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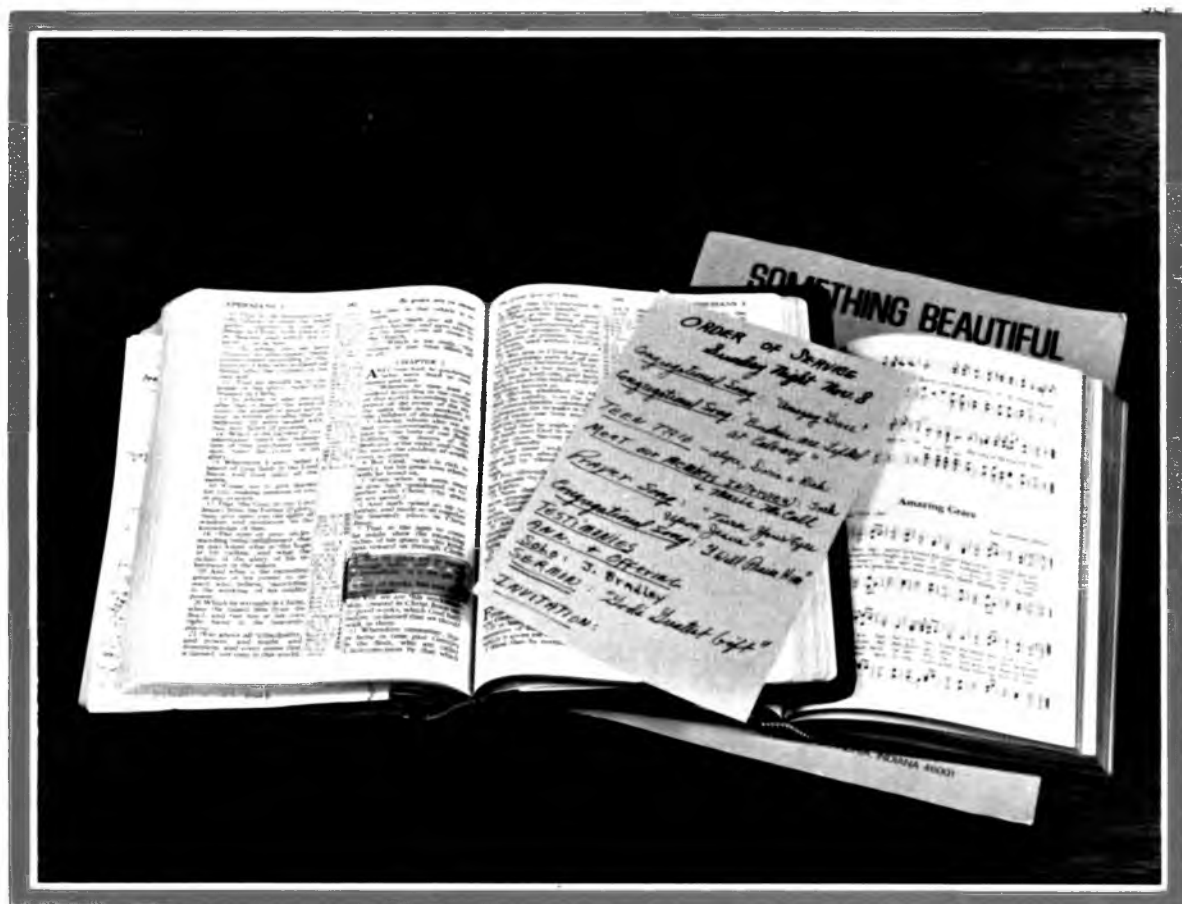
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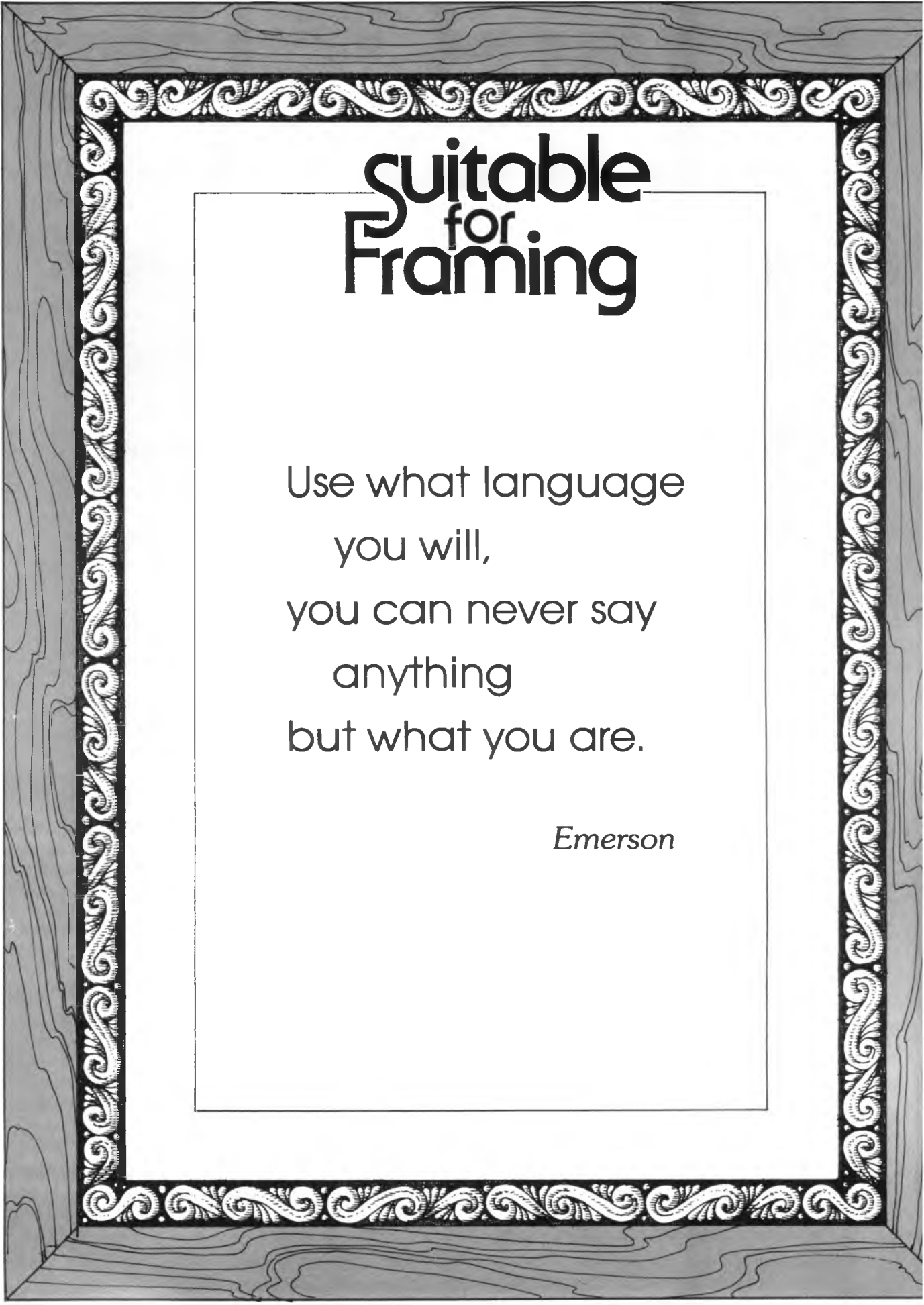
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THE
**PREACHER'S
MAGAZINE**

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, 1981



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suitable for Framing

Use what language
you will,
you can never say
anything
but what you are.

Emerson

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

Proclaiming Christian Holiness

Volume 57, Number 1

September, October, November 1981

IN THIS ISSUE

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by
Wesley
Tracy



THE FOUR SPIRITUAL FLAWS

More than four spiritual flaws flounce about these days. Probably dozens saunter into our sanctuaries, stretch their legs, put their feet on the furniture, and make themselves at home. I'm sure that anyone who cared to could flag more than four flaws in my own life before coffee break. In this editorial, however, I want to blow the whistle on just four.

1. The Do-It-Yourself-Jesus Flaw

Several years ago, one of those traveling "Passion Plays" came to Oil City, Pa., where I was pastoring. Dutifully, I paid my \$1.50 for 18" of hard bleacher in the high school gym to see the show. Parts of it were good, but the guy who played Jesus made me sick. He *created* his own role of Jesus, and tried to make of my Lord a prissy little wimp. Worse yet, the observers came dangerously close to bruising their hands clapping when he took his dainty bows at encore time.

Few of us will ever perform in a traveling Passion Play, but many these days are busy with a spiritual do-it-yourself kit. With this handy gadget, you can build your own Jesus—in your own image if you wish. Some make a super-puritan, fruit-inspecting, no excuses, no exceptions triple threat judge of Jesus. More people make their own "Jesus" into a sentimental would-be savior who only understands two words, "unconditional permissiveness." His primary activity is to give good-humored winks at selfishness, lust, and greed.

No distortion or counterfeit is impossible with a "Do-It-Yourself-Jesus Kit." Blasphemy of the most perfidious sort is not a rare result. So let us straightway junk *all* "Do-It-Yourself-Jesus Kits" and live in the New Testament where the real Jesus is made known.

2. The Losers-Limp Flaw

It's fourth down and one yard to go for the winning touchdown. The football is handed to number 24. He scampers off left tackle, but is smacked to the ground agonizing inches short of goal. Time runs out, the game is lost and number 24 *limps*, repeat, *limps* toward the sideline. The right fielder who misses a fly in the ninth inning or a basketball player who misses a crucial lay-up quite likely will *limp* too. These athletes are not hurt. They usually are not even aware that they limp. But the people in sports medicine recognize it at once. They see *losers limp* all the time. It's an unconscious appeal to the observers which if put into words would go something like this: "It's really not my fault I failed—you see, I'm injured."

Of course, this refusal to take responsibility is older than most hills. It's straight out of the Edenic drama where Adam tried to blame Eve and then God for his sin. Of course, as we all know, that kind of "Rolaid" gave no relief, and Adam finally had to spell relief "*I did eat*" (Gen. 3:12).

In our day, when even a lot of Christians have "cozied" up so snugly to the behaviorists, we have refined the drama. We have been taught for a long time that human beings are just passive lumps on which the environment acts. Now, strangely enough, millions of people really believe that. They truly believe they're not responsible for their own conduct. Just ask them about their rotten behavior, and they will tell you that it was because Mother was too strict, or that Dad didn't take them to the zoo, or that their Sunday School teacher wasn't spiritual, or that society warped them. Their troubles are all someone else's fault.

An extreme case of child abuse was reported recently in Kansas City. Exercising rare good taste,

instead of showing the battered child, the television crew filmed an interview with a social work expert. "Why do people abuse their children?" the reporter asked. In the 90-second film clip, the expert said six times, "They really have no choice." The lack of choice was laid at the feet of environmental conditioning.

The Christian must avoid this "flaw," for evading freedom and responsibility, and adopting *losers limp* can sometimes look as delicious as a hot fudge sundae on the fourth day of a diet. Do we not believe that by prevenient grace God has made man capable of choosing good or evil? Does not the Bible treat human beings as responsible? What an inappropriate stunt to declare "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" if we really can't!

3. The Single-Brick-Holiness Flaw

Especially in America where individualism is "past all prizing best" it is easy to regard the Bible only as a book of individual devotion. The truth is that many biblical promises are aimed at the collective entity of the community of faith. For example, in 1 Cor. 3:16, Paul says, "Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (NASB). It is grammatically clear that it is the community of Christians, the entire Corinthian church which the Spirit made His temple.

It was my privilege to read the 16 sermons submitted by Nazarene Theological Seminary seniors for the Corlett Holiness Sermon Award. I read all 16 at one sitting—not a highly recommended practice. But one thing that overcame eye strain and lodged in my mind and heart was Michael Lodahl's treatment of this 1 Corinthians theme. He pointed out effectively that holiness is more than an individual matter. "Lone Ranger" holiness is out. Michael says, "We are holy only as we present ourselves as building blocks to the holy temple of God in which His Spirit dwells." He adds, "We would not be far wrong to modify Cyprian's famous statement 'No salvation outside the church' to say 'No sanctification outside the church.'"

So being an isolated brick masquerading as a temple is a farce for our "holiness or lack thereof becomes all too evident against the backdrop of one's relationship to his 'fellow bricks.'"

Christians are holy temples individually (1 Cor. 6:19) but also collectively (1 Cor. 3:16). Getting this mixed up is a flaw worth avoiding. The "single brick syndrome" will have us damaging the Spirit's

temple (the community of faith) with unloving isolationism, jealousy, competition, and factions *ala* Corinth. A brick not mortared into the building is something which toes are stubbed on, not something which supports the altar and the Cross.

4. The God-Has-Lost-Track-of-Me Flaw

Life's checkerboard brings dark times with amazing regularity. Darkness comes in many varieties. Sometimes it wears labels like leukemia, delinquency, loneliness, divorce, failure. On occasion, it wears tragic designer-type initials like D.O.A., M.I.A., or O.D.

At such times, our faith can go from childlike to childish in a hurry. Almost as if we believed that since we can't see God, He can't see us. We feel lost, forsaken, alone. In times like that, we need Isaiah 40:27-28 more than ever:

Why do you say . . .

*"My way is hidden from the Lord,
And the justice due me escapes the notice of my
God?"*

*Do you not know? Have you not heard?
The Everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the
ends of the earth*

Does not become weary or tired.

His understanding is inscrutable. (NASB)

Isaiah goes on in verses 29-31 to tell us that our great God gives *strength* to the *tired*, *power* to the *weak*, renewal to those who *stumble in exhaustion* and new *wings* to those who *patiently wait* for the Lord. (See NASB and RSV.)

Sometimes the darkest periods come when ministerial failure clouds and chills the soul. At such a moment moving close to the warm glow of the candle Charles Spurgeon lit with this word helps: "*Continue with double earnestness to serve your Lord when no visible result is before you. Any simpleton can follow the narrow path in the light: faith's rare wisdom enables us to march on in the dark with infallible accuracy, since she places her hand in that of her Great Guide. Between this and heaven there may be rougher weather yet, but it is all provided for by our covenant Head. In nothing let us be turned aside from the path which the divine call has urged us to pursue. Come fair or come foul, the pulpit is our watch-tower, and the ministry our warfare; be it ours, when we cannot see the face of our God, to trust under the shadow of His wings.*"



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THE ARK ROCKER

Of Phone Booths, Poobahs, and Powwows

Remember Clark Kent, mild-mannered reporter for the *Daily Planet*? Come trouble and he'd nip into some handy hiding place, frequently a phone booth, and emerge as Superman—"faster than a speeding bullet (zing!), more powerful than a locomotive (whoo-whooh!), able to leap tall buildings in a single bound (whoosh!)." Delightful fantasy. Caused more than one kid to parade around the neighborhood with a towel or part of a bed sheet tied around his neck.

And here's the thought for the day: **Conferences ain't phone booths.**

Think what happens to expectation levels at the big legislative whing-dings when we dub somebody "Lord Pooh-bah." (Lovely term. Got it from a friend via Gilbert and Sullivan.) No matter what ordinariness stepped into the phone booth of election or appointment, we all know that what emerges is Supercleric; wit, wisdom, and competence oozing from every pore. And neither the newly created pooh-bahship nor ourselves want it any other way.

But the burden of it is too great. The process costs us and the new pooh-bah our critical capacities, our discernment, our discretion. The continual need for grace and forgiveness, for ourselves and the new pooh-bah, seems to have been left in the phone booth. Legislative whing-dings ain't phone booths and pooh-bahs ain't Superclerics. We know that and we don't know it. We pray for the Second Coming and almost seem to deny we need it once we've been to the phone booth.

Then there's the continuing education or promotional powwow. "Your chance to be Supercleric!" "Duck into this phone booth and burst out a new man (or woman)!" Only the kryptonite of an uncooperative spirit has kept us from winning the world! (Kryptonite alone could limit Superman to mere mortality.)

Hey! We need powwows and pooh-bahs. But that phone-booth syndrome has to go! It comes awfully close to the mentality of the idol manufacturer's shop sometimes. There, you threw your small change and trinkets into the fire, melted them and moulded them into statues and then called upon them to save you.

Where do you suppose this outlook comes from? I'd say it comes in part at least from looking at conferences

as starting blocks, as new beginnings, and under-valuing the past. Doting upon the past is foolish, of course. But celebrating God's faithfulness to His promises and asking forgiveness for not believing deeply and grandly enough—especially now that we see how steadfast He was—might keep us from acting as if the past were something from which we must recover and as if the future were entirely up to us. If the conference even for a moment gets us to believing that *we're* the script writers, directors, and actors in the drama to come, we have idol construction on our hands. Or, to get back toward our original metaphor, if conference gets us to making our own diagnoses of problems, proposing our own solutions, and believing we have just the folks and just the resources for meeting them, we're guaranteeing false expectation. We're building the phone booth.

These days, our perception of things rests upon the assumptions of the social sciences. Psychology, sociology, economics—their insights are treated as final, their systems are viewed as fixed. Overlooked is the fact that they are human inventions fraught with infighting and constant shifts. Useful they are. Useful indeed—as always fallible means. But conclusions drawn from analyzing by way of them may not be God's conclusions. And proposals established upon the bases they provide may miss by miles the divine design. They do produce the illusion that now we've nailed things down, now "we've got the plan and the man." But that's only because we've been taught to see things from that angle.

So how do we avoid the phone-booth syndrome? First, accept the mystery of history. It is God's territory and resists human analysis. Here too we walk by faith. The one thing it does tell us is that God keeps His promises. Second, let's let the Spirit really be free. Let's submit our plans and elections in a spirit of stewardship, not ownership, of the gospel vineyard. It may be that on occasion the *real* leadership of the Church won't be the elected leadership, and the *real* plan or agenda may come from a congregation of two dozen in Podunk or from a layperson with all of the administrative and theological savior-faire of Lois Lane. How will we know? Not by looking for the nearest phone booth!

The Ark Locker



Dave Anderson



THE SUNDAY NIGHT SERVICE



Thomas E. Saner



Susan Downs

Thomas E. Saner



SUCCESS ON SUNDAY NIGHTS

by Robert E. Maner*

The Sunday night service has become an embarrassment rather than an asset in some churches. We used to call it the Sunday night evangelistic service. All too often there is no one to evangelize anymore. In fact, in some midweek newsletters that I receive the Sunday night attendance is about the same as the midweek prayer meeting.

What is a pastor supposed to do with this kind of an audience? The evangelistic sermon seems a bit ridiculous. He has already preached a devotional sermon in the morning worship service. Prayer meeting is coming Wednesday night, so he can't turn it into a testimony and prayer service. What can the pastor do with the Sunday night service under these circumstances?

During the years of my ministry I have discovered some methods that have proven consistently successful in a wide variety of churches. My present church has a membership of 190 and we averaged 141 in the Sunday night church attendance the last church year. Now, 141 is not a large congregation but the ratio to membership is the point. We consider this a reasonable response by the resident members and friends of the church.

We have found the following things to be helpful in building this size Sunday night congregation.

1. We count and report the attendance as accurately as we do Sunday School. The importance of this as a first step cannot be overemphasized. This count is reported every week in our midweek newsletter. The congregation immediately becomes conscious of the night service. They begin to see it as an important service. Some newsletters that I receive will say something like this, "We had good attendance last Sunday night." How good? What do you consider good? Was it more or less than the Sunday before? Tell your people exactly how many were there. If your members were absent, their conscience will begin to work on them.

2. Start preaching the kind of sermons you would preach if you had an auditorium filled with unsaved

people. It will seem strange at first to preach a sermon on "What the Rich Man Learned in Hell" to 20 church members. But if you have the courage to do it, you will be surprised at the results. Some of them will begin bringing their unsaved relatives and friends to hear "their pastor" preach. If the people know you intend to continue this style of Sunday night pulpit ministry, things will begin to change at your church.

3. Have the best musical program that you can provide. You can have a choir on Sunday night. Offer a wide variety that involves as many people as possible. Use every musical instrument you have available. Develop a teen choir. Here also is an opportunity for a junior and primary choir to sing. Get everybody involved on Sunday night.

