington Pacific, Northern California, Kansas City, and Iowa Districts. He concluded his ministry by pastoring almost 17 years on the Northwest Oklahoma District.

Powers is survived by his wife, Toni; five daughters, Rita Gunsalus, Marcia Saliba, Denise Reed, Carol Broadbooks, and Terri Means; one son, Hardy Powers III, pastor of Joplin (Mo.) First Church; one brother, Dr. J. Dudley Powers; three sisters, Nona Kelly, Geneva McCullough, and Judy Cole; 13 grandchildren; and 4 great-grandchildren. All six of the Powerses' children are involved in the work of the Kingdom.

He was preceded in death by his infant son, J. D. Powers; his father, former general superintendent Dr. Hardy C. Powers,

and his mother, Ruby Mae Powers.

CHERYL JOHNSON SEAGRAVES, 34, Wister, Okla., Dec. 12. Survivors: husband, Rev. Lester; son, Lester II; daughters, Amanda, Rebecca; parents, Elton and Pat Johnson; brother, Michael Johnson; sister, Michelle Gibson.

DAN WAYNE SLEDGE, 71, Duncan, Okla., Jan. 27. Survivors: wife, Stevie; son, Steve; daughters, Becky Buller, Cindy Blystone, Debbie Howe; sister, Rudene West; eight grandchildren.

BOBBIE WILLIS WATERS, 64, Brunswick, Ga., Dec. 6. Survivors: husband, Rev. Charles; son, Greg; grandson, Daniel; mother, Gladys Lowery; sisters, Betty Wiggins, Linda Alexander.

REV. JAMES STANLEY WATSON, 85, Sexsmith, Alta., Jan. 1. Survivors: wife, Edwina; sons, Donald, Dale, Brian, Tom; brother, Johnny; sister, Martha Armstrong; 13 grandchildren.

EGBERT E. WOODS, 89, Columbus, Ohio, Feb. 23. Survivors: wife, Susie; daughters, Lee Marvin, June Petrie, Marian Hood; 3 sisters; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren.

LILLIAN M. WRIGHT, Salem, Ohio, Dec. 15. Survivors: husband, Rev. E. Guy Wright.

Anniversaries

REV. A. ELWOOD and **RUBY SANNER**, Nampa, Idaho, will celebrate their 60th an-

niversary May 25. Greetings may be sent to 719 W. Boone Ave., Nampa, ID 83651.

Announcements

GREENVILLE (TEX.) FIRST CHURCH will celebrate its 60th anniversary May 11 with Dallas District Superintendent David F. Nixon speaking, followed by dinner.

Former pastors, members, and friends are invited to attend or send greetings. For more information, contact Pastor Darrell E. Lloyd, 6606 Wesley St., Greenville, TX 75401, 903-455-3142.

LETHBRIDGE (ALTA.) CHURCH will celebrate its 75th anniversary June 7-8 with a special tent activity Friday evening, a banquet Saturday evening with District Superintendent Daniel Gales speaking, and a 10:30 a.m. Sunday celebration service with CNC President Riley Coulter speaking, followed by lunch on the grounds.

Former pastors, members, and friends are invited. For more information or to make reservations for the Saturday banquet or Sunday afternoon barbecue, contact the church office, 1521 9th Ave. S., Lethbridge, AB T1J 1V9, 403-327-8827.

SAN ANTONIO (TEX.) FIRST CHURCH will celebrate its 85th anniversary June 14-15 with a Saturday fellowship dinner at Churchill High School followed by an inspirational service, and a 9:30 a.m. Sunday celebration service at Municipal Auditorium.

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Former pastors, members, and friends are invited. For more information, call the church office, 210-349-4241, ext. 10.

SANTA ANA (CALIF.) FIRST CHURCH will celebrate its 85th anniversary May 11.

Former pastors, members, and friends are invited to attend or send greetings. For more information, contact the church, 1500 E. 17th St., Santa Ana, CA 92705, 714-835-8271.

VICKSBURG (MICH.) INDIAN LAKE NAZARENE CAMP will celebrate its 70th anniversary during the month of July. Special reunion activities are scheduled during camp meeting, July 12-20. Other special activities are scheduled July 1-5.

For lodging and event information, contact the camp, 7926 Central St., Vicksburg, MI 49097, 616-649-2281 or C. Neil Strait, 616-949-5575.