4. Use some of your bright promotional ideas for Sunday night rather than saving them all for Sunday School. Advertise the Sunday night service with the same "gusto" as any other interest of the church. Give the people the impression that the Sunday night service is not only important but essential.

5. Several years ago Wesley Charden wrote an article for *Life* magazine entitled "Sunday School—The Most Wasted Hour of the Week." I am sure we can all improve our Sunday Schools. But the hour most wasted by many churches is the one just preceding the Sunday night service. Most churches used to have a service for the youth at this time. In many cases that has long since vanished.



*Robert E. Maner is pastor of the First Church of the Nazarene, Valdosta, Georgia.

We have developed a program that has greatly helped our Sunday night attendance and gives us an additional hour of training and Bible study as well. We call ours the SEED Hour. This means Sunday Evening Educational and Development Hour. The NYI meets at this time as well as several other groups. In fact the junior choir meets for practice, the teens have a quiz team meeting at this time, the teen choir uses this time to practice and the single adults have a study group. We have in our church what we call the SWAT Team. This is our Soul Winning And Testifying Team. They have a class that meets just before the evening service. We have a tiny tots and crib nursery open for all mothers with small children who are involved in these classes. In all we have about six groups meeting at this time. We try to keep these programs flexible and suited to the needs and interest of the various groups.

Attendance, which starts at 5 p.m. with some committee meeting, will reach 90 or 100 by the time the SEED Hour group is dismissed at 6:45. There is a 15-minute intermission between the two services. Some will stop by the prayer room on their way to the evening service. It all looks very much like a night Sunday School as people from all over the building file into the auditorium.

Another 30 or more people have arrived for the evening service who were not present in the SEED service. Our service begins promptly at 7 p.m. We try to keep the length of the evening service to about one hour. I almost always give an altar call on Sunday night. Our altar calls are never long or tedious. It is simply an opportunity to come to Christ. There are no high-pressure methods or special gimmicks used to get people to the altar. It is nothing more than an opportunity that the people know they will have every Sunday night at their church. Last year we had people at the altar on 25 Sunday nights.

Every church is different and every plan must be adapted before it can be used helpfully. I am sure 7 p.m. would be too late for some congregations. Certainly, some churches would have to start with only one or two study groups on Sunday night. Others will be limited with their music or leadership or small groups. There will be discouraging Sunday nights when attendance is low as in former days.

May I suggest five basic principles that will be helpful:

1. You must be convinced that the Sunday night service is not a hopelessly lost cause.

2. You must involve your leadership. Impress on the church board, the Sunday School teachers,

everyone in leadership, the importance of their presence on Sunday night. Until you get your key leadership's support, you will have little success with the rest of the church.

3. You must produce a service worth attending. Your competition is strong. People no longer go to church because there is nothing else to do. They may go to church on Sunday morning to ease a guilty conscience, but you have no such ally to help you on Sunday night.

4. You must capitalize on your assets. If you are a good Bible preacher, use that gift to its best advantage. Make your preaching the focal point of the service. If you have a lot of musical talent in your church, use this as extensively as you can. Like David, when he faced Goliath, use what you have.

5. You must have God's help. Develop a prayer consciousness among your people. No church ever succeeded at anything spiritually without strong prayer support.

At no point is prayer more vital than when we are trying to win people to Christ. Get the maximum number of people praying for the success of the night service.

The potential for the Sunday night service is limitless. We have special guest speakers or singers when they are available. We use the fifth Sunday each quarter for an hour-long singspiration. I just finished a sermon series on the Book of Daniel in which I gave out mimeographed material with each sermon. A series on the Book of Revelation or on holiness would likely be well received.

When the pastor expresses enthusiasm for the Sunday night service the people will begin to reflect the same attitude. A negative attitude toward anything cannot be disguised by the pastor. If the pastor feels negative about the Sunday night service, he is in a bad situation. The people can stay home but the pastor can't.



**Last year we had people
at the altar on 25 Sunday nights.**

CLIMATE, EXPECTATION, AND SPIRIT

by Dennis Johnson*

“Shining Lights on Sunday Nights . . .” This bold headline captioned the feature article in the city’s leading newspaper. It told of the excitement and dynamic of the Sunday evening service in the First Church of the Nazarene. While other churches were dark and silent, or at best, dull, here was a church alive with a sense of expectation. As a member of that congregation, I looked forward to the evening service. The weekly newsletter and Sunday bulletin had whetted my appetite with a statement about the pastor’s message and a preview of the special music. I knew the service would begin on time, that everyone who participated would be prepared, and that the total service was planned to meet the worshiper’s needs. Inviting friends and neighbors to share that excitement was a positive joy.

Every pastor wants that kind of service. Far too often, the Sunday night service depends heavily for attendance on church families whose consciences make them feel guilty when absent. Their motivation for attendance may actually be negative rather than positive. If this motivation can be changed to make people of all ages feel they cannot afford to miss the night service, the church has begun a new day of growth and excitement. How do you develop a climate of expectation and positive spirit in the Sunday night service?

Climate may be defined as the composite of generally existing conditions, averaged over a period of time. Expectation speaks of something to which one looks forward. Spirit is an inspiring or animating principle such as pervades and tempers thought, feeling, or action. Climate, expectation, and spirit are closely interrelated and interdependent. Let’s examine the major elements of each.

Climate

Pastor, you are the key to establishing the climate of worship in your services. The first step is your decision to make the Sunday night service dynamically alive. If Sunday night is of secondary value to you, it will show. Poor organization, ill-prepared music, and the careless conduct and dress of the choir, ushers, and service participants will reflect the lesser value you place on the service. Your attitude and expectations will reflect your priorities and set the pace.

Climate reflects the atmosphere that exists over a period of time. If climate is to be changed, careful long-range planning is required. Attention must be given to the purpose of the Sunday evening service. If the weekly services are much the same, people may simply choose which of the three they want to attend. Evaluating the needs of your people and community and planning the total ministry approach of the church is essential. The Sunday night service should have an atmosphere all its own. With advance planning, each service can have a specific theme. The music, message, scripture . . . every aspect of the service can focus on that theme. Leslie Parrott states, “Although the Holy Spirit will apply the blessings of a good service to as many needs as there are people present, the blessings seem to pour more freely in a service with a central theme or purpose.”¹



*Dennis Johnson is pastor of the Overland Park Church of the Nazarene, Overland Park, Kansas.

Planning should include concern for the “flow” of the service. Beginning on time with a strong, positive opening sets the tone, lifts the spirits of the people, and lets everyone know the service is underway. In a preservice meeting with participants, the order of the service is given. Careful planning and communication avoids “dead spots”—those moments in the service where nothing positive is happening. If the special singer waits to be announced, walks from the middle of the sanctuary to the musician to give them the music, then moves to the pulpit to sing, worshippers are distracted and ministry is severely hampered. With thoughtful planning, the climate of the evening service may be so positive and meaningful that people become excited and expectant about coming to church.

Expectation

Expectation is both a result and cause of a positive climate. Careful planning results in services that are alive and meet needs. Worshippers begin to look forward to the next service. Promotion or publicity helps to build that expectation. Too often, the disproportionate space given to the evening service in the Sunday bulletin reflects its lower value. Prior planning makes it possible to promote the service in the midweek mailer, the local newspaper, or other means.

Sunday evening sermon series, although requiring careful planning, will add much to the appeal, particularly if the series is publicized and geared to the needs of the people. Special speakers, music groups, children and youth presentations add variety and offer appeal to the broader community. Additional advertising may broaden community awareness and lift the excitement of the congregation.

An illustration of the effect of expectation was given by a vacationing pastor who visited a large church of another denomination on a Sunday evening. As he got out of his car, he was warmly greeted by a parking attendant who introduced himself, asked if he had attended before, then said, “You’re going to enjoy tonight’s service! You will especially be blessed by our pastor’s message.” As he reached the doors, he was greeted again with that same message. Inside the foyer, another greeter reinforced that message; and the usher, who seated him repeated it once again. This visiting pastor remarked, “By that time, I was literally sitting on the edge of my seat with expectation, waiting for the service to begin.”

As he later reflected on the service, he determined that it was no better than many he had experienced in his own church. But the level of expectation that had been communicated to him had made that service great. Pastor, you and your people can build a spirit of excitement and expectation for the evening service.

Spirit

Climate and expectation provide the atmosphere in which spirit is generated. For the Christian, spirit

is not simply enthusiasm, although enthusiasm is acceptable and needed in the church. Spirit comes from our awareness of the provision, presence, and power of God for us, with us, and in us. As we come to worship, we need to be keenly aware that we come to worship God; that our dependence is upon Him; that our focus is not on what we do, but upon God’s doing, then and now.

Personal participation encourages the development of spirit and adds value to the experience of worship. People are more committed to that which directly involves them. Our faith and involvement is encouraged when we see others participating. Also there is a direct ratio between the number involved with specific assignment and the number present in the service. The capacity for participation is as varied as the gifts and talents of the people. Whatever the involvement, it should be delegated in advance with clear instruction as to the importance and place in the service. Scripture reading and prayer should be preassigned, so that the participants may be prepared for these important elements of worship. Special music, including the use of children and youth, contribute greatly to the spirit of the service. Additional lay involvement may include interviews, special announcements, skits, drama, and puppets. When the pastor is aware of a victory, a preplanned testimony can encourage an effective testimony time. As people are involved, the service belongs to them in deeper measure. A spirit of excitement and personal concern results.

Spirit is more than planned involvement. Prayer is essential. Without prayer, planning may become cold calculation. Without prayer, publicity and promotion may come across as slick advertising. Without prayer, preparation can be mechanical and participation may be coldly professional, creating a climate of performance and entertainment rather than worship and ministry. Rather than need-centered, the service may appear to be an end in itself. Prayer places the focus where it belongs—on God and the desire we have for His presence and power in our midst. As the pastor, you must give evidence of having been with God. Every participant should know that their part is important; that it all matters. When people have been praying for the service, they come to worship expecting the presence of God. When we have prayed, when we are prepared and expectant, then it is His Spirit that creates the spirit of worship and celebration.

Pastor, you are the key! You can have a Sunday evening service that is alive and brings them back. By definition it is apparent that this kind of service is not a “one shot” situation. One top-notch service in a series of mediocre gatherings will not generate change. But the week-to-week, month-to-month building of the climate and expectation of worship will generate that dynamic spirit in which needs are met and lives are changed. The evening service can be so alive and so inspiring that people feel they cannot afford to miss it. Your church can offer, “Shining Lights on Sunday Night.” 

1. Leslie Parrott, *Building Today's Church* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City), p. 78.

THE SUNDAY NIGHT SERVICE— WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

by Harold E. Raser*



Dave A

The Sunday night service has not always been the "poor kid on the block" of Christian worship which it sometimes seems to be today. A survey of the historical development of worship reveals that, quite to the contrary, evening worship may well have been the original form of worship practiced by Christians. It appears from the few references we have in Scripture and other documents from the earliest period of the Church that an evening "breaking of bread" on the first day of the week formed the basis of the first distinctively Christian worship service. For some time the first Christians frequented the synagogue, maintaining their connection with Judaism, but this practice was supplemented and eventually replaced by specifically Christian gatherings where Jesus was honored as Lord and prayers and praise were offered in His name.

Acts 20:7-11 describes a typical gathering of Christians on what they came to call "The Lord's Day"—typical except for the fact that the meeting lasted until daybreak and one of the congregation was fatally afflicted by the long-winded sermon. Yet the hour and nature of the meeting seem to reflect the common custom of the time. At the heart of this

evening's gathering was the "breaking of bread" which commemorated the disciples' "last supper" with Jesus on the eve of His crucifixion and probably also grew out of His fellowship with them on the evening of His resurrection (see John 20:19 ff. and Luke 24:36 ff.). Following these examples, Christians met together in private homes for fellowship with one another and with the risen Lord on the evening of the first day of the week, continuing a practice that went back to the evening of Easter itself.

ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL DEVELOPMENTS

If Christian worship did begin in this way as an evening celebration on the first day of the week, it might well be asked how and why the morning eventually came to predominate as the appointed hour for worship. No certain answer can be given since evidence is so scarce from the first few centuries. A reasonable guess would be that the shift began to take place when evening gatherings of Christians were proscribed by the Roman imperial authorities sometime in the second century A.D. Pointing in this direction is a letter from Pliny "the younger" (A.D. 62?-113), Roman governor of the province of Bithynia in Asia Minor, to the emperor Trajan (reigned A.D. 98-117). Pliny declares that Christians in his province have ceased to gather at the time of the evening meal in response to his command implementing the emperor's edict forbidding "seditious gatherings." He relates that they now meet on their "fixed day" before daybreak.¹ It is quite probable that the imperial edict did not



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apply to Asia Minor alone, so that Christians throughout the empire were compelled to change their traditional hour of worship.

By the time of Justin (A.D. 100-165) morning worship had become the norm. In his mid second century *Apology* Justin gives us the earliest detailed description of Christian worship written by a Christian. He describes it as a Sunday morning gathering, beginning sometimes with baptism, followed by reading and expounding of the Old Testament or the writings of the apostles, prayer, and the taking up of an offering. The service ends with the Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper, which had been the heart of the original evening gathering.² By the middle of the second century, then, a shift had been made from a Sunday evening table fellowship to a morning service which had its conclusion in the Eucharist.

Several other developments in the ancient and medieval period also affected the time and nature of Christian worship. One of these was the increasing elaboration of the worship service. What began as an essentially informal, spontaneous, and free celebration of the Lordship of Jesus, over time acquired an elaborate structure of ritual, climaxing in the grand Mass of the Medieval Church. In the third and fourth centuries, Communion was celebrated in secrecy, only after catechumens ("Probationary Christians") and nonbelievers had been dismissed. This gave rise to a "Liturgy of the Word," which was a prayer and scriptural exhortation service for all, and a separate "Liturgy of the Upper Room," which involved Communion for only the fully initiated. The Church once again emerged into the open under the patronage of the emperor Constantine (A.D. 288?-377); its worship fully public and greatly changed. Some would say it had been enriched, while others contend it had been encumbered. Whichever the case, it is possible to see the influence of the ceremonialism of both the old Temple worship of Judaism and the popular mystery religions of the time in the changes which took place.³ The result was a worship service which by the fifth century clearly subordinated all else to the Mass centered in the Lord's Supper; which was by then conceived as an act of sacrifice presided over by a "priest." This Mass more and more took on the characteristics of a spectacle, with worshippers the spectators. This meant that corporate worship came to be increasingly focused on the one great weekly celebration of the Mass and that worshippers were at the same time progressively cut off from meaningful participation in it.

Also significant was the edict of Constantine in 321 which proclaimed Sunday a general day of rest. This gave legal sanction for Christians to "clear the calendar" of secular concerns on the "Lord's Day," which they did. They also soon filled up the time through proliferation of public services, not all of them involving the Mass.

Finally, monasticism contributed to the development of Christian worship in this period. Committed to lives of utter devotion to God, undistracted by "secular" involvement, the monastics developed a disciplined daily regimen organized around eight

mandatory hours of prayer, called "offices," to be observed corporately throughout the day, commencing at midnight and concluding just prior to going to bed. Standardized prayers, scripture lessons, and instructions for their use at the various appointed hours were developed and collected into books called "breviaries." These "breviaries" gradually found their way into the Church at large and in some places became the basis of a daily schedule of public services which imitated the hours of prayer in the monasteries. In this way evening, along with midday and afternoon, worship services not connected with the Lord's Supper and more fully involving the laity became part of Christian practice.

REFORMATION DEVELOPMENTS

The profound upheaval of Christianity brought about by the Protestant Reformation certainly did not bypass worship practices. Some scholars have, in fact, seen dissatisfaction with the state of worship in the medieval Church as being a primary cause of the Reformation. Each of the major reformers did change in significant ways the manner in which worship was carried out, though some reformed worship more drastically than others.

All the reformers agreed in principle that the focus of worship in general, and the Sunday morning service in particular, ought to be proclamation of the Word rather than the sacrament. Still, the Eucharist retained a very significant place in worship, with Luther and Calvin urging its celebration weekly. Zwingli's view that a complete worship experience could be had without Communion, however, was the one that finally predominated within Protestantism. As a movement asserting the authority of the Word (by which was meant not only the written, but also the spoken and living Word of God) over against other kinds of authority in the Church, the Reformation naturally elevated proclamation of that Word to preeminence in the worship experience that underlay the average Christian's understanding and practice of Christian faith. So, the Protestant worship service tended to become a preaching service.

The Reformation also modified the calendar of worship which was observed in Catholicism. Again, differences among the various reforming leaders, groups, and geographical localities are evident, though the trend was steadily in the direction of limiting the number of worship gatherings by, among other things, eliminating many of the festivals and celebrations in honor of saints. In England Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) carried out a revision of the Book of Common Prayer which "protestantized" worship in the English church, and in doing so created "offices" of Morning and Evening Prayer out of the old multiple "offices" of the monasteries. He did this by combining materials from the "breviaries" for several of the early prayer hours to form one service of Morning Prayer and material from several evening "offices" to form one service of Evening Prayer. Neither of these services included Communion as an integral part, though it could be celebrated in connection

with them. The orders of service for morning and evening were almost identical, though the prayers, recitations, and scripture readings used were different. This arrangement of morning and evening worship services set the pattern for the standard Sunday worship of the English-speaking world.

As Cranmer designed it, the pattern of Morning and Evening Prayer could be followed daily, not only on Sunday. The Reformation tendency to limit the number of corporate worship gatherings, however, worked out in practice to restrict the two standard services to certain days of the week, commonly Wednesday and Friday along with Sunday. It was left to the English Puritans to develop this into a Sunday-only practice. Among the most radical of the "Protestantizers" in English Christianity, the Puritan party wanted to do away with every vestige of what it considered Catholic "superstition." In the case of the worship calendar this meant that for the Puritans there could be only one "red letter day" and that was Sunday. All other festivals and "holy days" were subsumed under the "Lord's Day," which was to be honored scrupulously (it was the Puritans who drew up the first "Blue Laws" compelling cessation of business and recreation activities on Sunday). In this process Anglican Morning and Evening Prayer quite naturally became the heart of the Puritans' conscientious "Sabbath" observance.⁴

Puritan Sunday services were "Morning and Evening Prayer" with a difference, however. Not only did the Puritans eschew the traditional Church calendar, but ritual and ceremonialism as well. Their worship services thus became informal and were characterized by extemporaneous rather than standardized prayers, little, if any, recitation of traditional creeds, absence of clerical vestments, and often lengthy sermons as the heart of the worship experience.

AMERICAN DEVELOPMENTS

English Puritans, of course, contributed much to the development of religious life in America. In establishing strict Sunday observance in their New England settlements they raised a standard that was followed by American Christianity in general. Sometimes Puritan Sunday worship included three gatherings rather than the typical two. In addition to a morning and late afternoon preaching service (corresponding to Morning and Evening Prayer) there might also be an informal evening gathering where the sermons of the day could be discussed and elaborated upon.⁵ As noted, for the Puritans, Sunday was the day of Christian worship and scheduling several meetings for preaching and prayer and spiritual edification on that day was seen by them as the best way of making it above all others the "Lord's Day." So the practice of holding at least two relatively unstructured preaching services on Sunday came to America with the Puritan colonists.

Along with a basically Sunday calendar of worship the Puritans also brought with them their aversion to liturgical and formal worship. The plain

worship style they embraced came to typify almost all of the American Protestant churches. It was particularly adaptable to the circumstances of the nation in its formative days when the population was moving ever westward and there was often a shortage of trained clergymen, and established churches in which to worship. Frontier conditions did much to help the plain style prevail.

These conditions also contributed to preaching becoming primarily evangelistic in thrust. Under frontier conditions there was often great spiritual need and yet little time for the generally itinerant preacher to be with his people. Of necessity he stressed what was most important so that the sermon came to be nearly exclusively a call to repent and receive salvation, and the preaching service almost by definition an evangelistic service. This was also helped along by the country's numerous seasons of national revival. A series of "Great Awakenings" has stamped an indelible mark on American Christianity: the style of the camp meeting, the evangelistic appeal, and the individual conversion experience have colored many American Christians' understanding and expectations of the worship event.