FOR THE RECORD Moving Ministers

SCOTT ANDERSON, to associate, Redding (Calif.) First

BRIAN BAKER, from Okeechobee, Fla., to pastor, Greensboro (N.C.) Northside

PHIL BALDWIN, to pastor, Republic, Wash.

GEORGIE A. BOZEMAN, from Lake Charles (La.) Moss Bluff, to Hemphill (Tex.) Sabinetown

JAMES S. BOZEMAN, from associate, Lake Charles (La.) Moss Bluff, to pastor, Hemphill (Tex.) Sabinetown

LEONARD W. BUDD, from Spring Hill (Fla.) Calvary Community, to Plum (Pa.) Monroeville

MICHAEL CLARK, to pastor, Clay City (Ind.) Union Chapel

DONALD E. DANIEL, from Mountain Grove, Mo., to Girard, Kans.

ROBERT F. DARR, to pastor, Punxsutawney, Pa.

EARL DEETZ III, from associate, DeLand, Fla., to associate, Jacksonville (Fla.) Oak Hill

JOHN DRUSEDUM from Santa Fe, N.Mex., to Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Rio Vista

DAVID C. DYKES, to pastor, Johnstown, N.Y.

WILLIAM R. EDWARDS, from North Little Rock (Ark.) Rose City, to San Antonio (Tex.) East Terrell Hills

JOEL R. GAY, from associate, Oregon (Ohio) First, to associate, Kalamazoo (Mich.) First

MARK GRAHAM, from pastor, Greensboro (N.C.) Rolling Roads, to general assignment

BEN GREGORY, to pastor, Upper Sandusky, Ohio

GEOFFREY S. GUNTER, from Junction City (Kans.) First, to Arlington (Tex.) First

WAYNE HEIDLER, from student, Trevecca Nazarene University, to pastor, Orleans, Ind.

ANDY HUGHES, from associate, Versailles, Ky., to associate, Huntingburg, Ind.

CECIL A. JONES, from Columbiana, Ohio, to Gallipolis, Ohio

LARRY JONES, to pastor, Richmond (Va.) West End

SHERIE M. KEELEY, to associate, Anderson (Ind.) Goodwin

WILLIAM L. KEEN, from Nappanee, Ind., to Elwood, Ind.

CHARLES E. KELLAR JR., to pastor, El Dorado, Ark.

CURTIS LEWIS, from pastor, North Little Rock (Ark.) First, to superintendent, Northern Michigan District

JAMES A. LOCHARY, to associate, Indianapolis (Ind.) First

DEWEY L. MILLER, to pastor, Pennville (Ind.) Gas City

DONALD M. MINTER, from Indianapolis (Ind.) Shepherd Community, to associate, Glendale (Ariz.) First

ROBERT W. NOOE, from associate, Seattle (Wash.) Aurora, to associate, DeSoto (Tex.) First

DARIN D. NOSSETT, from Evansville (Ind.) Eastview Community, to Oakland City, Ind.

R. SCOTT OSTENDORF, from DeLand, Fla., to Jacksonville (Fla.) Oak Hill

D. PHILLIP PINCKARD, from pastor, El Dorado, Ark., to chaplaincy

MICHAEL RAINES, to pastor, Kualapuu (Hawaii) Molokai

ELDON L. RUSSELL, from Avon Grove, Pa., to Tulsa (Okla.) Calvary

SAM L. STARNES, from pastor, Montpelier, Ohio, to evangelism

PAUL D. SYDENSTRICKER, from St. Petersburg (Fla.) Lealman, to Lake Placid, Fla.

JEFFREY T. TACKEBERRY, from pastor, Terre Haute (Ind.) Southside, to associate, New Albany (Ind.) Eastside

ANDY TESTON, to pastor, Robeline (La.) Holly Grove

TIM VAN HOOSE, from Orleans, Ind., to Georgetown, Ind.

STEVEN VAUGHN, from Phoenix (Ariz.) Desert Hills Fellowship, to Coolidge (Ariz.) Valley Community Fellowship

DAVID P. WARREN, from Mitchell, Ind., to Spencer, Ind.

JAMES H. WILKINS, from pastor, DeQueen, Ark., to special assignment

Moving Missionaries

DOUGHARTY, KENT and MARY, from Côte d'Ivoire to Yukon, Okla.

ESSELSTYN, THEODORE and JOAN, from Mount Vernon, Ohio, to South Africa

GARDNER, DONALD and EVELYN, from Malawi to Holbrook, Ariz.