For decades the Sunday evening service in this country was an integral part of "Sabbath keeping" for most Christians. In its informality, stress on preaching, and evangelistic thrust it was largely at one with the Sunday morning service in the bulk of the churches. In more recent times, as observance of the "Lord's Day" has declined in society, affecting the churches as well, as many denominations have discontinued the Sunday night service, focusing all of their resources on Sunday morning worship. Others have maintained it, but as clearly subordinate to the morning service. Some few have attempted to treat it as an equal partner with Sunday morning worship.

It can be seen from our brief survey that these developments are all, in some way, consistent with the checkered past of Sunday night worship. As the original form of Christian worship, it was abandoned through governmental pressure. As morning worship became ritualized and exclusively centered in the Eucharist, the Sunday night service made a comeback, particularly through the influence of the monasteries, but subordinate to the Mass. Over time Sunday night worship became an integral part of the pattern of worship in the Reformation churches as a preaching service, and took on its informal and evangelistic flavor through Puritan influence and the American revival experience. 

NOTES

1. Cited in Paul King Jewett, *The Lord's Day: A Theological Guide to the Christian Day of Worship* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), pp. 69-70.

2. Justin Martyr, *Apology*, chapters 65-67.

3. See Ilion T. Jones, *A Historical Approach to Evangelical Worship* (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954), pp. 94-98. Also J. V. Bartlett, "Christian Worship as Reflected in Ancient Liturgies" in *Christian Worship: Studies in Its History and Meaning*, edited by Nathaniel Micklem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), pp. 91-94.

4. A. G. Matthews, "The Puritans," in Micklem, loc. cit., pp. 172-73.

5. Ibid., pp. 178-79.

THE SUNDAY NIGHT SERVICE— WHY HAVE IT?

By Richard Young

Pastor, Shawnee Church of the Nazarene, Shawnee, Kansas

Some say the modern Sunday night service is rooted in the soil of the Great Awakening in North America when believers began gathering on Sunday night to conduct evangelistic meetings. I cannot speak with authority about that, but I do know that my church has always gathered on Sunday night. To do anything else was never seriously considered. Sunday night services are clearly our tradition.

Across eight decades of this century many other churches have discontinued Sunday night services. Even among us voices call at times for a closing of the curtain on the Sunday night service. "Times have really changed." "The person of today does not need as much instruction as those of other days." "In our already too-busy lives, we must make more time for family." "There is now too much competition for the attention of the unbeliever on Sunday night." These and other concerns are raised by sincere people.

This question—Why have a Sunday night service?—is one with which we must grapple. After all, the new commandment does not say: "Thou shalt have a Sunday night service." What's more, tradition continued only because it is tradition has a way of losing its meaning. It eventually becomes an empty pantomime.

For me, the question requires examination of the original purpose for our Sunday night gatherings. When I became a part of the church 37 years ago, the Sunday night service was an evangelistic service. Everything I hear and read confirms that the preaching of the Good News for the purpose of seeing unbelievers converted

and believers sanctified was at the heart of the Sunday night service.

Today, it appears that most churches aggressively involved in evangelism have continued to meet on Sunday night. In contrast those who have turned their attention to other concerns have most often discontinued the practice. Perhaps it is fair to conclude that the need and desire for a Sunday night service has a direct relationship to a church's commitment to evangelize the lost. There is still valid purpose for gathering when believers are committed to the basic mission of the church and when they support the preaching of the Good News with their presence, their prayers, and their invited guests.

Looking back over my own experience as a pastor, several things impress me about the Sunday night service. Response to the invitation has been far greater in the Sunday night service than in morning worship. Unbelievers do still respond to the Good News on Sunday night. Believers do still seek the sanctifying fullness of the Holy Spirit on Sunday night. Backsliders are still reclaimed, and Christians still experience renewal and revival. The Sunday night service provides an opportunity for loving confrontation of spiritual need with the gospel.

More than ever, I am convinced of the value of the Sunday night service. When the church gathers to worship on Sunday morning, the primary focus must be on the edification of believers. Meaningful worship is absolutely essential. Without it the church will ultimately fail. Having said that, I must also say that I do not deny the existence of an evangelistic

impact in the morning worship experience. However, the Sunday night service spotlights on pulpit evangelism in all of its aspects. Even at the end of the 20th century, a church committed to evangelism can profit from continuing the Sunday night service.

But what of the objections that we sometimes face? It is true that "times have changed." No longer is the Sunday night service the Sunday night social event in the community. Seldom do people attend simply because there is nothing else to do. Often there are many other activities competing for the attention of the prospective Sunday night service participant. All of these things remind us that the quality of what happens in the Sunday night service is very important. When there is an uplifting spirit, good music, a sense of warm fellowship, and the faithful preaching of the Word, people will be attracted and helped.

It is also true that we live busy lives, and that most of us struggle to find enough time for family activities. However, it seems to me that there are other places in our schedules where room can be made for meaningful family times. In our own family, we have profited tremendously from sharing together in the evangelistic mission of the church by participating in the Sunday night service. Many families who choose to drop out of Sunday night service eventually join the Sunday night TV audience, most often to their own spiritual harm.

Why have a Sunday night service? It is still an effective method for accomplishing the mission which our Lord has given to His Church.



WHAT'S WORKING

We asked 15 pastors to share with our readers what's working for them on Sunday nights. Strangely enough, 9 sent us no response whatever. But 6 sent us plenty.

SUNDAY NIGHT CELEBRATION AT POMONA

Sunday nights at church! A lot of people, even some Nazarenes, are thinking the Sunday night service should be discontinued. I do not accept that!

It has been our discovery that Sunday nights at church can be exciting, alive, enjoyable, inspirational, and most of all, spiritually uplifting! We started with the premise that when believers leave the Sunday night celebration to reenter their world, there should be motivation and inspiration to bring Christ to the persons they shall meet. Therefore, it became my responsibility to seek God's help to provide this kind of spiritual environment in our celebration event.

KEY FACTS

Pomona First Church of the Nazarene,
Pomona, California

Kenneth Wilson—Pastor

Membership—275

Sunday School

Attendance—310   Year ago—230

Sunday Nights—

150-170   Year ago—95-115



Our whole objective has been and continues to be . . . involvement and participation by as many as possible, ideally the entire congregation. We emphasize a lot of music, with children, teens, adults singing or playing instruments. We encourage groups to sing together. Our congregational singing is lively and fun, with our music director leading many favorite choruses, "singing in rounds," etc. He even walks among the congregation, leaving the platform area. We try to have people involved in testimonies that are direct, alive, and up to date. We use our children and teens many times as ushers. Our prayer time on Sunday nights is usually led by someone in the congregation. The evening message is precise and poignant, usually addressed to the Body of Christ. However, many times in closing our Sunday night services, nonbelievers are finding their way to an altar of prayer. We believe in our altars and use them!!

One other tool that is very helpful to our increase in Sunday night attendance are the fellowships following the service. These consist of all-church gatherings, teen afterglows, children-get-togethers, Sunday School class fellowships, etc. These contribute to bringing people to Sunday night celebration.

It seems to me that what is working for us on Sun-

day nights is simply Christian love and concern put into action, and an attitude of "celebrating" every Sunday evening. We believe in Sunday night celebration.

DO SOMETHING IMPORTANT ON SUNDAY NIGHT

Rev. Laurel Buckingham is the pastor of the Moncton Wesleyan Church in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. During the past eight years, the church has grown from an attendance of 200 to over 1,000.

In this city, Sunday night services were either a thing of the past or were attended by less than one-half of the Sunday morning church-goers. Consequently, most churches scaled down the quality of Sunday night in keeping with the low attendance, thus making it even less attractive and inviting.

We began to work on the assumption that most Christian's *want* and *need* to be in church on Sunday night, provided the service is alive and well!

Our church, as well as the majority of other churches in our city, had all its special features such as musicals, children's programs, baptisms, reception of church members, and baby dedications on Sunday mornings. Consequently, the people subconsciously developed the idea that Sunday morning was *the* important service. Therefore, the second premise we adopted was that Sunday night needed a higher profile of priority and importance in the minds of the people in order for them to be attracted to it.

At this point, we worshipped in a very small sanctuary, so we rented the 900-seat auditorium of a liberal church, which had no Sunday night service. Soon we had exciting Sunday night rallies, with an attendance much larger than our Sunday morning attendance.

After building a new church with a sanctuary to accommodate four times as many people as our old one, we began inviting special guests, musical teams, and outstanding personalities for Sunday nights to get the momentum started. The church began to fill up, and the atmosphere seemed charged with electricity and excitement.

Newspaper advertising took on new significance. It became our primary vehicle for promotion of the



UNDAY NIGHTS?

evening service. Imaginative headlines and photographs of special guests were a part of our weekly ads.

However, Sunday nights still need constant attention. Children's programs, choir productions, baptisms, baby dedications, and reception of new members, still take place on Sunday nights. Baptism and reception of new members have become extremely meaningful and well-attended services. The candidates for each of these ordinances are given engraved invitations to send to their families and friends, inviting those they love to witness this significant step in their Christian life. Special music is planned for these services, and the message is usually to the unsaved.

We have tried to capture the attention of the city from time to time by having "Appreciation Nights" for various groups, such as civic officials, policemen, teachers, and service clubs. Invitations are sent to each of these people, asking them to be present so that we can show them our appreciation for their dedication and service to our community. This has been one of the most successful ways of letting Moncton know that something is happening at the Wesleyan church on Sunday nights.

A means of motivating our people to invite their unsaved friends to Sunday night services, is to set aside four to five Sunday nights two to three times per year for evangelistic thrusts. Our people have responded and many new people have been won to Christ as a result.

If Sunday School is a strong and growing part of your church, the Sunday morning service will automatically grow. Why not give Sunday night the priority and profile it deserves?

—Laurel Buckingham

70 THEMATIC MINUTES

Sunday night services are fairly well attended at the First Church of the Nazarene, Canton, Ohio. Last year, our morning worship average was 606 and the evening attendance average was 314 or 52 percent. Our church is 60 years old in a nongrowing community, however, our decadal growth has been fairly good at 42 percent. Membership at the end of the year was 783. The total money raised for all purposes was \$398,000.

There is no one outstanding thing about the Sunday evening service. It is called "70 Minutes at 7:00." We keep the time commitment so that our families may attend since we are a drive in church and travel time is important. There is less of an evangelistic thrust in the evening than in the morning service.

Music is a major factor on Sunday night with a

full choir, full orchestra, and special singing groups of all ages from children's choirs to various adult instrumental and singing groups. We attempt to make the service move with smoothness and flow toward a theme. All five full-time staff members participate in various ways. The senior pastor usually preaches.

From this service we see an opportunity to establish our families in Christian faith and service.

—John Howald, Jr.

VISIBLE YOUTH

The First Church of the Nazarene at Owego, N.Y., has 260 members, a Sunday School attendance of 239, 284 attend morning worship. Sunday night attendance averages 143.



Pastor Harold E. Henderson uses (the last Sunday evening of each month) Youth Night to give the teen ministry more visibility and to strengthen the night service. The young people lead the service serving as song leader, instrumentalists, reading scripture, praying, testifying, and singing in the youth choir. Usually the youth pastor or one of our college theological students preaches.

The young people have an opportunity to develop their talents and use them publicly.

The response of the adults has always been positive. They like to have the young people lead the service and give witness to their faith in Jesus Christ.

—Harold E. Henderson

A SHORT, EXCITING HOUR

The First Church of the Nazarene at Clovis, N.M., usually has about 300 persons on Sunday night. Some special night features attract crowds up to 400 or 500. Church membership is 575, Sunday morning attendance 550. Leon Wyss is the pastor. The Clovis folks call their Sunday night service, "The Shortest, Most Exciting Hour of the Week." That's what Sunday evenings are at the First Church of the Nazarene. We structure a one-hour service each Sunday evening. Music becomes a vital part of this hour. The



(continued on page 40)

PREPARING FOR THE SUNDAY NIGHT SERVICE

by Robert L. Leffel*

"The pastor of a large city church reported to his Monday morning golfing partners, 'I pastor one of those churches that is not quite full in the morning and not quite empty at night.'"¹

Rare indeed is the church today in any denomination that consistently equals or exceeds its morning worship attendance in the Sunday night service! In fact, a recent visitor to our Sunday night services whose interdenominational work affords him the opportunity to visit many different churches expressed alarm at how few churches are conducting *any* kind of evening service!

A bit of the history and philosophy of the Sunday night service is reviewed elsewhere in this issue, but the bottom line of all services and ministries of the church relates directly to *purpose, planning, and preparation*. What is our objective for the Sunday night service? Have we clung tenaciously to the traditional concept of "morning worship" and "evening evangelistic service" in a culture that has drastically changed church-going habits? Are we to declare that evangelism can't happen on Sunday morning and worship has no place on Sunday evening?

Eugene L. Stowe, in *The Ministry of Shepherding*, states, "While we have traditionally identified the morning service as 'worship' and the evening hour as 'evangelistic,' this order is not sacrosanct. There is wisdom in the strategy of surprising some 'Sunday morning only' parishioners with a strong emphasis on evangelism occasionally. And there is certainly nothing wrong with making the theme of a night service one which relates to missions or some phase of Christian living."

Few would argue with the premise that effective services, morning or evening, do not just happen! Thorough, prayerful planning and preparation is the key to a dynamic Sunday night service.

Years ago I received helpful counsel at the real heart of the issue from a serious reading of G. B. Williamson's manual for ministers, *Overseers of the Flock*. Williamson suggested, "... if a man desires full pews and fruitful altar services, he must give a proper amount of time, thought, preparation, and prayer to the evening service. Careless, shoddy preparation and consequently poor preaching may explain the fact of empty pews in the church on Sunday evening."

Is it a fair assumption to suggest that the Sunday evening service in most churches has played "second-fiddle" to the morning service in "high priority" planning and preparation? While I have not had opportunity to conduct an official poll, ministerial colleagues with whom I have confided readily concede that the planning, prayer, and preparation put into the Sunday night service is far less than that of the Sunday morning service. Meaningful Sunday night services occur in proportion to the importance we attach to this service and the amount and quality of planning and preparation we give it.

General planning includes all the basic ingredients that contribute to making the Sunday night service appealing to both your own constituency and prospects and new families. Such items as music, special features, testimonies, and the sermon will require advance planning by the pastor, staff members, and lay leaders.

Creating an "atmosphere" of friendliness and a sense of belonging, spontaneity is important. This must be done, however, without sacrificing "orderly procedure." All these and more are vital to a vibrant service that will bring "satisfied customers" back week after week.

Let's take a quick look at a few of the components of the Sunday night service that will meet "people's needs."

1. Music—Elmer L. Towns states that there is no great New Testament church that is not a singing church. My earliest recollections as a boy as we attended the Church of the Nazarene include spirited singing on Sunday nights that was a bit like “camp meeting” singing. Songs of salvation and praise were in abundance, and the congregation gave happy response through singing.

“The pastor does not have to be a competent musician himself, but he does play a significant role if the music program is to be successful. Man is to praise God in song, and God intends that music should bless, thrill, encourage, calm, and be en-

Some preachers make shoddy preparation under the guise of depending upon the Holy Spirit.

joyed by—man; and man *is to use* music to help others.” This sound piece of advice from James Van Hook helped many of us to “overhaul” the ministry of music in our churches.

2. Lay Participation—The very nature of the Sunday night service allows greater opportunity in most churches for active participation and involvement on the part of the key laypersons. Why not involve your youth, Sunday School teachers, board members in Bible reading, prayer, a planned testimony on Christian service or stewardship, or “state of the church” report on significant projects?

Our church orchestra, though far from professional, one Sunday night a month involves a number of persons and their families, along with a Sunday night choir different from our morning “Sanctuary Choir.” It adds a new dimension that our people enjoy. An abbreviated Junior or Teen Bible Quiz early in the service once or twice a year has become a “feeder” to our evening services, and highlights the excellent work being done by a large number of laymen.

3. Variety—Any public service can be greatly improved by simple variations of the basic components. “Dullness” and “sameness” are unforgivable when a little variety can produce an element of suspense, surprise, and an exciting freshness!

Time spent each week with other staff members, choir director, pianist or organist, and a key layman or two will be rewarding as a new level of expectancy is developed.

4. The Sermon—Since the sermon really is the centerpiece of each Sunday service, all true planning must revolve about the Word of God. The sermon that has transforming power is generally a product of many hours of “blood, sweat, and tears.” A planned service requires a prepared sermon! And the prepared sermon can be delivered only by a prepared preacher. Its presentation is completely dependent upon thorough, prayerful preparation. This preparation will involve biblical study and

exegesis, a wide range of reading of sermonic aids, and the best of contemporary Christian books and journals. As someone has said, “You will be the same five years from now as you are today except for the people you meet and the books you read.” Wesley’s advice to early Methodists still applies today: “The work of grace would die out in one generation, if the Methodists were not a reading people.”

A preaching program should be planned a few weeks ahead, with some degree of flexibility. In no way does this type of planning remove or limit the element of divine guidance. On the contrary, it may spare the busy pastor from yielding to the ever-present temptation to drift along carelessly and pull an old or “half-cooked” sermon out of his “barrel” and feel he can get by with it.

John A. Knight often reminded young ministers that the Holy Spirit is not bound by time and thus is available to help in the preliminary planning. At any point, plans may be delayed or redirected, and often are. But changed plans are better than no advance plan at all.

William Barclay observes in his book *In the Hands of God* that “some preachers make shoddy preparation under the guise of depending upon the Holy Spirit. William Sangster heard one of these and commented, ‘I never knew the Holy Spirit could be so dull.’”

God’s Word is anything but dull, and the Holy Spirit quickens and makes alive, so we cannot blame our dullness on anyone but ourselves if a “ho-hum” attitude prevails when we preach. There is a thrilling kind of preparation that comes through meditation and communion with God himself.

A significant part of planning and preparation for successful Sunday night services must be done by the people. Help them give the Sunday night service the place it rightfully deserves, proper physical, mental, and spiritual preparation on Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons. Encourage them to bring a friend or relative, an attitude of faith and expectancy, and the idea of being a participant rather than a spectator. These elements must be cultivated among the laity to create and sustain a Sunday night service that is pleasing to God and rewarding to pastor and people.

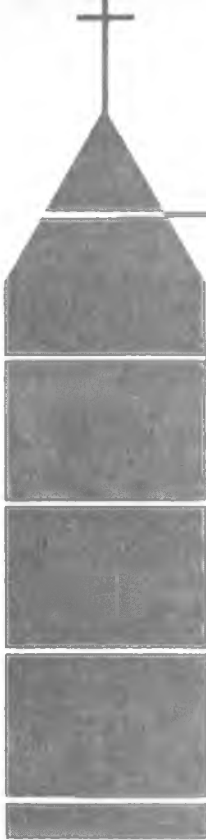
It can be done, and it is worth the effort, as one small boy was heard to remark to his mother as they were leaving church on Sunday night, “It’s fun to come here on Sunday nights, isn’t it, Mom?”

And even more thrilling to any pastor is to hear the testimony of one who has been saved, or sanctified wholly—on Sunday night!



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HOW TO BUILD YOUR SUNDAY NIGHT ATTENDANCE

By Charles I. Miller*

The Sunday night service has been referred to as the "Hour of Evangelism" of the evangelistic service. The question needs to be asked, is the service what the title implies? Is it a time when new people are won at the altar, a time when Christians are sanctified?

The truth of the matter is, in most of our Sunday night services this is not what is happening. It is not happening because there is no one present to evangelize. In most churches it is the faithful Christians who make up the crowd on Sunday night. Some pastors admit they do most of their evangelistic preaching, with

invitations to the altar, on Sunday morning. They do this because this is the only time candidates are present. So in many churches, Sunday night has ceased to be a time of evangelism.

If that be the case in your church, you can do one of two things. Accept the situation as being a fact of the changing times, and therefore nothing can be done, or you can be determined you are going to build the Sunday night service. You build it to the point where new people are attracted, and this service becomes a time of evangelism.

I would like to share three key ideas which will help you to build your Sunday night service. I share them because I have seen them work in my own ministry. The first is promotion. At this point, we can learn from the Sunday School. In many churches the Sunday School is growing, and one of the reasons is the promotion it gets. There is promotion from three levels: general, district, and local. Where these promotions are done properly, the Sunday

School has grown, and the morning worship service has also benefited.

How much promotion does the Sunday night service receive? Probably in most churches, no more than an announcement in the Sunday morning bulletin. One way that you as a pastor can promote this service, is in your Sunday morning announcements. Build it up, make it sound like it is going to be an exciting time, a time of spiritual victory and blessings. Then pray mightily that God will make it happen. If you do have a good service, why not get a couple of laymen who were present, to give a testimony the next Sunday morning about the service. Chances are, what they say will do more to attract others than anything you say.

You can also plan and promote a good musical program for the Sunday night service. One of the things that has been a real attraction in our denomination in the past, has been our music. Good music still attracts.

Another means of promotion



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that I have used which builds interest, is preaching sermon series on Sunday night. Besides preaching through certain books in the Bible, I have used some special series. One summer I used "mountaintop" experiences in the Bible. On another occasion, I used book sermons, announcing the book ahead of time which gave the people a chance to read it. I also preached a series on biblical characters, asking the congregation to submit the names of those they wished to hear a sermon on. I made no guarantee to use each name submitted. However, I was able to use all the names turned in, and it did create interest.

The second idea is a feeder program. One of the reasons we do not have the problem on Sunday morning that we do at night, is because we have a built-in feeder program in the Sunday School. The Sunday School helps to get the people to come, and the majority stay for the worship service. We used to have a feeder program in the young people's service. Since that program has found other forms and times, most churches do not have a pre-service program. This conspires against the Sunday night attendance.

We are currently using two feeder programs that have greatly helped our Sunday night attendance. The first is a youth Bible study. The youth leader, in order to get the interest of the young people, passed out a questionnaire on topics they would like to study. Their first choice was the "Second Coming." The attendance was good for this study, and it doubled our youth attendance in the Sunday night service. It is not unusual to see teens step out and make their way to the altar on Sunday night.

The second is a junior fellowship program. The leader makes this primarily a world missions program, with refreshments being served that are typical of the country studied. The junior missionary books are also read. This has brought children from unchurched homes into the Sunday night service. We have had the privilege of praying with some of

In my past ministry, I scolded the people for not coming on Sunday night. I finally woke up to the fact that if there was something in the service that was a real spiritual blessing, they would come.

these children. Hopefully in the future we shall get to lead their parents to Christ. We have also used our junior choir one Sunday night a month which has helped to increase our attendance.

Another way to build your Sunday night attendance is to have a spirit of revival in your church. When I first came into the church I remember hearing it said, "A spirit of revival is the answer for every problem in the church." In my own ministry I have found this to be true, and especially with the Sunday night attendance. When there is a real spirit of revival, there is no problem getting the people to attend on Sunday night. A spirit of revival brings a spirit of expectation for all the services, especially Sunday night. If there is a true spirit of revival they will not be disappointed, for there will be blessings and victory. People are basically the same as they have always been. They want to be where something is happening, where there is life, excitement, and victory.

I have also found that when the revival spirit begins to lag, so does the attendance, and not just in the Sunday night service. There have been times in my past ministry, when I scolded the people for not coming on Sunday night. I finally woke up to the fact that if there was something in the service that was a real spiritual blessing, they would come. Not only come once, but would come back and sometimes bring others with them.

The question may be asked, how do we bring about a spirit of revival? There are two ways. First, you must create a spirit of re-

vival and expectancy in your own heart. I am sure you know as well as I do, there is only one way to do that. Stay on your knees before Him, until the revival fires begin to burn in your soul. I have learned the hard way that the first priority in my ministry must be prayer.

Second, you must create some type of prayer program for your church. By that I mean a time when your church comes together for a special time of prayer on a weekly basis. It may be done through prayer cells, early morning prayer meetings, cottage prayer meetings, or a Saturday night time of prayer in the church. It has been my observation at district assemblies, that the pastor who has something worthwhile to report usually has some sort of prayer program in his church.

I have tried many prayer programs. What we are using at the time of this writing is a Saturday night prayer meeting. These prayer meetings have created a spirit of revival in our church. Altar services are the usual on Sunday night, instead of the unusual. We recently had a new couple saved on Sunday night, and this in turn helped to increase our Sunday night attendance. Since starting these prayer meetings, and with the help of the feeder programs, our attendance has increased by 60 percent.

In this article, I have not exhausted all the ideas on how to build your Sunday night attendance. Whether you use these ideas or some of your own there is one thing I am sure of, with God's help you can build your Sunday night attendance. 

THE SUNDAY NIGHT SERVICE & CHANGING TIMES

by Kenneth L. Kern*

On October 4, 1896, in Topeka, Kans., a little-known preacher began reading what he called "Sunday night sermon stories" to a packed church house. The little-known preacher was Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, pastor of the Central Congregational Church. What Rev. Sheldon read that year was one chapter at a time of his weekly serial for young people that became the best-selling religious novel, *In His Steps*.

The book *In His Steps*, based on 1 Peter 2:21 (NIV), "... Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps," brought Central Church and Dr. Sheldon world renown. Little did Dr. Sheldon or the members of Central know that this Sunday night series of sermon stories for young people would have the worldwide impact that it has.

Did Dr. Sheldon's Sunday night sermon stories really pack the auditorium? The year was 1896 and several writers with historical references say that the church was packed every Sunday night. The church was not packed prior to the reading of *In His Steps*.

A little-known fact regarding the history of the great Sunday

night services at Central Church is the way that Dr. Sheldon got the standing room only crowd for the first Sunday night reading. John W. Ripley, in an article titled "Last Rites for a Few Myths," states, "An expert in public relations, Mr. Sheldon had told the press earlier in the week, that police were permitting saloons and gambling dives to run wide open along Kansas Avenue in defiance of state laws. Names and locations of the violators would be revealed to those attending his services next Sunday evening."

Times have changed! Eighty-four years have passed. Sunday night service attendance on the North American continent seldom exceeds Sunday morning attendance. Through the past 40 years, at least, we have talked of our Sunday night services in terms of "the evangelistic service."

Since the late 40s, possibilities for getting large Sunday night crowds have changed. Have you considered what fast cars, fast foods, and fast schedules have done to the prospects of Sunday night attendance? Television, more than any other media, has rapidly introduced us to the ways

of the world and a myriad of thrills taking place outside the church on Sunday nights. The realities of worldly activity have multiplied themselves many times over since the late 40s.

The church no longer enjoys the automatic social appeal she had in the days when the only sizeable social gathering on a Sunday night was at the church. Changing times have brought the advent of the roller rink, the race track, miniature golf, pleasure boating, motor homes, computerized games, electronic toys, and scores of things you might think of which Satan has used to lure families away from home and the church.

We so dislike the idea of competition that we fail to recognize our responsibility to give the world something which exceeds

(continued on page 22)

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SUNDAY NIGHT: BIBLICAL PREACHING AND INSPIRED SINGING HELP



Susan Downs

by Ark Noel, Jr.



Pastor, First Church
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I was a young preacher just learning to pastor when V. H. Lewis, then secretary of the Department of Evangelism, led our denomination in a strong push to renew the Sunday evening service. We hung banners in our churches and studied a denominational CST course. Our slogan was: "Keep the Lights Burning Bright on Sunday Night." Even then it was apparent that our Sunday evening services were in danger of losing some of their zest and inspiration. It was my conviction then and I am still persuaded that the Sunday evening service is more than an "after service" for a few special saints. It is still one of the vital heartbeats of our holiness heritage. The Sunday evening service is very important in the fulfilling of our God-given mission to the world.

It was my special privilege to join our church when I was a junior boy and since the first day I graduated from a Nazarene college until today, I have been in full-time ministry. Through all these years I cannot remember a single church that has really been healthy that did not have a strong Sunday evening service.

The fact that we live in changing times does not mean that everything older than yesterday must be junked. Inspirational singing characteristic of the holiness movement and Bible preaching will still keep the lights burning bright on Sunday nights. When our Sunday evening services are meeting needs, the people will come and there are at least three great benefits that the church will reap:

1. A Better Preacher

A church will seldom rise above its leader. While we sometimes like to look for a reason why our church doesn't go and we can generally find plenty of reasons by blaming the former pastor, the present circumstances, or the unconcerned laymen, the truth is that frequently the success or failure of our church still lays at the doorstep of our pastors.

One man can take 40 acres and a mule and he will starve to death while another man can take the same 40 acres and mule and make himself a millionaire. The difference, of course, is not the land or the mule but it's the man and his willingness to plow. There is more in the man than in the land!

We cannot keep from becoming better men and bolder preachers of the Word if we go all out for Bible preaching two times on Sunday. It will require us to read the Word more. We'll just naturally pray more as we read the Word of God. The religion of a burning heart was not only for those men who walked with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, but it is for all of us.

Reading more and praying more will bring a man to the pulpit with a greater realization of his need of God and a greater anointing of the Holy Spirit as he preaches. Our people who come to church will realize that the preacher has tapped a new supply of God's anointing and blessings. It will create a desire within them to come and hear the Word of God from a man who feels his divine call is to preach the Bible.

2. A Blessed People

Many of our key laymen are so busy on Sunday morning that they hardly get to worship God. They are ushering, counting money, working in children's church, nursery, etc. They need the evening service. Real traditional holiness singing and Bible preaching will feed their soul. I cannot believe that a film, a message on current events, or a warmed-over prayer meeting talk will help these people who need it the most. An evening where we are not tied to more formal worship can be the source of great blessing to many.

Inspirational holiness singing by the congregation will lift the heart. Special music with a message, sung by those who know what they are singing about, will always lift the people. I am not talking about dead, lifeless singing with no spirit of God and very little spirit of man. I am talking about singing where our people are encouraged to let the Holy Spirit come and bless them. I mean singing where the freedom of His presence can find liberty in the tears, the raised hand, the amens, and the testimonies which come from the heart. Our people need God's visitation so much and we fail when we do not offer them services where they can be blessed. Our churches can develop that kind of atmosphere by Bible preaching and inspirational singing. As our laymen continue to be rooted and grounded in their walk with God and blessed in their hearts, it becomes a spark which will ignite a fire and encourage and bless others. A vital, uplifting Sunday evening service will help us to have a congregation of *blessed people*!

3. A Bigger Spiritual Harvest

The bottom line of all our efforts is to produce a bigger harvest. The harvest we must labor for is twofold: First, we must build up and conserve the people we have. We make no gain at all when we win one and lose one. We must establish our peo-

ple. Second, we must win new people to God. The Sunday evening service offers great opportunity to help us fulfill both of these areas of ministry. On Sunday evening we have opportunity to call our people around the altar for prayer, we can encourage testimonies, close with a song of victory and have more time for our altar calls. As we generate a spirit of expectancy, our congregation will look forward to coming, they'll bring new people, and we'll see Sunday evening altar services with some new people finding God.

A by-product of victorious Sunday evening services is the influence it gives to our revival meetings. You will notice that attendance and altar services in our revivals will usually be duplicates from our Sunday evening services. If our Sunday evening services are cold, uninspired, and poorly attended, you can be sure the revival services will be about the same. If our people have learned to expect good attendance, altar services, and victory in the Sunday evening service you'll generally have a revival where the people are blessed and souls are saved. In essence, a bigger harvest!

While a student in a Nazarene college, one day I heard the fire truck coming down the road and it stopped two blocks from my home. Of course my curiosity got the best of me and I ran down to see what was burning. By the time I got there it seemed like half of Bethany was already there. Much to our surprise, it was not a home but an old hen house in the backyard. In 10 minutes the hen house, a rooster, and a dozen old Domineker hens had burned up. As I walked back home after the fire, I thought to myself, "My, how big a crowd a little fire attracts." I've noticed since then that churches are the same way. If you can get a little fire started at the altar and in the heart of the preacher, the people will still come out to see what is burning. Inspirational holiness singing and Bible preaching will still keep them coming!



CHANGING TIMES

(continued from page 20)

the cheap, the earthy, the pleasure-centered experiences to be found nearly everywhere on a Sunday night.

In an effort to avoid superprogramming and "production-oriented" services, we have had poorly prepared or no music specials and skeleton choirs whose rehearsal time would embarrass a television program director by their brevity. In too many cases the congregation appears to be unprepared for guests and very poorly prepared for themselves.

An alternate title for this article could be "The Church Competing for the World." Like it or not, we (the church) do compete for

people's attention. Could it be that one reason we are more successful with Sunday morning attendance is that worldly enterprises do not offer much on Sunday mornings?

How much of our Sunday evening service attendance is related to our expectation and preparation? Here are two suggestions which will help you. First, read again Dr. Orville Jenkins's book written in 1961, *The Church Winning Sunday Nights*. Second, read the chapter which includes "A Night Service That Brings Them Back," from Dr. Leslie Parrott's book *Building Today's Church*.

This pastor's conclusion is that everything has to do with expectation and preparation. Expecta-

tion begins in the heart of the pastor. Our vision of what can be accomplished through the Sunday night service is tied to every prayer effort and every molecule of sanctified energy spent in planning for a challenging, lifting service to draw a hungry crowd away from the world.

If the Sunday night services are enthusiastic, well prepared, excitingly relevant, and blessed of the Holy Spirit, our own people will do more to fill the pews than the pastors are ready to believe. Answer this question, "Which of your Sunday services has more time devoted to its preparation?" Is it possible that we have been receiving less on Sunday night because we have expected less on Sunday night?





In the Preacher's Magazine 50 Years Ago

WHY NOT DIGNIFIED IN SPEECH?

Not a few Christians, so-called, are guilty of the use of language that is very unbecoming. There is no dignity or respect shown in their choice of words. When they refer to individuals nearly everybody is a "guy." Little children are referred to as "kids." An elderly woman is classed as an "old dame," or a "cat." Any old man is dubbed "whiskers." A young fellow of respectability is denominated a "prude." "Son-of-a-gun," "O Lordy," and "heavens" are of frequent exclamation.

Some preachers have fallen into this nasty habit. Does the Christian religion change the language of a man or woman? I aver that it does, and this "low-down" language, which many are guilty of using, has no place among real Christians where spiritual refinement has sway. One can never advertise the holy Christ by the use of common, worldly terms. This language of the lips is an index of the heart, and a heart that is full of smut, filth, and carnal speech is far from the Man of Galilee. Let us consider the humility and dignity of Christ and pattern our lives after Him.

—C. E. Cornell
October, 1931

SLOGANS

Church slogans are numerous and multiplying. The "church with the open door," the "church with the open hand," the "church with the warm heart," and many others. On the bulletin it says, "You will never be a stranger but once." And yet many strangers go in and out without a greeting. Then the big red cross or some other color are becoming more numerous. The lights down and a beautiful cross comes into view while prayer is being uttered. The brass band and the orchestra; solos, quartets, duets, voices and instrumental.

Hand-clapping, laughing, whistling and everything unspiritual and sensational. Here is an actual description. "Let's try No. 8. No. 8 in the red book. Everybody sing. 'Brighten the corner.'"

"We sang two verses. Then the leader stopped to tell about Pat, whose favorite song was 'Fight in the corner where you are.'" Then another verse. Then all the men whistled a verse. Then the women hummed one. Then the men whistled while the women sang. Then we sang the last verse over again, everybody except the unmarried ladies over 65 years of age being invited to sing (laughter). Then everybody shake hands and everybody say Amen! Say Hallelujah! The band will play "Way down on the Swanee River." We will not take the offering. And not a few churches think they have to go through this theatrical performance to get the crowd. Is this kind of thing approved of God? We aver not.

—C. E. Cornell
November, 1931

CAN WE BE MODEST WITH OUR CHURCH ADVERTISING?

The popular church must advertise or be left in a hole. There must be all kinds of advertising. Big display ads, sensational lines, cuts, etc. Some of these ads are truthful and some are not. It seems that some thoughtful person, with care and truthfulness, ought to censor the advertising and keep it within bounds. A church ought not to lie or be off color in anything. I presume that it is all right to set the preacher's name in BIG DISPLAY type. We know one great church that modestly advertises; the pastor's name is set in very small type, about the smallest in the ad. Not so with many. Modesty is becoming in any individual or church. The meek and lowly Jesus was modest

and very humble. The church should imitate Him.

—C. E. Cornell
November, 1931

A CHILD'S BILL OF RIGHTS

In the office of the Church Federation of Los Angeles, there hangs an illuminated copy of the Child's Bill of Rights:

"To be born right,
To be loved,
To have his individuality respected,
To be trained wisely in body,
mind, and spirit,
To be protected from evil persons
and influences,
To have a fair chance in life."

—D. Shelby Corlett
November, 1931

MOVIES

Despite the presentation by the Lord's Day Observance Society of a petition containing 1,457,683 names protesting against movie shows being run on the Sabbath, the British House of Commons passed by a vote of 258 to 210 a bill granting local authorities in England the power to permit movie shows on the Sabbath.

—D. Shelby Corlett
November, 1931

GREAT TEACHERS

There are probably fewer great teachers now than there were 50 years ago; there will probably be still fewer great teachers 50 years hence.

The god of research is slowly but surely proselyting the followers of the god of teaching.

The teacher of 1850 was mainly a man with an object.

The teacher of 1950 may be merely a man with a subject.

—C. E. Cornell
October, 1931

FULL SALVATION AND THE LITURGY OF THE EARLY CHURCH

by Paul Merritt Bassett,

Professor of Church History, Nazarene Theological Seminary

By now, thanks to the research work of R. Newton Flew and various attempts either to extend or (in vain) to rebutt his position; it is a point needing no further demonstration: the idea of Christian perfection, variously defined, has been a theological constant in the history of the faith. Seldom, if ever, has the Church been without exhortation to, expectation of, and professed arrival at perfection of some sort, in this life.

So, in what way or ways is the holiness movement different, or at least distinctive? Surely not in its definition of Christian perfection. Not every branch within the Body nourishes itself on the same definition, but the holiness movement is certainly not alone in defining Christian perfection as unconditional devotion to God or as perfect love to God and neighbor. It is only a little less typical in speaking of it as freedom from original sin or depravity. What really distinguishes the holiness movement is its understanding of entry into the experience of Christian perfection and its way of relating the doctrine of perfection to the rest of Christian theology. The movement insists that Christian perfection is begun in the experience of entire sanctification, which is a distinct and "second" work of grace, "an act of God subsequent to regeneration." This sanctification is said to be "wrought instantaneously."

Holiness scholars believe that these two notes, distinct secondness and instantaneity, are part of the doctrinal legacy of John Wesley, and there seems to be little room for doubting their findings on these points. But where did Wesley get his views? Certainly from Scripture, reason, and experience; but why should he develop what appears to be a novel view from passages of Scripture, with logical processes and by means of experiences that others had examined—with quite different doctrinal results? And, to what degree is a novel view to be taken as normative?

Here enters an aspect of Christian life to which Wesley gave close, lifelong attention, though he says proportionately little about it. One writes here of the liturgies of the Church of England. Wesley occasionally criticized, and criticized sharply, the church in whose rituals he lived and died. He knew the dangers of what we would call "formalism," but his antidote was not to ignore formality. He insisted that the Methodist societies should meet at times that would not interfere with "attendance upon the means of grace," i.e., the services of the Anglican parish church. Methodists were to be the truest of Anglicans. And when it became obvious that American Methodism was developing an identity separate from its Anglican mother, Wesley sent it not a list of doctrines but a liturgy. He risked bitter

criticism in ordaining ministers, but these were to serve in America and he felt it necessary to ordain them so that the American Methodists would not be without properly celebrated sacraments and a properly ordained continuing ministry, the apostolic succession.