GOULD, BRENDA, from Côte d'Ivoire to Columbus, Ohio

HEBETS, ROBERT and DONNA, from Papua New Guinea to Crestline, Ohio

LAFORE, WAYNE and CONNIE, from Japan to Olathe, Kans.

LEHRKE, CAROLYN, from Swaziland to Lewisburg, W.Va.

LEUPP, RODERICK and STEPHANIE, from the Philippines to Portland, Ore.

PARK, MICHAEL and DO-YEA, from Dallas, Tex., to Kazakhstan

PSAUTE, DANIEL, from Mesa, Ariz., to ENBC

ROTZ, JAMES and CAROL, from Kenya to Vancouver, Wash.

SEAMAN, JOHN and LINDA, from Côte d'Ivoire to River Forest, Ill.

SUNBERG, JAY and TEANNA, from Olathe, Kans., to Russia

Missionary Receives World Relief Award

Brian Johnson of Virginia Beach, Va., received World Relief's 18th Helping Hands Award for his service to the people of Liberia, Africa, in the face of personal risk, according to a recent news release.

Johnson arrived in Liberia in 1973 as a tentmaker missionary. From 1983 to 1989 he served with Carver Foreign Missions. In 1989, when war engulfed Liberia, Johnson, his wife, and children were forced to leave.

Johnson return to Liberia in 1994 as World Relief's director. Within months of his arrival, nearly 700 church leaders from 16 tribal groups and 23 denominations gathered to begin the hard work of forgiving one another for past atrocities.

During reconciliation ef-

forts, his wife's father and three other relatives were murdered. One year later, when the Johnson family was trapped in their home by rebels, they had to be rescued by helicopter.

Today, the Association of Evangelicals in Liberia (AEL) has a Liberian leader; however, Johnson continues to advise them and carry out the work of World Relief in the AEL.

"Brian, with his family's permission, turned his back on security to serve God in a difficult place," said Bas Vanderzalm, World Relief's vice president of international ministries. "God has used Brian almost single-handedly to bring unity to church leaders and propel the AEL into ministering to the hurts of the people."



Johnson

Significant Court Case Involves Church

In Boerne, Tex., population 5,400, an old Catholic church needs to expand. However, local zoning regulations restrict changing the appearance of *historical* structures.

In court, the church is relying on the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), contending that the city has no "compelling reason" to keep the church from enlarging to meet its needs. City officials argue that the RFRA is unconstitutional, even though it passed the U.S. Congress with a unanimous voice vote

in the House and only three dissenting votes in the Senate.

According to the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), this is the most momentous church-state case to come before the Supreme Court in our nation's history. The NAE believes the religious liberty of every American is at stake in the court's decision. On the side of the church is the U.S. Justice Department, which will defend the constitutionality of the RFRA.

New Law Benefits Homosexuals

The city council of San Francisco, Calif., has passed a law forcing companies doing business with the city to offer benefits to partners of homosexuals. An estimated 8,000 companies—including firms

owned by Christians—will be affected. The law, taking effect in May of 1997, boosts the drive for same-sex marriage by requiring economic support of same-sex couples.

Sauntering Saints

JOHN C. BOWLING



John C. Bowling is president of Olivet Nazarene University.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF when you hear or see the word *saunter*? Do you picture a leisurely stroll through the mall, a walk in the park, an amble across the campus? Saunter is a pleasant word, a word of leisure. No hurry, no worries—just out for a walk in any direction.

The word *saunter* has an interesting history. It is derived from the French words *sainte terre*, meaning “Holy Land.” During the period of the great Crusades, soldiers marched across Europe on their way to liberate the Holy Land, the *sainte terre*.

As these individuals journeyed through France, Christians who lived along the main roads and in the major towns and villages would often give these travelers food and accommodation for the night as they continued their “holy journey.”

It didn’t take long for some people to learn they could pretend to be going *à la sauntier* (to the Holy Land). They had no real intention of going there, but this was a convenient way to get a free night’s room and board.

These impostors became identified after a time, and they were called “saunterers”: those who pretended to be going somewhere, those who appeared to be on a holy journey, but

who were, in fact, impostors. These were individuals who professed what they did not really possess and pretended to be what they were not.