None of this denied the importance of right doctrine, but it all forms a context for doctrine which must not be forgotten, as it so readily has been. For Wesley, the constitution of the church is not her articles of faith. Rather it is the way in which she worships. The articles of faith are essentially an intellectual articulation of what the church expresses in the affective richness of her worship. Her worship, in turn, is an attempt to symbolize and propagate the Christianizing of all of life at both the personal and the societal levels. This is how an Anglican would think of worship and doctrine and spiritual life; especially a rather "high-church" Anglican, such as Wesley certainly was (though the term *high-church* is of latter use).

We may take it as axiomatic, then, that Wesley's understanding of Christian perfection had at least some relationship to the liturgy which otherwise shaped and guided his spiritual life. But what of the distinctive notes of "secondness" and "instantaneity"?

Obviously, these are notes having to do with Christian *experience*, as distinguished from strictly or fundamentally intellective or revelational concerns. For Wesley, this would put them in the realm of liturgy. But here, except for a few scant clues, the researcher works inferentially.

On the other hand, the early liturgies of the Church do seem to reflect these notes of "secondness" and "instantaneity," and with these liturgies we know Wesley was familiar. The Anglican liturgy itself reflected them to some degree, and Wesley himself, conscious of this fact, took interest in the worship of the premedieval Church. So, we can venture at least a tentative hypothesis that Wesley took some cues for his doctrine from the liturgical heritage of Christianity.

Let us take a look at the early liturgies, then, to see what may have been there in the way of materials for Wesley's doctrinal construction a millennium or more later. In this essay, we shall confine ourselves to the sacrament of baptism after a few brief remarks on the meaning of the sacraments in general.

I. Sacrament in the Early Church

The Early Church was born at worship and sought to sustain its life by worship. To be sure, it had the Old Testament and the teachings and biography of Jesus from the beginning, and ere long it had what we now call the New Testament. But these writings were read and reflected upon in a context of worship. Even the theologians, a breed that came along in the second and third generations of the life of the Church, were worshippers. Not all worshippers were theologians, but all theologians were worshippers. And the Church built (or remodeled) for wor-

ship. Sanctuaries, not writing rooms nor debating halls, were constructed for the faithful. So, at the center of being Christian was worship, not scientific or intellectual articulation; corporate celebration, not debate. Liturgy was part of the very path to salvation. Theology was a sort of tourist guide or topographical map. It was to explicate the path. But the path included liturgy. No one doubted the need for worship, but not a few doubted the need for theology.

Within worship, no activities meant more than the rituals denoting entrance into the faith and the offer of grace to continue in the Way. Entrance or initiation was made in baptism. Grace for continuance was offered in the Lord's Supper.

These rituals were called "mysteries" and "symbols." They were not called "mysteries" because they hid anything or were obscure in meaning but because in them, the common, such as bread and wine and river water, carried profoundly uncommon meaning. Bread carried the meaning of Christ's broken body, wine the meaning of His shed blood, and water the meaning of cleansing from sin. "Symbols" they were because they took the believer right to the heart of what it meant to be a believer. For us, a symbol is an abstraction, meaningless until we assign it meaning, like the gold watch given a retiree as "a symbol of appreciation." For the Early Church a symbol was a way into the essence of the thing symbolized. The gold watch, in this case, is a fitting symbol as it somehow expresses in itself, apart from our opinions of it, appreciation—it says "appreciation," it *is* appreciation.

II. The Meaning of Baptism in the Early Church

For the Early Church, baptism was the symbol of the washing away of sin and of "repentance unto life." It took the latter meaning from its symbolizing of the burial and resurrection of Christ. As symbol, at several levels, the rite itself was understood to participate in the very reality of cleansing and repentance, burial and resurrection. It was in no way an abstraction, a mere "outward sign" or a simple "testimony." Baptism was a way into the very essence of salvation and a part of that essence. Baptism was a soteriological moment.

We will let Clement of Alexandria, a teacher who died about A.D. 200, say it for a host of early Christian writers:

Is Christ perfected by the washing and is he sanctified by the descent of the Spirit? Indeed so. And the same thing also takes place in our case, for whom the Lord became the pattern. Being baptized, we are illuminated; illuminated, we are made sons; being made sons, we are perfected; perfected, we are made immortal. . . . This work is variously called: "a gift of grace," "illumination," "perfection," "washing." It is the washing through which we are cleansed of our sins, the grace-gift by which the penalties for our sins are removed, the illumination through which the holy light of salvation is beheld, that is, through which the divine is clearly seen. . . . Instruction leads to

faith, and faith together with baptism is trained by the Holy Spirit. . . . We who have repented of our sins, renounced our faults, and are purified by baptism run back to the eternal light, children to their father (*Instructor* 1.6, 25.3-26.2; 30.2; 32.1).

So the Early Church would totally agree with us when we say that baptism is a symbol of having received salvation in Christ Jesus; when we say that baptism is "an outward sign of an inward work of grace." But they would attach an entirely different meaning to the words. Citing such passages as John 3:5; Eph. 5:25-26; and Heb. 10:22; they would say that the very act of baptism is itself part of the total act of salvation.

III. Baptism and the Spirit's Work

It may be that early on, some were baptized in Jesus' name alone (Acts 8:16; 19:15; Rom. 6:3), but trinitarian baptism seems to have become the standard form very quickly. And this form was understood to have been commanded by the Lord (Matt. 28:19). The New Testament is not clear as to whether Christian baptism is different from "John's baptism" or the "baptism of repentance." But it is clearly a requisite to Christianity, for there are 12 specific instances of Christian baptism on or after Pentecost recorded in Acts and 1 Corinthians.

Baptism symbolized the work of the Spirit and it was the Spirit who made baptism effective. Tertullian (c. 160—c. 230), a native of Carthage, North Africa (near present-day Tunis, Tunisia), and the first of the great Latin-writing Christian scholars, set down the Early Church's understanding of the relationship between the Holy Spirit and baptism. Responding to some critics who were saying that baptism availed little, if anything, Tertullian says that just as the Spirit of God "moved over the waters" in the first creation, making them fit for God's own purposes, so Christians invoke the Spirit's presence upon the waters of baptism to sanctify them to the Father's purposes again. And as the waters are sanctified, so they are used to sanctify. Yet baptism proper, says Tertullian, does not give the gift of the presence of the Spirit in fullness. That gift must come at another moment. However, baptism proper does make one ready to receive that presence. And so it is that immediately following baptism itself, as a part of the total ritual, "We are anointed all over with consecrated oil . . . then the hand (of the minister) is laid on us, while the Holy Spirit is invoked and invited through a benediction. . . . Then, down over the body thus cleansed and consecrated comes the Holy Spirit from the Father" (*On Baptism*, 4-8).

Tertullian's treatise was for centuries the standard doctrinal statement on baptism, and remains so among both Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and the Orthodox, though Tertullian himself finally became a schismatic. What is clear here, and important to the development of the doctrine of entire sanctification as Wesley came to express it, is the clear distinction between the act of baptizing (initiation) and the act of receiving the Holy Spirit in fullness (sanctification), though both are included in the one rite

called baptism. In fact, Cyprian, bishop of Carthage a generation after Tertullian's death, made the distinction in meaning even sharper (*Letters* 63:8; 70:2; 73:9). On the other hand, the distinction should not be allowed to mask the unity of the ritual as a whole. The early Christian could not think of baptism without thinking of the gift of the fullness of the Spirit as well. The baptismal act itself was most especially related to remission of sin. But from the very beginning our Lord had connected remission of sin with the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 20:21-23), so the baptismal liturgy as a whole includes first the symbol of remission (baptism proper) and then the symbol of the gift of the Spirit (anointing and laying on of hands)—two qualitatively distinct workings of grace in one rite.

Space prevents review of it here, but the reader should take a look at Hippolytus's description of the baptismal liturgy in his *Apostolic Tradition*, a work of the early third century with much more ancient roots. It became the standard for the Church in Western Europe.

Hippolytus presents baptism as a tripartite symbol with (1) a prebaptismal liturgy that includes an invocation of the sanctifying Spirit, a ritual for disrobing, renunciation of Satan, and exorcism by anointing; (2) baptism proper, with confession of faith, sometimes a brief dialogue, triple immersion and anointing in thanksgiving; (3) a post-baptismal liturgy which included the laying on of hands and an anointing symbolizing the coming of the Spirit in fullness.

The three acts of this drama are integral one to another, but each clearly symbolized a qualitatively distinctive act of God in His relationship to the believer. This is clear in all of the Early Fathers who treat baptism to any extent: Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian, and Pope Leo I, especially.

How and when and why the Church lost its early understanding of its own baptismal liturgy is a sad and complex story. Suffice it to say that it lost its ability to interpret its own symbols, and in time came to confound and to confuse them—not suddenly, but over centuries.

And yet, it never lost a keen, if unarticulated, awareness that beyond initiation into the faith there lies a qualitatively distinct "second" stage or state contingent upon one's first having been regenerated. It was clearly understood that this stage is characterized by a special visitation of the Holy Spirit, both as a continuing purifier and as the empowerer who gives gifts of grace for the leading of a holy life. The language and symbolism are those of a "secondness" and "instantaneity." To this continuing awareness, the later sacrament of confirmation gives clearest witness, but not the sole witness.

It is in the context of these liturgical cues that Wesley comes to spiritual maturity. Lacking more direct evidence than we have, it is inappropriate to make categorical statements about either the doctrine of sanctification in the Early Church or its impingement upon Wesley. But there is certainly sufficient evidence to venture an informed opinion on both counts.



A DAY FOR LEADERSHIP

by Robert E. Coleman*

Never has the holiness movement had a greater challenge to show its vitality than today. I am thinking of those people who subscribe to Wesleyan doctrine, particularly in regard to sanctification. Let me hasten to say, however, that in the larger dimension of apostolic Christianity, everyone in Christ belongs to the holiness movement. And, I am sure, none of us have exhausted the meaning of sainthood. We can be grateful for the variety of approaches to this truth, and can learn from each other. But there are some inherent aspects of the Wesleyan tradition, though shared by other communions, which at this time in history offer us an unprecedented opportunity for leadership.

I

One is in the area of *biblical authority*. Society has largely lost its sense of moral value. Guided only by fallen human enlightenment, with no absolute objective criteria upon which to measure truth, it is adrift on a sea of confusion without a compass to chart its course. Everything is relative. The only hope of bringing any semblance of direction out of the existing chaos is by heeding the Word of God, spoken by the prophets, written in the Scripture, and living in Christ.

Unfortunately, the professing church too often has been caught up in the skepticism of the age. The Bible may be revered as an instrument through which truth is conveyed, but the message is thought to have been corrupted by man, so that we are left to wonder what part is true. No wonder people confronted with such theological double-talk become confused. They have no basis upon which to build a sure faith.

Addressing this problem, evangelical Christians, following the example of their Lord, have no hesitancy in affirming the complete integrity of the inspired Revelation. Rightly understood, we believe that what the Bible says, God says, and the Scripture is therefore completely trustworthy. To use the words of the Lausanne Covenant, it is "without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice."¹

With this statement the holiness movement has complete affinity. John Wesley believed the Scripture in its entirety to have "no defect, no excess."² "If there be one falsehood in that Book," he said, "it did not come from the God of truth."³ His counsel was that we "try all things by the written Word, and let all bow down before it." As he put it, "You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture: yea, or from the plain,

literal meaning of any Text, taken in connection with the context."⁴ Wesley was far more concerned with being a biblical theologian than either Arminian or Calvinist. With all his erudition, he said of himself: "I am a Bible-bigot. I follow it in all things, both great and small."⁵

The same might be said of his holiness progenitors. As there came pressures for compromise within the Church, and those of the holiness persuasion began to emerge as a distinct body within Methodism, they did not abandon Wesley's view of the Scripture. So also with those leaders who through the 19th century withdrew to form various holiness denominations. While not articulated as much as our distinctive experiential emphasis, the holiness movement has always contended for infallibility of the Bible. Significantly, it was the National Holiness Association which wrote the article on scriptural inerrancy later adopted by the NAE.⁶

I say this because the holiness people individually, and our fellowship corporately, are in a strategic position today to give leadership to the growing evangelical witness across the world. While humanism in its different guises runs rampant, and apostasy abounds, there are multiplied millions of people who increasingly are moving out to affirm the Word of God. They come from every church and community. What is especially encouraging, the appeal is most evident among the youth of our nation. Though sometimes buffeted, this Bible breed cannot be easily ignored. They are raising basic questions regarding the nature of truth which demand a verdict.

Here is a challenge for us in the Wesleyan movement to show the vitality of our heritage. Yet, I must confess, with some dismay, that we have not always been in the forefront of the action, at least, in the intellectual arena where the issues are being decided. Would I be unfair to ask, where are the Wesleys and Fletchers and Watsons of our generation? I know that we have gifted scholars and great teachers

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among us, and they have produced notable work, but their numbers should be multiplied tenfold. Take a look at almost any major publisher's list, and you will see how we have largely left the proclamation of biblical authority to our Calvinist brethren. Or scan the speaking platform of the great evangelical and interdenominational campus movements of our day, and it will show how little the intellectual world hears us.

Why this situation, we can only conjecture. I do not think, however, that it is because our message makes us unwanted. Most Bible-believing people seek a holy life, though it may be interpreted differently. But whatever the reason, we need to show more initiative in giving an intelligent, unwavering, scriptural rationale for our faith. Ultimately it is the intellectual leaders who give direction to a movement. If from our ranks such leaders come forth in sufficient numbers, unapologetically affirming an inerrant Bible, and show how the beauty of holiness shines the eternal Word of God, our message can flavor the whole evangelical awakening of this generation.

II

Lest we become complacent and ingrown in our experience, however, another concern of holiness needs emphasis today—leadership in *the missionary mandate of our Lord*. Persons committed to the Word cannot be disobedient to the Great Commission.

Everywhere in our world bewildered and desperate people need help. Their yearning eyes peer from smoke-filled bars and dimly lit street corners; they stare into the crowd as if looking for a friend in the gathering darkness. Millions of them are without direction—they are lost. If lined up, they would circle the earth 30 times, and the line is growing at the rate of 20 miles a day. Yet 140,000 die somewhere on this earth every 24 hours.⁷ These are people for whom God gave His Son. Each one of them is of more value in His sight than the accumulated wealth of the whole world.

From the beginning the holiness movement has been a missionary enterprise. As Wesley told his preachers: "You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore, spend and be spent in the work. Observe: It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society, but to save as many souls as you can: to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord."⁸

With this commission resounding through their spirit, those first Methodists came to America. Thomas Ware, one of the early circuit riders, while riding along was once asked by a clerical opponent if he were a missionary. "I replied," he said, "that I was a Methodist, and we were all missionaries."⁹ Answering those who wondered why they did not settle down and tend to their own flock like respectable churchmen, Bishop Asbury wrote: "Our discipline is too strict . . . Go says the command; go into all the world; go to the highway and hedges. Go

out—seek them. Christ came seeking the lost sheep."¹⁰

This is still our challenge. We are not called to hold the fort, but storm the heights. We must take the offensive by getting out into the world, and there doggedly witnessing to the redeeming grace of Jesus. C. T. Studd expressed it when he said:

Some wish to live within the sound of church or chapel bell. I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of Hell.¹¹

This will mean giving more attention to reaching persons with a diverse culture and language. Likely they live in out of the way and distant places, but some will be found in our own cities and neighborhoods. Wherever they are, they need to be located, and ways learned to communicate the gospel to them. Too many of us have been cloistered in our comfortable churches and campgrounds with no vision for the white fields of harvest beyond.

Any method that will get the job done should be employed. Whether the particular approach has support by tradition does not matter. The question is: Does it work? Programs naturally will change with different people and circumstances. What works in one place may have no relevance in another. Likewise, methods that were effective 100 years ago may have little appeal today. For this reason, old forms need to be continually evaluated. Unproductive programs should be discarded when a better way can be found. Openness and willingness to change are implied in progress. Whatever it takes, we must keep pressing the claims of Christ. Not all will respond, but all deserve to hear, and some will believe. Churches that do not grow are an anomaly to the Spirit of Pentecost.

In stressing the gospel outreach, however, I do not want to minimize the need for compassionate social concern. Here again, the holiness movement historically has demonstrated unusual leadership. Though the evangelistic imperative is primary, making disciples invariably involves us in the total dimension of life.

All of us have a part. The sentimental idea that the pastor is a sort of religious general engaged to do the fighting for the man in the ranks is absurd. Not only does it deny to each member his own service, but it virtually immobilizes the church for conquest. The ministry of Christ belongs to every member of His Body, and no one can transfer this responsibility to another. Perhaps this will mean giving less attention to the distinctions between laity and clergy, if not doing away with the titles altogether. But, in any case, it demands a more realistic application of the priesthood of all believers. Few will be gifted evangelists, but everyone can make disciples, and that finally is what our Lord asks us to do.

This will mean especially working with those few persons drawn to us. Those who are willing to learn can be shown what the Christian witness means, and in turn how they can reach out to others within their sphere of influence. In this manner the ministry of the church increasingly becomes a reality to the world. This is essentially the strategy of Jesus, and

by following the same pattern, His commission to make disciples comes alive to every believer.

Here our challenge to show leadership is exceeded only by the opportunity. Though the holiness movement may be comparatively small, by each one of us reproducing ourselves in a few others, and teaching them to do the same, we will multiply our witness in an ever-expanding circle of disciples, until ultimately the gospel reaches the ends of the earth.

III

Yet, our exposition of the Word, and active involvement in the mission of Christ, will mean little unless we minister in *the dynamic of Pentecost*. It is this area where we have our greatest opportunity to demonstrate leadership in this day.

Revival is the need of the hour. For most churchmen, Christian experience has lost its vitality. There is no thrill in personal devotion; no spring in the step; no shout in the soul. The joy of that saintly fanaticism which filled the Early Church is missing. Complacent respectability has become the norm.

While the nominal religious community flounders in mediocrity, the world plunges deeper into sin. For the average person, life has lost its meaning. It is eat, drink, and be merry, with every person for himself. The sacredness of the home and family is forsaken. Standards of decency in public and private are debased. A spirit of lawlessness pervades the land.

But the day of reckoning is sure to come. Moral and spiritual decline has its limits. There comes a time when we must reap the folly of our ways. Already we are seeing the disintegration of society, and unless something appears soon to change our course, our civilization is doomed. The threatening forbodings of disaster are causing many to think that we are in the last days before the return of our Lord.

Be that as it may, we need to be reminded that our greatest spiritual awakenings have come during the darkest periods of church history. Human nature being what it is, I suppose that the night has to close in before we look up and see the stars. There can be no doubt that multitudes of people today in and out of the Church are seeking something that will satisfy the soul. They may not be theologians, but they know that God is alive, and they long to know Him in personal experience. Ceremonial rites and pious clichés, however orthodox, do not satisfy the heart. Nor does all the glitter of big programs, big budgets, big buildings, and big mergers answer the yearning for spiritual reality. However defined, these people are searching for revival—a God-wrought transformation in the inner man that reaches into the total fabric of our life and culture.

The Wesleyan societies were born out of this concern. We are at heart a revival movement. By this I mean that by doctrine and experience we have a natural identity with that power which is described in the Book of Acts. The work of the Third Person of the Trinity should not have to be rediscovered in the holiness churches, as in some others, for this teach-

ing has always characterized our thinking. However inadequately we may have exemplified the life of those early Spirit-filled Christians, at least, we have emphasized this privilege as the norm of Christian experience. To the degree that we have lived by our doctrine, the holiness movement has known the blessing of God.

Our heritage puts us in a unique position to give leadership to the spiritual quest of our time. It is taking form in hundreds of thousands of little home Bible study groups, in homes and college dorms and breakfast meetings, some even in Congress. It comes through in witness missions and discipleship training seminars. It is seen in great evangelistic crusades, Holy Spirit conferences, missionary conventions, and a host of other programs. Perhaps the greatest spiritual movement of this decade is the ever-enlarging network of prayer across the nation. In all kinds of ways and theological settings, the action is reaching into every church communion across the land.

One of the most obvious expressions of this spiritual momentum comes from the charismatics. I recognize that the issue has created some tension in our fellowship, especially as some who have received the gift of tongues have sought to proselytize our numbers. And, may I add, that the best way to counteract the attraction of people to other persuasions is to have a greater attraction in our own. I do not want to be critical or presumptuous, but have you ever wondered why the holiness movement has not moved into the spiritual vacuum within Christendom as have our charismatic brethren? Could it be that in some sense the rise of the modern charismatic witness reflects upon our own timid and halting display of Pentecostal power? People are searching for what we profess. But if we do not show them what it is, the yearning must be satisfied some other way.

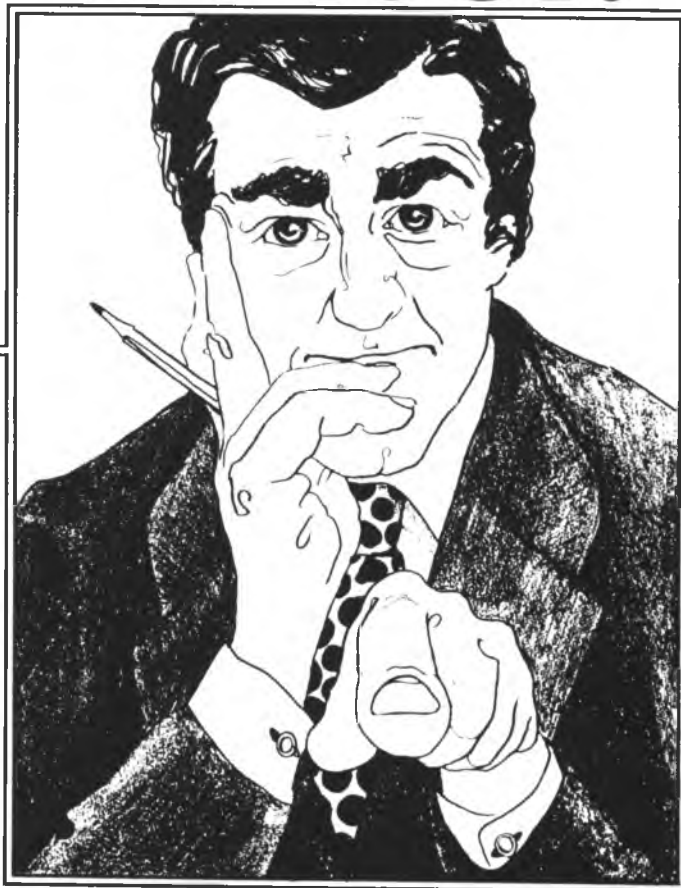
Holiness is beautiful. That is why I believe that when more people see it, they will want it. I recall how Samuel Chadwick said: "The power to attract is in attractiveness, and it is useless to advertise the banquet if there is nothing to eat."¹² May I ask in all honesty, is love so real and spontaneous in our fellowship that people want to be around us? Can our homes be recognized by the sound of joyful singing? Are the shouts of Zion ringing in our churches? Do we find our people excitedly going into the highways and byways telling everyone the glad tidings of Jesus? You may say, but we have outgrown that.

To be sure, this is a new day. And, as I have said, methods of communication must be updated. But the Spirit of Pentecost has never changed. That is why above all others, the holiness people have such tremendous opportunity to lead today. As never before in our lifetime, millions are restlessly looking for something that can bring deliverance from the bondage and power of sin—an experience authenticated in the Scripture, outgoing in its love, and wrought freely by the Spirit of God. They want to know the Christlike life. By whatever name it is called, these people are looking for true holiness.

We must rise to meet them with greater faith and

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**GIVE ME ONE GOOD
REASON FOR
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1982!

Your approach to church planning can prescribe future success or nearly automatic failure.

HOW TO DO BETTER ON PURPOSE

by Lyle E. Schaller

"It should be perfectly obvious to everyone that the number one priority here should be youth and young married couples," declared a longtime leader at Ebenezer church. "The future of the church is with the young people! Jim and I went over the membership roll last night in preparation for this meeting, and out of our 243 resident members, 209 are at least 40 years old. Nearly half of those are past 55! We do not have anyone in a leadership position under 40. We have only 14 members in the 20 to 30 age-group, and 9 of them are really inactive. I don't see how anyone can look at those figures and come out with any other conclusion. We need to put more emphasis on our ministry to youth!"

"You're right, Martha," agreed another older leader. "We do a pretty good job here at Ebenezer for couples in their 50s and 60s, but there is no future for our church in that age group. There's no question but that reaching out to young couples should be our top priority."

"I couldn't agree with you both more," added a man who was generally recognized to be the most influential leader at Ebenezer church. "I know it's easy to list a lot of other problems we have here. The Sunday School is down to a handful of kids, we're hurting financially, we need more parking, and we're short of leaders; but those are really symptoms of a more basic problem. If two dozen young adults joined the congregation next Sunday, all of these other problems would soon disappear!"

This approach to planning, priority-setting, and decision-making is not unusual. It is one of the most widely used "planning models" to be found in the churches. For the purposes of this discussion it can be identified as "planning from weakness." Or, to be more specific, this planning model appears to be based on the assumption that the best approach to planning is to identify that area of ministry in which our church is least effective or that function of the church in which we as a congregation are weakest and make it the number one priority. This means concentrating on that specialized area of ministry in which the resources are the fewest, past experiences will be least effective, and local skills are the scarcest. There may be other approaches which have a greater probability of failure than this planning-from-weakness model, but it is very difficult to name more than two or three. There may be other techniques which are more likely to undermine the morale of a congregation, but they are very rare. There may be other administrative processes which are more likely to be nonproductive, but they too are fortunately very rare.

Planning from Strength

A far better planning model for use at Ebenezer church would be one which can be identified as "planning from strength" or the "potentialities model."

Recently the leaders in a congregation very similar to Ebenezer church began asking themselves, "Where do we go from here?" As they

sought to respond to this question they first concluded that they must do so within the context of the call to be faithful and obedient, rather than from a concern to perpetuate the institution. Next they asked two questions. First, what are the needs of people to which we can address ourselves as servants of Jesus Christ? Second, what are the special gifts, resources, strengths, talents, and assets we are blessed with that suggest a direction?

As they reflected on the 80 years of the congregation's life, they began to realize that in the three decades since the end of World War II they had changed from a two-generation "family church" to a congregation of one-generation households, most which had already seen the youngest child leave home. They had become a congregation in which 83 of the 191 names on the mailing list represented one-person households. Instead of planning from weakness in an attempt to re-create yesterday, they saw themselves with a meeting place in a neighborhood with an increasing proportion of older residents. Many of these individuals, a large number of whom were widowed, had no active affiliation

with any worshiping congregation. As they studied this picture the leaders saw needs and hurts of scores of lonely older persons. They also saw that this coincided with the greatest strength of their own congregation—the ability to minister to older persons, to be a family for those who had no family, to be a support group for the bereaved, and to bring the gospel of Good News to those who felt there no longer was any good news.

Within the space of 14 months this congregation created a Bible study—prayer group—quilting fellowship of 11 older women, most of them widowed, who met all day every Tuesday and Thursday. Another group of older persons came together every Friday morning for Bible study, fellowship, and lunch and spent the afternoon calling on residents of four nearby nursing homes.

A third group was formed around the idea of a "Fishermen's Club." Following a carry-in supper and a 35-minute Bible study period they went out by twos in a visitation-evangelism program based on the assumption that a minimum of seven calls was necessary on any unchurched person before

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Cartoon by Masters Agency



"I've been thinking about the INTERIOR design, George. What would you say to bucket pews?"

Nazarene

Update

UPDATE EDITOR, SUSAN DOWNS, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

SUNDAY EVENING BELONGS TO THE CHURCH

The pressures of the world—customs, social practices, and the peer pressure of communities—ever push at the church. The church exists in an environment that is alien to and often antagonistic to the advancement of Christ's kingdom on earth.

If the church will just behave itself and stay within its own sanctuary, everything—as the sin-dominated world sees it—is just fine. It is when that church challenges the sin practices of society that opposition arises. But this “challenge” to evil must always be active in the program of the church. The church has a divine mission. It was given to the church by Christ our Lord. It allows no respite, no accommodation with evil, no retreat.

The offerings of public worship to its constituents with open invitations to any and all to come are the highly visible activities of the church. They are also the very

life stream of the church. They are essential to its existence and its mission.

The Sunday evening service is vital. It must be kept an aggressive part of the church's effort to evangelize. Many denominations began a subtle retreat when they—by program, etc.—removed their Sunday evening service from the area of confrontation with sin. After they had reduced it to innocuous activity and started broad entertainment, they then canceled it without much wracking of conscience.

So a tried and proven way of ultimately doing away with the Sunday evening service is to turn to entertainment. Do it rather intermittently at first, then increase the number of meaningless meetings and before too long you can put it to sleep. But such can never be for our Zion. We must defend, promote, and utilize the Sunday night service.

The offerings of television or other entertainment are unacceptable substitutes. It is still the Sabbath Day—to be kept, honored, and used for worship/evangelism.

The family needs a Sunday evening activity for common interest and doing. During the hectic week there has been precious little of family doing. “Church life” with all its meaning to the family is essential to the people and also for the church to keep from being shuffled to the sidelines by its members.

Every opportunity must be used to the full by this institution of destiny-controlling power. Rescue operations in crisis, emergency, or disaster are carried on around the clock. People can die, drown, be lost, killed in the night. So the work of rescue goes on. And our lost and sin-ravaged world is dying, drowning, lost, and destroyed in the night.

It should be truthfully said that the church never sleeps. So let's give our attention to the Sunday evening service. Make it interesting. Involve the laymen, promote it forcefully, don't retreat. Keep it centered on the mission of reaching the lost. Preach as well at night as in the morning.

Keep the cutting edge. Keep at it. We are on the march for our Lord. Sunday night services are indispensable.



By General Superintendent
V. H. Lewis

A complimentary subscription to the *Preacher's Magazine* is sent to all ministers in the Church of the Nazarene from the Nazarene Publishing House.

CELEBRATE CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

One of the most important ingredients of successful ministry is long- and short-range planning. The following general church events, with their dates, are provided by the Pastoral Ministries for your convenience in coordinating the local and district church calendar into your total program. We want to help you "Celebrate Christian Holiness." The events and programs should support the theme or be useful in attaining the purpose. We want to assist you in your ministry. Call on us.

1981-82—The Year of the Layman

September 14-19, 1981	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 21-25, 1981	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 28—October 2, 1981	NIROGA, Schroom Lake, New England
October 12-16, 1981	European Military Personnel Retreat
October 12-16, 1981	NIROGA, Banff, Canada
January 4-6, 1982	Evangelists' Meeting
February 22-26, 1982	NIROGA, Lake Yale, Florida
	REGIONAL CHRISTIAN LIFE CONFERENCES
	Mid-America Region
March 1-2, 1982	Eastern Canada Region
March 3-4, 1982	Eastern Region
March 4-5, 1982	Mount Vernon Region
March 8-9, 1982	Olivet Region
March 11-12, 1982	Canada West Region
March 16-17, 1982	Northwest Region
March 18-19, 1982	Point Loma Region
March 22-23, 1982	Bethany Region
March 25-26, 1982	Trevecca Region
March 29-30, 1982	NIROGA, Asilomar, California
May 31—June 4, 1982	Faith and Learning Conference, Olivet
June 21-25, 1982	Nazarene College
	International Lay Retreat, Toronto
July 6-11, 1982	Nazarene Multiple Staff Association
August, 1982	Conference
	Green Lake '82-Campus/Career Youth
	Event, Green Lake, Wisconsin

1982-83—The Year of the Young

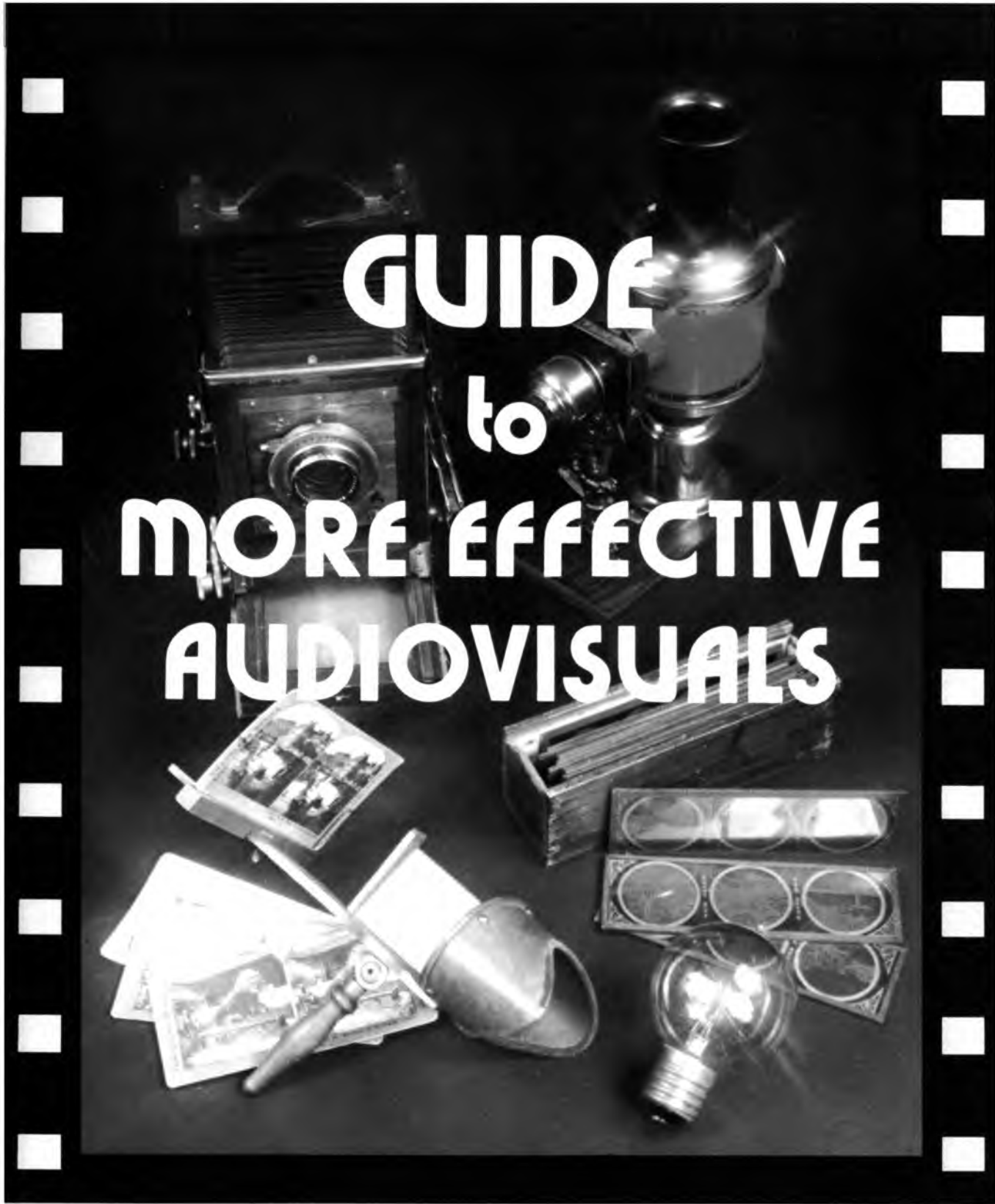
August 30—September 5, 1982	Youth Week
September 13-18, 1982	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 20-24, 1982	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 27—October 1, 1982	NIROGA, Schroom Lake, New England
October, 1982	European Military Personnel Retreat
December 13-15, 1982	Evangelists' Conference
January—May, 1983	Simultaneous Revivals
February 21-25, 1983	NIROGA, Lake Yale, Florida
May 30—June 3, 1983	NIROGA, California
May 30—June 7, 1983	NIROGA, Hawaii
June 20-26, 1983	World Youth Conference, Oaxtepec, Mexico

1983-84—The Year of the Diamond Jubilee

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

1984-85—The Year of Church Growth

Goal—75,000 New Nazarenes	
August 27—September 2, 1984	Youth Week
September 10-15, 1984	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 17-21, 1984	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
October 1-5, 1984	NIROGA, Adirondacks
October, 1984	European Military Personnel Retreat
December 10-12, 1984	Evangelists' Conference
February 18-22, 1985	NIROGA, Florida
June 20-22, 1985	General Conventions, Anaheim
June 23-28, 1985	General Assembly, Anaheim
August 26—September 1, 1985	Youth Week
September 9-14, 1985	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 16-20, 1985	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 30—October 4, 1985	NIROGA, Adirondacks
October 14-18, 1985	NIROGA, Canadian Rockies



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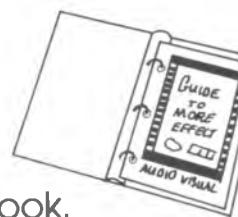
- 1) Obtain a notebook for 8½" x 11" paper.



- 2) Cut along the dotted line.



- 3) Insert the Media Memo into your notebook.



- 4) Wait anxiously for the next Media Memo in the UPDATES section of your next quarter's "Preacher's Magazine."



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Church of the Nazarene



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the world

SEPTEMBER IS ALABASTER OFFERING MONTH

Past Alabaster offerings have yielded

- 927 Churches
- 438 Building Sites
- 425 National Workers' Homes
- 316 District or Other Buildings
- 239 Missionary Homes
- 201 Primary, Secondary, and Bible School Buildings
- 33 Hospital or Clinic Buildings
- 16 Homes at Casa Robles for Retired Missionaries

... yet, *tremendous needs remain!*

Even with last year's NWMS Alabaster offering goal of \$1.5 million met, needs presented to the Division of World Mission totaling \$6.5 million had to go unfunded due to lack of finances.

We must work to win the world for God while it's yet day, for "the night cometh when no man can work" (John 9:4).

GIVE TOWARD ACCOMPLISHMENT OF OUR GREAT
GOD-GIVEN, GLOBAL TASK. GIVE IN THE 1981
SEPTEMBER ALABASTER OFFERING.

EVERYBODY OUGHT TO KNOW JESUS

Fall Rally

Sunday School Goals & Objectives for '81

GOALS: Minimum October increase both in Sunday School average attendance and October 25 Rally Day.

3+ per local church

200+ per district

20,000+ for the denomination

above last year

OBJECTIVE: To turn Sunday School attendance around. To have 100,000+ quinquennial increase over last quadrennium.

COMPETITION IS IN LOCAL CHURCH THIS FALL

The four Sundays of October this fall each has a different sponsor: children—October 4; youth—October 11; adult—October 18. The objective is to see who can have the greatest number in attendance on their rally day. Then on the fall Rally Day, October 25, each will compete to have the greatest number under their sponsorship in attendance. On each rally day the departments will also report the number of new enrollees. On the big Sunday School Rally Day, two winners will be announced in each church—the attendance winner and the enrollment winner.

The object is for each sponsoring group to get as many people of all ages as possible in Sunday School on their rally day. The department who gets the greatest total attendance on the Sunday School record on their day wins the attendance competition. But, each age-group department keeps a record of its new enrollees all four Sundays of October. The greatest total number of enrollees during October is the winner in the enrollment competition on Rally Day.

REPORTING: The local Christian Life and Sunday School board chairman reports on Sunday afternoon to the district chairman or a district designated person. Monday morning the district chairman reports the district attendance total to Kansas City following each children, youth, and adult rally. On the last Sunday of October, the 25th, the local churches report the attendance on the big rally day and the enrollment increase for children, youth, and adults and the total enrollment increase in October. This is to be net increase or enrollment enlargement. The chairman on each district reports these district totals to the general Division of Christian Life/Sunday School office in Kansas City on Monday, the 26th. Every Wednesday of October the general Division of Christian Life will mail the denominational report back to both the chairmen and the district superintendents. Any district may call Wednesday afternoon if for some reason they wish their report immediately.

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

The Editorial Team is supported by the wise counsel of a rotating editorial advisory board. Each issue of the *Preacher's Magazine* accents a theme. An advisory board of persons with experience and expertise on the subject is recruited to tell the editor and his staff what needs to be said about the accented theme.