The Christian life was not then, nor is it now, a saunter. Our calling is not to a leisurely stroll. It is not a pretense. It is a march that calls for conviction and sacrifice. The Christian life must have discipline and purpose. There is direction. There is a cadence. There is a goal to pursue.

In his classic book *The Church*, Hans Kung writes:

If the Church really sees itself as the people of God, it is obvious that it can never be a static phenomenon. The Church is always and everywhere a living people, gathered together from the peoples of this world and journeying through the midst of time. The Church is essentially “en route,” on a journey, a pilgrimage. A Church which pitches its tents without looking out constantly for new horizons, which does not continually strike camp, is being untrue to its calling.

We are a pilgrim people: men and women who do more than talk about taking up our cross. We must be men and women who lay all pretense aside. We must truly join the great crusade to liberate the world from sin.

There is no such thing as a “sauntering saint.” We do not meander; we march. And it is this sense of purpose and direction that gives rhythm and eternal meaning to our daily life. This is what Jesus was saying when He called to His followers, “Take up your cross and follow Me.” This was a call to action.

Mikos Kazantzakis writes:

My prayer is not the whimpering of a beggar, nor a confession of love. Nor is it the trivial reckoning of a small tradesman: “Give me and I shall give you.”

My prayer is the report of a soldier to his general: This is what I did today, this is how I fought to save the entire battle in my own sector, these are the obstacles I found, this is how I plan to fight tomorrow.

My God and I are horsemen galloping in the burning sun or under drizzling rain. Pale, starving, but unsubdued, we ride and converse.

I like the sentiment of those words, for I want my life to have purpose and direction. I don’t want to drift my way toward eternity. Surely our call to discipleship is a call to join the army of the Lord. It is a summons to service.

*It may not be on the mountain's height,
Or over the stormy sea;
It may not be at the battle's front
My Lord will have need of me.
But if by a still, small voice He calls
To paths I do not know,*

The Christian life is a march that calls for conviction and sacrifice.

*I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in Thine,
"I'll go where You want me to go."*

—Mary Brown

My fear is that the culture of ease that surrounds us and the lack of urgency and mission found within the church may cause us, like those early saunterers, to follow Christ for what we may gain, rather than what we may give to His cause.

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God's Aloha

by Joanne Martin Walker



Don't change out of your muumuu, Mom." Joel carried the last load of folding chairs from the large room that was undergoing its weekly transformation from sanctuary to living room. Stacking the chairs in the storage closet, he added, "We're going for a ride."

I smiled at the role reversal. On Mother's Day, I was happy to take orders. "Good timing! I was looking in my suitcase, deciding what to wear."

Joel blotted his forehead with the hem of his shirt. "We thought we'd take a drive up to the north end of the island. When you two mothers are ready, we can go."

"Fine! I'll just finish putting the hymnals away." Kneeling by the bookshelf, I mused. A ride would be nice. With a new baby in the house, Selu's and my only jaunts had been to the grocery store. This was a working vacation, but it would be a treat to play tourist.

Joel had been cooped up too. A carpenter, he had been out of work for three months. Weekly sign-in

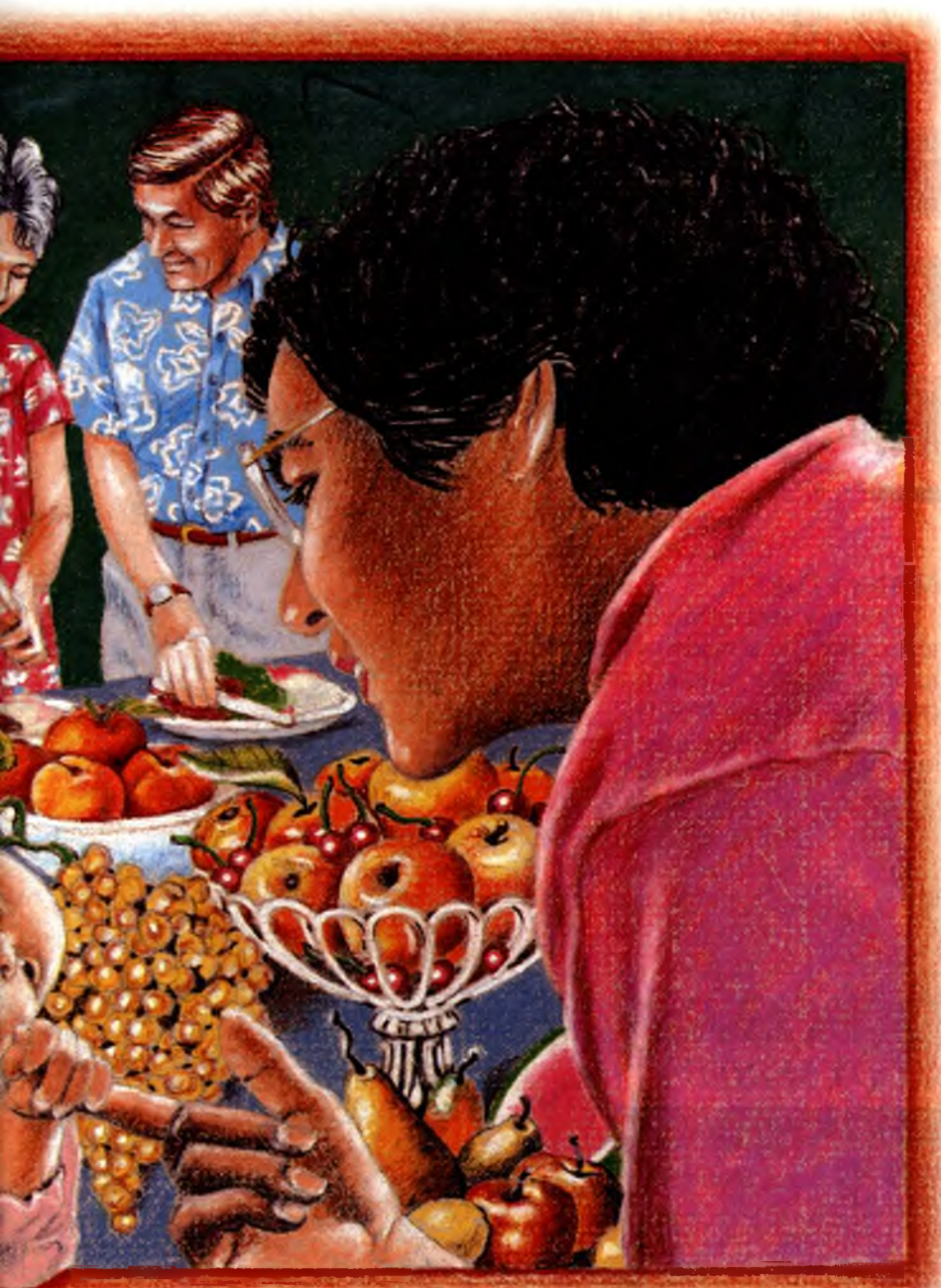
at union headquarters in Honolulu had been his excursion. Yes, a ride was what we needed, and it wouldn't cost much. Unless . . . worry fingered the edge of my mind. What if they took me out to dinner? Their budget couldn't stand such a splurge. I jammed the last book into the shelf and pushed the idea away. After all, it was only 10 A.M. It was hard to get used to the early service.

Standing up, I peered out the window. An hour earlier, a pile of empty shoes almost blocked the doorway. Japanese, Samoan, and Caucasian parishioners dropped their shoes and noisy chatter at the door of their home church. Some would return for Monday evening Bible study, but otherwise the space would be living room, playroom, and at night, my bedroom.

What a blessing this house was. Joel's carpentry skills and Selu's gracious hostessing qualified them as caretakers. In return, they re-

ceived a comfortable home. Most important to me was the assurance that they were always present at the weekly Bible study. For two years, I had prayed they would join a study group. God's answer was better than my dreams.

"Now, Lord, if only You could help them financially. Well, I know You could . . . but before I leave, it would mean so much if I had a hint that things were going to improve. They feel so rich now with their income tax refund, but



Roland Miller

ANNA SAID THAT SHE WANTED ME TO HAVE A HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY.

mind. As he edged us into a queue, I spied a "Sunday Brunch" sign.

I groaned inwardly, "What shall I do, Lord? Should I offer to pay? I can't let them spend their grocery money on one meal. Their gesture is what matters, isn't it?"

Two smiling faces anticipated my response, as if waiting for me to open a gift. I couldn't spoil their treat.

"You two! I've really wanted to eat here. This is the nicest Mother's Day present you could give me."

"It's a small thank-you for coming to help with the baby." Selu's smile drew us together, but I ached inside. Perhaps I could pay at the door. My thoughts jostled for control. I had asked the Lord for a sign that their financial situation would improve. If I helped out, would I be playing God? Like a mother separating quarreling children, I pushed conflicting thoughts apart. I decided to let God be God.