Serving without pay, the editorial board, pictured here, helped us put together this issue on "The Sunday Night Service."



Future issues of the *Preacher's Magazine* will accent the following themes:

- Adult Ministries in the Local Church
- Preaching from the Book of Matthew
- The Preacher and Prayer



ROBERT L. LEFF
Pastor, First Church
of the Nazarene,
Topeka, Kansas



CHARLES I. MILLER
Pastor, First Church
of the Nazarene,
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RICHARD YOUNG
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The Wesleyan Church



WESLEY TRACY
Editor
The Preacher's Magazine



SUSAN DOWNS
Asst. Editor
The Preacher's Magazine



ARK NOEL
Pastor, First Church
of the Nazarene,
Springfield, Missouri

Opportunities Unlimited

Scheduling Missionary Deputation Services

Career missionaries in the Church of the Nazarene usually serve five-year terms: four years on a mission field and one year on furlough. Missionaries need this time of furlough to come home, rest, visit with friends and family, and minister to the churches in the interest of missions.

Hearing firsthand from Nazarene missionaries is one of the best ways to learn about the growth of the church worldwide.

Scheduling a missionary to speak in your church is easy.

We have approximately 120 missionaries available for services at all times.



- ★ Missionaries are usually scheduled through the Division of World Mission. If a missionary prefers to do his own scheduling, we will refer you to him.
- ★ If the missionary asks the Division of World Mission to arrange his deputation schedule, and then personally accepts a service in a church without confirming the date first with the Division of World Mission, then, should the Division of World Mission already have confirmed a date for him in another church, our assignment would have precedence.
- ★ Occasionally cancellations do occur due to illness or some factor we cannot control. We appreciate your understanding at those times.
- ★ Please feel free to contact us at any time. We are prepared to help you secure a missionary. Address your requests to:
Deputation Secretary,
Division of World Mission
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131
Phone: (816) 333-7000
- ★ If you want only a single service with a missionary, it is best to contact your district NWMS president and ask to be included on the district list that schedules a missionary who will be touring your district. Travel costs are prohibitive for a missionary to come for a single service unless he or she is already in the nearby area.
- ★ If several churches on your district want a special missionary (perhaps your LINKS or adopted missionary), contact your district president about scheduling a tour for this missionary.

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Cordially,
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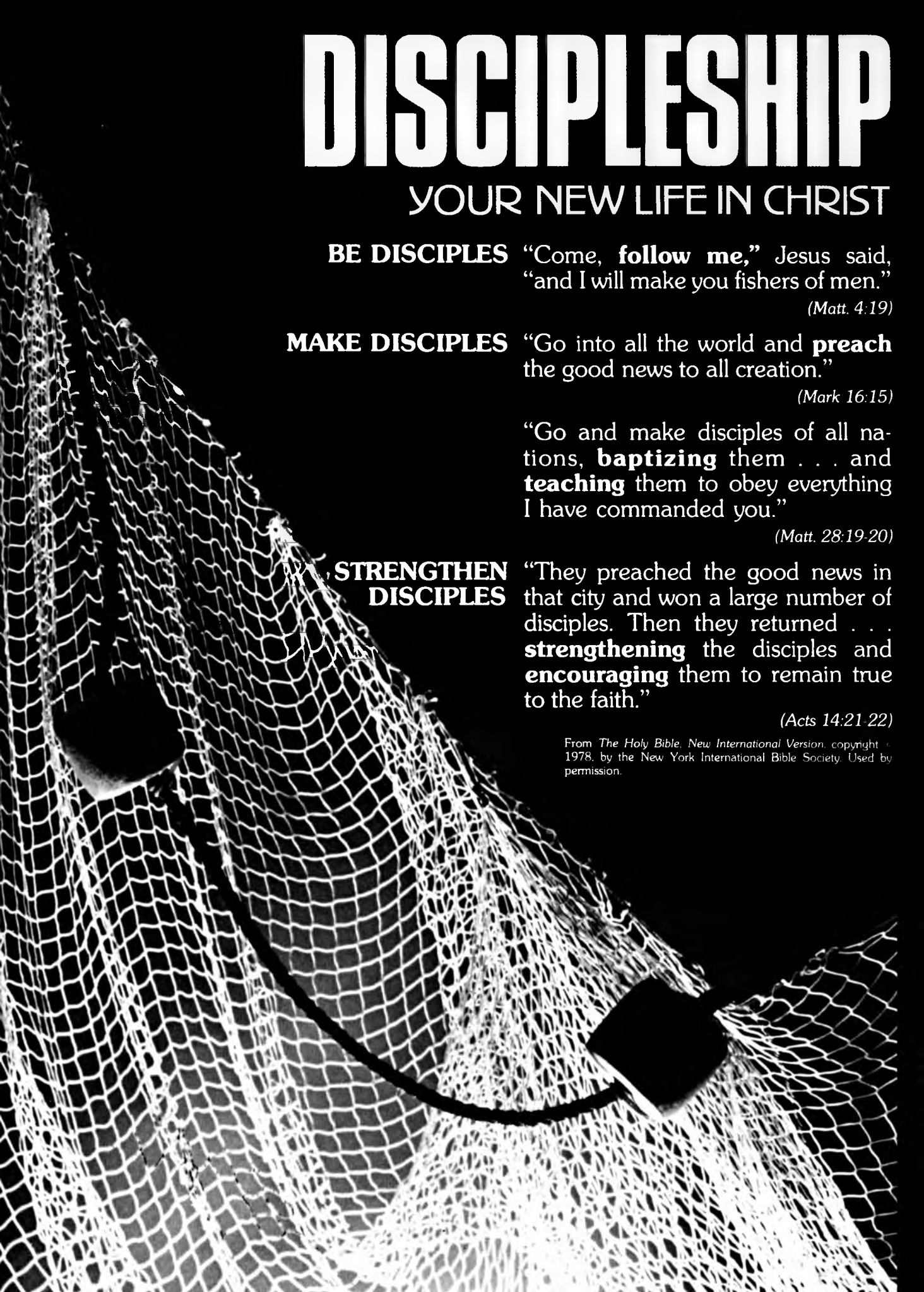
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BE DISCIPLES “Come, **follow me**,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”

(Matt. 4:19)

MAKE DISCIPLES “Go into all the world and **preach** the good news to all creation.”

(Mark 16:15)

“Go and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing** them . . . and **teaching** them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

(Matt. 28:19-20)

**STRENGTHEN
DISCIPLES**

“They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned . . . **strengthening** the disciples and **encouraging** them to remain true to the faith.”

(Acts 14:21-22)

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STUDY GUIDE

DISCIPLESHIP

YOUR NEW LIFE
IN CHRIST

EDITED BY MEL & WENDY

DISCIPLESHIP

YOUR NEW LIFE
IN CHRIST

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"*Discipleship—Your New Life in Christ* was written by a committee largely composed of pastors who understand the basic needs of new converts. While it is primarily intended for new Nazarenes, we anticipate that many of our people who have been in the church for several years will want to enroll in this discipleship course. We believe that it could add a whole new dimension to their understanding of the Christian faith and that this in turn will make them more effective witnesses.

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Dr. Eugene L. Stowe

Discipleship—Your New Life in Christ authors include: Neil B. Wiseman, Editor, Bill Sullivan, Al Truesdale, A. F. Harper, Reuben Welch, Melvin McCullough, Gordon Wetmore, C. Neil Strait, Jerry Lambert, Millard Reed.



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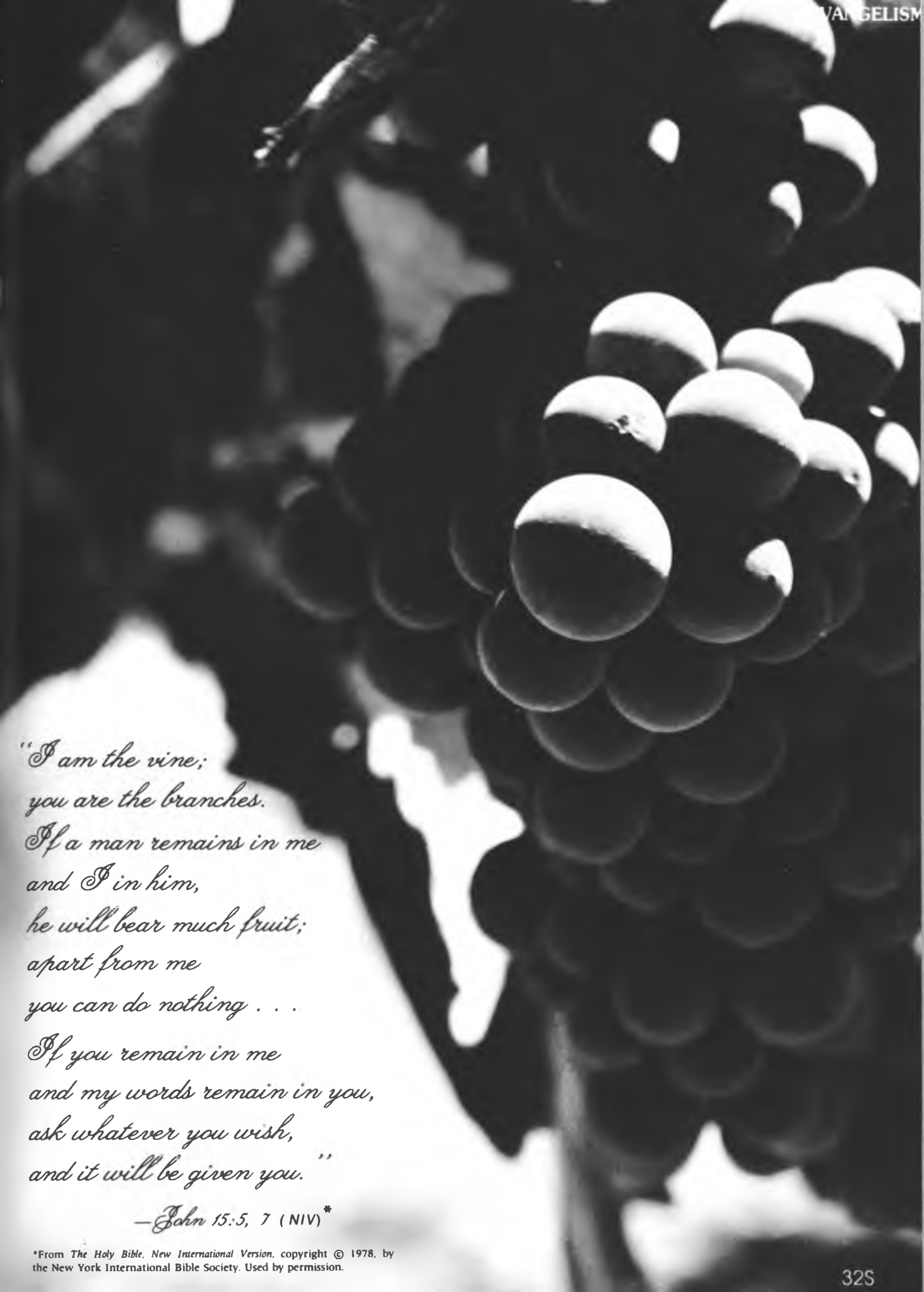
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you are the branches.
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and I in him,
he will bear much fruit;
apart from me
you can do nothing . . .*

*If you remain in me
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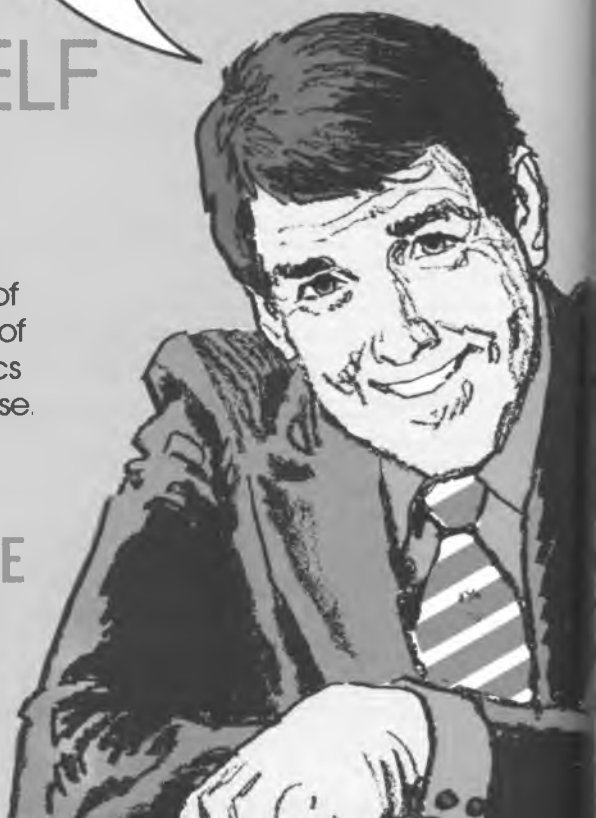


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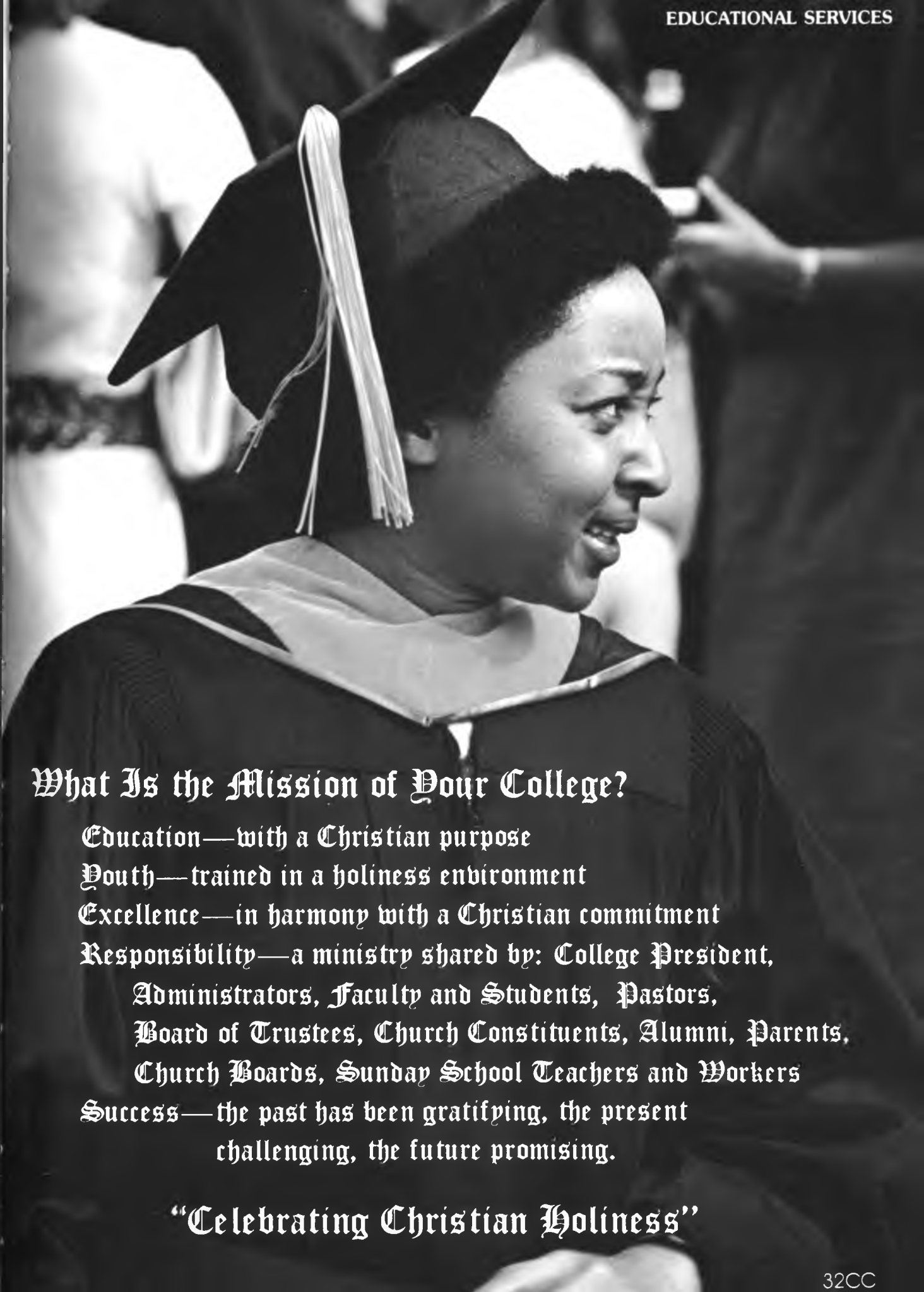
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Please remember to put this important item on your November church board agenda.

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ON PURPOSE

(continued from page 32)

they could tell whether or not that individual might be interested in uniting with their congregation.

A fourth group was formed to call regularly on the growing number of shut-ins in the congregation. A fifth group met every Tuesday evening for intercessory prayer. A sixth group was composed of nine men, four of them widowers, who met at the church every other Saturday to spend the day going out into the neighborhood to put up storm windows, repair front steps, fix leaky faucets, and perform a hundred other "handyman" chores for residents who could not do these things for themselves and did not feel they could afford to hire someone to do it. Every noon two or three of the wives of men in this group served a hearty lunch at the church for the corps of "neighborhood volunteers."

Twenty-six months after the first meeting of the planning committee which led to the development of the groups, a statistical summary revealed that 78 persons—55 of them widowed, divorced, separated, or never married—were involved regularly in the life of these six groups. All but 3 of the 78 had passed their 55th birthday, and 37 of the 78 were new members of the congregation. Another 119 persons, again all but 3 age 55 or over, had united with the congregation as a result of the intensive visitation-evangelism program.

When this statistical summary was being discussed by the leaders of another, similar congregation, someone asked, "But what's the future of a congregation which specializes in a ministry to older persons?"

One response was, "That's an irrelevant question; the point is, they are being faithful and obedient in responding to what the Lord is calling them to do and to be."

A more pragmatic-minded person responded, "They have a great future! They're specializing in a ministry to the most neglected and the second-fastest-growing age-group in the total population."

Planning by Cliche

A third planning model in wide use across the North American continent today can be identified simply as "planning by cliche." All too often simplistic cliches, which later turn out to be fallacies, are offered as the solution to the problems facing the church.

Unquestionably the most common of these cliches is "Ours is a friendly church, and that's our main attraction for people."

While it is true that in most congregations many of the recent new members commend the friendliness of the congregation, this is counting only some of the ballots. Rare is the church which counts the number of persons who visited once or twice and never came back. Though friendliness is a wonderful attribute, it is not a substitute in the long run for opportunities for personal and spiritual growth nor for excellence in program, especially in preaching and music. Likewise the number of different oppor-

tunities for people to be actively involved in ministry is far more significant than the number of "friendly" people. Every congregation has lots of "friendly" people in it. Every open, friendly, extroverted, and gregarious person finds friendly people wherever he goes. How "friendly" is the friendly church to the lonely, the alienated, the shy, the introverted, and the overburdened? That's another question!

While this dependence on "friendliness" represents the most extreme example of planning by cliche, it does not stand alone. There are at least five other examples of this planning model which deserve review here.

"If only we can reach the youth and keep them, that'll be our church of tomorrow."

Many churches launch a youth ministry in order to strengthen "our church tomorrow." This pattern has four built-in areas of self-deception. First, that is a very poor motive for developing a ministry to youth. Second, only rarely in a vigorous and growing *urban* congregation will more than 10 or 15 percent of your high school youth be members of your church 20 years hence. They move away or join another church. Third, almost invariably the urban congregation, in which more than 30 percent of today's adult leaders are people who were reared in that congregation, is a church in trouble. Usually the source of the problem is that the congregation has been unable to reach new people and assimilate them into leadership positions, and thus it has been forced to depend heavily for leadership on persons who are children or spouses of members. Fourth, all too frequently this cliche can be translated into operational English as "Let's place a top priority on a ministry to youth, as the youth will grow up to share our values and be like us." The problem here is the tremendous shortage of high school youth in the 1970s who want to grow up to be "like us"!