We admired the buffet table as we waited. Before long, Joel and I stood in front of an overwhelming

You know that won't last long without a job."

Joel broke into my prayer with "Ready, Mom?" They stood in the archway, Joel's blond hair contrasting with the black French braids of his Samoan wife and the dark tufts of their new son, Noa. I memorized the back view of those heads as we drove up the island. This intense blue ocean was going to separate us on Tuesday, and I wanted to remember their every detail.

Turning into the entrance of the

hotel at the north end of the island, Joel mimicked a tour guide, "And here's where Joel and Selu spent the first night of their honeymoon."

"Oh, good. I've been wanting to see the grounds ever since we drove you here on your wedding night."

Once out of the car, I lingered over the Tahitian gardenia bushes, but Joel urged me on. "Let's go inside."

Selu and I dawdled in the shops, but again Joel had something else in

spread, our plates in hand. Selu cuddled Noa and talked with our waitress.

Two heaping plates later, we traded places with Selu. I gladly accepted the cuddling job.

When Selu returned, she said, "Our waitress is a girl I knew in high school. We weren't close friends, but we were on the track team together." Spearing a pineapple chunk, she grinned. "It was fun catching up on each other's news while you two held up the buffet line. I always liked Anna, and she really likes Noa."

With Noa's snoozing cooperation, we leisurely sampled the entrées and lingered over dessert. As we reluctantly left the table, Selu and I were thankful for muumuus that hid our waistlines. Joel proudly carried Noa until we reached the cashier. Suddenly, he whirled

around, depositing Noa in Selu's arms. "I forgot to pick up our bill."

A few minutes later, he returned, a stunned look on his face. "The maître d' said that our waitress had taken care of the bill."

The baby quickly changed hands again as Selu darted back to our table. When she joined us, she reached for Noa and wiped her eyes against his downy hair. "Anna said that she wanted me to have a happy

IF I HELPED OUT, WOULD I BE PLAYING GOD?

Mother's Day."

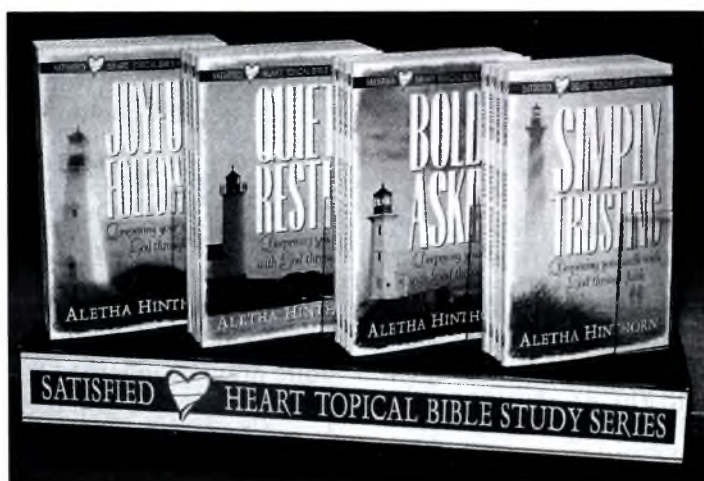
I put my arm around my daughter-in-law. "She made two mothers happy. Anna's gift in no way diminishes your generosity."

Joel scowled. His voice accused, "Did she know about my job?"

Selu looked hurt. "Joel! No."

Gently, I laid my hand on his arm. "God knew. This is His Mother's Day gift too." **HH**

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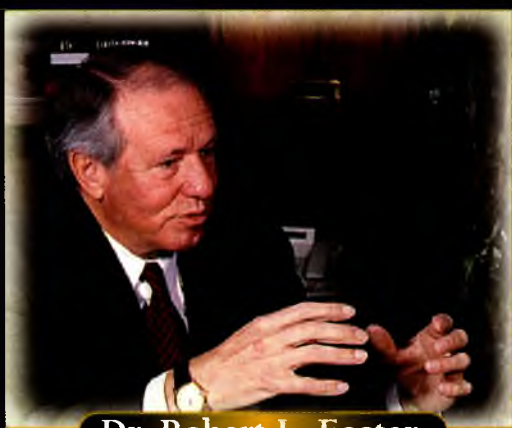
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