The apartment boom of the past two decades has produced a third cliche for this list: "When the apartment buildings proposed for this area are constructed, there will be hundreds of people living within walking distance of our church; and many will come here and become members of this congregation."

Though this is not heard as often as it was a decade ago, before the failure of most congregations to reach the lonely people in apartments became so widely publicized, it is still a frequently encountered cliche. The general rule on this subject is that the congregations which are reaching an increasing number of people will reach apartment dwellers, and the churches which were not reaching many new people before the apartments were constructed will not reach the new apartment residents. Apartment dwellers, like other adults, tend to participate in the life of those congregations where they have friends and/or relatives among the members. Since most residents of new apartment structures have neither friends nor relatives in the congregations which meet in nearby buildings, one of two things happens. Either the apartment dwellers stay

away from the nearby congregations, or members of these congregations seek out the apartment residents and take the initiative in building friendship ties.

Closely related is a fourth cliché, which is often expressed in these words: "If we're ever going to reach more people, we have to move to a new location." This statement is heard most frequently in hundreds of central-city congregations with a declining membership figure.

While many relocations have produced larger and stronger congregations, especially those that were carried out before 1965, this does not automatically happen in every case. In general, the congregations most likely to grow in membership following relocation are those which before relocation is proposed to have developed the capability of reaching and assimilating unchurched persons, rather than those which relocate in order to perpetuate an institutional name and a congregation of people.

The last in this set of examples of planning by cliché is "If we can bring in programs and ministries so the building is used every day of the week, that will attract people, and our membership will increase."

Occasionally this does happen. New members were attracted by what the church is doing in ministry. Rarely, however, do many of the people toward whom the program is directed (such as the parents of children in a day-care center or senior citizens) join the congregation housing the program. A far more typical pattern is that the congregation redefines its purpose as acting in a landlord role and the membership continues to decline in numbers.

Planning for Tomorrow

A fourth model which is useful in some situations and which parallels the planning-from-strength model can be described very simply as "getting from here to there." This model focuses on three questions: What, in our understanding, is God calling this congregation to be and to do five (or six or four) years from today? Where are we now in relationship to where we should be five years hence? How do we go about getting from here to there?

This is a very strongly goal-oriented model and resembles the concept of management by objective. It requires the people to dream, to envision the future, and to focus on the potentialities. This helps define "where we should be five years from now." Second, it requires the people to identify contemporary reality and to recognize both the assets and the liabilities of today. Third, the process of getting from "here" to "there" requires planning, policy formulation, decision-making, decision implementation, and evaluation. In very simple terms this process can be described by this diagram:



Nonplanning

The list of planning models that might be used by a congregation is very long, and it is impossible to describe them all here.

There is no one "best" model. Which is the best model to use will depend very heavily on local conditions at the time that a serious planning effort is undertaken. Among the least helpful are planning from weakness, planning by cliché, planning in response to a crisis, planning for efficiency and economy (rather than for ministry and quality), scapegoating, planning for yesterday, and "studying the community." Among the generally useful planning and decision-making models are management by objective, planning from strength, planning for tomorrow, cost-benefit (allocative), innovative, from-purpose-to-program-to-performance-to-evaluation, planning-budgeting-evaluation, from old role to new role to new goals,¹ policy-planning, and the "here-to-there" model described earlier.

Regardless of which model is used, however, there is one concept which should be kept in mind and which can be integrated into most other models. Identified by its critics as "nonplanning," it can be described by contrasting two approaches. While the first is a caricature, it is not as much of an exaggeration as it may first appear. Back in the late 1940s and early 1950s, if one judges by action rather than by the rhetoric, much planning was apparently based on the assumption "Never again will we have the wisdom, the foresight, and the talents of so many gifted people assembled in one place as we have here today. Therefore it is our responsibility to make all the decisions now on all questions which may arise during the next quarter-century because those poor folks 10 or 20 years from now may not have the benefit of our wisdom."

At the other extreme is a view represented by the statement "We do not know the needs of the people who will be here 10 or 20 years hence, so there is no point in our trying to plan for tomorrow."

Between these two extremes is a view which is reflected in this statement: "We do not know the needs, the values, and the wishes of the people who will follow us. We do know, however, that they will probably want to do things differently than we do now. Therefore let us plan in such a way that we leave the optimum range of choices open to those leaders who will follow us here so they can make use of what we do but also have the flexibility necessary to change and to adapt to the needs of their day." The Akron plan of church construction which flourished in the 1870-1925 era is one example of the first approach. The flexible and multiple-use worship facilities being built in the 1970s represent this intentional "nonplanning" model. 

From *Creative Church Administration*, by Lyle E. Schaller and Charles A. Tidwell. New York: Abingdon Press, 1975. Used by permission.

1. For an elaboration of this concept see Lyle E. Schaller, *Hey, That's Our Church!* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), pp. 160-77.

“WHEN THE SWORD IS ONCE DRAWN”:

WESLEY’S VIEW OF WAR

by Donald D. Wood*

Hark the cannon’s roar! A pitchy cloud covers the sky. Noise, confusion, terror reign over all! Dying groans are on every side. The bodies of men are pierced, torn, hewed in pieces, their blood is poured on the earth like water! Their souls take flight into the eternal world; perhaps into everlasting misery” (Wesley, *Works*, 7:404).

Ambrose Bierce’s “Chickamauga”? No, John Wesley is here describing the horror of war, in particular, a battle in which some British troops were slain near Boston in 1775. The description is part of his sermon, “National Sins and Miseries,” Wesley’s lament over sinful practices in national life. Some of these practices were the slave trade, the bloodshed in the East India trade, and the failure to observe the Lord’s Day. These practices had, in the just providence of God, led to the American conflict which had in turn made some members of his audience into widows and orphans. England had sown the wind, now she was reaping the whirlwind.

Wesley, of course, was a loyal subject and a faithful defender of the crown. The direct cause of the conflict was the folly of greedy and rebellious men, e.g. John Hancock, in the colonies. In Wesley’s mind, these men’s voices, while raised in apparent cries for liberty, were masking hearts set on anarchy. He would have

agreed with Napoleon’s assessment of the French Revolution: “Vanity made the revolution; liberty was only a pretext.” The same statement, in Wesley’s view, could have applied to the American Revolution.

Though Wesley made particular comment on the American conflict, such comment was consistent with his overall hatred of war. In his treatise, “The Doctrine of Sin,” which is dated 1757, he referred to war as one of the major proofs of man’s depravity. The cause of war might be the ambition of princes, the quarrel of kings or parliaments, controversy over the nature of sacraments, covetousness, the civilization and conversion of barbarous people, or the national interest. However, at its most basic root, war is caused by sin. It represents a denial of all man’s claims to dignity and virtue, flies in the face of both reason and religion, and proves the original depravity and corruption of sin.

If, then, all nations, Pagan, Mahometan, and Christian, do

in fact, make this their last resort, what further proof do we need of the utter degeneracy of all nations from the plainest principles of reason and virtue? of the absolute want, both of common sense and common humanity, which runs through the whole race of mankind? (*Works*, 9:222).

In Wesley’s day reason was considered one of the chief faculties of man. Wesley agreed. However, reason without the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit was too weak to rescue man from the depravity of his heart.

Surely all our declarations on the strength of human reason and the eminence of our virtues, are no more than the cant and jargon of pride and ignorance, so long as there is such a thing as war in the world (*Works*, 9:223).

War is a particular affront to a Christian nation. For Wesley as for Karl Barth 157 years later, war was the jolting reminder of how far human society is from the kingdom of God.

There is still a more horrid reproach to the Christian name, yea, to the name of man, to all reason and humanity. There is war in the world! war between Christians! I mean, between those that bear the name of Christ, and profess to “walk as he walked” (*Works*, 9:221).

(continued on page 62)

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A former pastor and district superintendent talks about . . .

PAYING THE BUDGETS

by Norman W. Bloom

This article is presented as a challenge by one who needs such stimulation. In no way does the writer imply perfection in the realm of church finance. However, I believe with John A. Knight, that, "What needs to be done for God's glory can be done by His power." This includes paying the budgets, which are, like the poor, "always with us."

The proclaimer of the Word needs to be competent in stewardship guidance, both as a teacher and model. This leadership includes a broad enough concept to encompass consecration, applied holiness, service, evangelism, as well as the stewardship of giving, which in turn includes local, district, and general interests.

Basic Tithing

Immediately the word *tithe* enters our thinking. In the Church of the Nazarene, we at least say, we are 10 percent conscious. But this attitude toward giving may have some indirect financial loopholes. Just how can life be summed up in dollars and cents or parceled out into tenths or any other fractions? Our Lord explicitly pointed out that there are "things that are God's" and "things that are Caesar's." We dare not fall into the fallacy of dividing life into airtight compartments of "sacred" and "secular," yet there is a distinction between the two. The sacred should permeate the whole, yet all life cannot possibly be reduced to one level. All days are not the same; the Lord's Day is set apart as the Sabbath was of old by sanctions of religion, rest, and worship in a way quite different from other days. And so all money is not to be treated the same. A certain portion is to be set apart "unto the Lord" and this should influence the disposing of the remainder.

In the patriarchal period, Abraham offered the tenth to Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, anticipating the day when men would lay their most precious gifts at the feet of the promised One. Jacob pledged to God at Bethel, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen. 28:22).

When the Hebrews became a nation, the tithe was provided for in the statutes of their ceremonial law. Each head of a family among the Jews was

bound to give a tenth of all of his yearly increase to the support of the Levites, but the Levites in turn were required to pay a "tenth part of the tithe" unto the Lord (Num. 18:26-29). The Hebrew was obliged to pay the second tithe which was used for the maintenance of the feasts (Deut. 14:22-23) and in addition, there were trespass offerings, sundry other religious charges, plus long and costly journeys to the Temple, all imposed by divine sanction, *besides* the freewill offerings. To total all of these religious obligations would indicate that the head of the Jewish family contributed between one-fifth and one-third of his yearly income. The ripe fruitage of this benevolent system of Israel appears incarnate in the person of Zacchaeus when our Lord called him from the sycamore tree and he turned at once to the matter of personal accounts and said, "The half of my goods I give to the poor" (Luke 19:8).

Since there was a system of giving religiously observed among God's ancient people, would it reflect credit upon our Lord to omit the furnishing of a working plan for the present dispensation?

The Church of the Nazarene, from its inception, has preached and promoted the scriptural practice of supporting the work of God by means of the tithe. The *Manual* reads: "Storehouse tithing is a scriptural and practical performance of faithfully and regularly placing the tithe into that church to which the member belongs. Therefore, the financing of the church shall be based on the plan of storehouse tithing, and the local Church of the Nazarene shall be regarded by all of its people as the storehouse. All who are a part of the Church of the Nazarene are urged to contribute faithfully one-tenth of all their increase as a minimum financial obligation to the Lord and freewill offerings in addition, as God has prospered them, for the support of the whole church, local, district, zonal, and general."

Training in stewardship is necessary in every church. People learn how to give by being taught to give, by having opportunities to give, and channels through which to give. And yet there are few subjects more difficult for the pastor to deal with. The myriad unceasing demands could cause the faithless to despair, and even sometimes the faithful.

Method in Church Finance

Unquestionably one of the crippling problems today in church finance is *method*. There is such an assortment of miscellaneous ideas practiced that our system of church finance has nearly as many models as the automobile market. Too often we find ourselves on the ragged edge of wonderment as to how to secure the necessary funds to boost a depleted church treasury. Thank the Lord there is a general recognition of the practical worth of the tithe system. But the "tithes" never seem to meet all the noble demands which challenge the church. So we devise more methods, more specifics, more pledges, miles of pennies, buckets of quarters, tin-bank accumulations, etc., etc., etc., to pay the mortgage, the building fund, and the budgets. This results in publications like one book in my library called *102 Snappy Schemes of Church Finance*. Is this God's best for our day when He made His financial plans so plain in other days? Without doubt the method of haphazard giving was one of the causes of the introduction of questionable money-raising methods in the church—suppers, bazaars, and whatnot. There is a trend in our church toward accepting these previously condemned means.

The workable system in the Old Testament is not arogated in the New Testament, but is commended by Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. 23:23). Is it good judgment to substitute another method or a variety of methods for this system of success wherever it has been faithfully tried? I think not.

God's plan for financing His work was and is *tithing*. We should give up gimmicks and "snappy schemes" and teach our people to *tithe*. Only then will the needs be met. Too many holiness people do not tithe! Too many holiness people are careless about their tithe. Too many holiness people are not instructed and encouraged to tithe. (Pastor, when did you last preach a series—or even one message on tithing—with love?) Too many Christians do not experience the rewards of tithing. Too many Christians have stopped tithing, or would stop if it were not for the income tax deduction privilege. We need to remember that the rich blessings of God come from the giving of our offerings, and this is only after we have met the requirements of bringing the tithe.

The pastor must be wise about money. He *must* preach on giving to God, and he *must* practice generosity in his own giving. His attitude toward authorized budgets and financial programs for the support of the total departments of the church must be magnanimous and wholehearted. A pastor can talk poverty and offer criticism about budgets and benevolences until he stops the springs of generosity in the hearts of God's people.

Wisdom in money matters carries over into the realm of spending money as well as securing money. This is true in the preacher's own finances.

No pastor should be content to see his own salary and the items of the local church budget cared for, but neglect the district obligations and general commitments. If the pastor has only a passing interest in demands other than his own, spiritual remediation is needed.

If my church fails to pay the General Budget in full, which missionaries should we call home due to lack of funds? If my church fails to pay the District Budget in full, how much should we cut the district superintendent's salary this month? If my church does not pay the NMBF Budget in full, which one or ones of the retired elders on the district roll shall we write to and say, "So sorry, friend, you will not receive a check this month"? If my church does not pay the Educational Budget in full, which one or ones of those enrolled at a holiness college should we call home? Budgets are just as vital as the light bill, the fuel bill, the bank payment. Budgets are personal. Budgets are human. Budgets are vital. Budgets are payable! Actually it is fun to pay the budgets and thus be a fully participating part of the whole program of our beloved church worldwide.

It is idealistic to think we will ever have 100 percent of our membership tithing. But we can and must pay the budgets. The formula is this:

1. We must train more tithers.
2. We must believe in budgets.
3. We must believe in paying budgets—the pastor, the church board, the membership.
4. We must pray until we have a plan.
5. We must work the plan.
6. We must keep at it until the goals are reached—the budgets are paid.

The district superintendent is a vital link in this believing-succeeding process.

The best way I know of is to begin making budget payments on a regular monthly basis and finish on time 10 months later. Most churches keep up to date and some always paid ahead on the 10-month schedule. Paying the budgets becomes a "must" for the laypeople, as much of a concern for them as for the pastor and district superintendent.

In conclusion, let me recommend stressing of the scriptural standard of the tithe, plus offerings (not gimmicks), as the solution to the financial problems in your church.

Second, recognize your responsibility as a leader to work with your board at the beginning of the assembly year to disperse all church income wisely as unto the Lord. This includes caring for local interests and paying all of the budgets—systematically—in full and on time.

Third, keep your people informed, for an informed people will be a responsive people.

Fourth, always be optimistic, kind, and persistent. Your attitude will be contagious.

Tithes keep a lot of dedicated workers in the job and a lot of great ministries operating. The challenge will not be met by snappy schemes or cute commercialism but by tithers who, from dedicated hearts, give a tenth and even more. May their tribe increase.





THE CHURCH: A BIBLICAL- THEOLOGICAL DEFINITION

by Stephen Gunter, *Chairman, Department of Religion, Bethany Nazarene College, Bethany, Oklahoma*

Is the Church human or divine? In a day when the Church is a much disparaged institution by those within and without her,¹ a serious attempt needs to be made at recapturing her *raison d'être*. If we are to find an answer with any hint of correctness, we must find a primary source of information about the genesis of the Church and the primary themes and forms she has adopted. Thus, before we state the Church's reason for being we must determine the nature of the Church.

It is foolhardy to define goals and purposes for Christ's Church before very carefully delimiting the nature of that institution. We do not set the Church's goals and then select her *esse*; we determine her nature, being, then outline her purpose, function, and goal. The Holy Scriptures is our sole definitive source for such a task.

In his definitive treatment of the biblical analogies used to portray the essence of the Church, P. S. Minear carefully analyzes some 96 images which refer to the Church.² This lengthy treatise of almost 300 pages has been succinctly condensed by the same author in an excellent article in the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.³ In a paper the scope of this one it is entirely impossible to cover even one-third of these images. The great number of analogies used in the Testaments to depict the Church leads us to choose three broad metaphors which allow for including nearly all the images either explicitly or implicitly. First we will consider the Church as the "People of God"; then examine the "Body of Christ" analogy; and finally, the Church as the "Fellowship Community." It is obvious that each of these is a very broad concept and worthy each of its own treatment; nevertheless, we shall look briefly at each in an attempt at defining the nature of the Church.

Before proceeding to the treatment of our three chosen metaphors, it is necessary to briefly examine the Old and New Testament words for "Church." This brief survey of meanings is an attempt at demonstrating the fact that any definition of the Church which is biblical must be a definition based on religious and theological association rather than on philological origins.

The Septuagint uses *ekklesia* almost 100 times as a rendering for *qahal*. This is quite legitimate for the basic meaning of both words is a "meeting" or "gathering." These words do not carry any intrinsic religious connotation.⁴ *Qahal* was frequently translated by other Greek words in the Septuagint. Of these the most noteworthy was *sunagoge*, which also was a general term, applicable to meeting of all sorts. *Sunagoge* was also used to translate the Hebrew *'edah* which had one single connotation not associated with *qahal*. *'Edah* could refer to a group apart from its actual meeting together. *Ekklesia*, however, never appears in the Septuagint for *'edah*. And the word *sunagoge* is limited in New Testament usage to Jewish congregations, with the rare exception of James 2:2. The distinctive meanings of *ekklesia*, therefore, develop within Christian history and are "due more to religious associations than to philological origins."⁵

With this basic information as a background we can now proceed to the analysis of our three metaphors.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Should a person refer to himself as "God's person" or should a group of persons refer to themselves collectively as "God's people," it would certainly leave the distinct impression that they were conceited and self-righteous. Such terminology conveys the idea that God has favorites, which seems to hint at God being capricious. Moreover, to the modern mind it suggests that some persons are naturally better than others in God's sight. Indeed, this has been a common misconception of man since the beginning of time, even among the covenant seed of Abraham. It is, then, not surprising that we find both Jews and Gentiles believing themselves to be the inheritors of the promises given by God in the covenant which He made with His chosen people, Israel.⁶

The basic truth, however, that the chosen people were not intrinsically good was often missed by the masses as they heralded their favored position with their Creator. It is easily forgotten that the twice-born are the chosen people; the covenant between

God and man is the foundation of favor. Indeed, God has no favorites; He has "sons." God is never capricious; He cannot be because He is not. He bestows favor upon whom He wills, but He wills to bestow favor on those who enter into and maintain a covenant relationship with Him.

Since modern man is not conditioned to think in terms of man in covenant relationship to God, he is in danger of drawing at least two false conclusions when we speak of the "people of God." Since we usually use the word *people* in a very casual and vague way to refer to human beings in general, we usually use it to denote simply the aggregate number of individuals present at a gathering. One can find, however, very few occurrences of *laos* in the New Testament that convey this meaning.⁷ People in general do not exist; there are only "particular peoples." Each people has a "separate and cohesive actuality" of its own.⁸

A second misconception stems from the habit of using *people* to refer to "all men as men." When the New Testament refers to all men, the writers either speak of Adam, the representative man, or they speak of "all the peoples." Humanity is not pictured as a "worldwide census of individuals," but as separate peoples which comprise mankind as a whole. Each people keeps its own "discreet unity." Hence, to designate a particular society as the "people of God" is immediately to set it over against all other peoples.⁹ Many times in the Bible we read the assertion that the birth and survival of such a people are due alone to God's gracious and faithful action in creating, sustaining, judging, and saving them. They are a people only because He dwells within them and moves among them.¹⁰

It is evident from a number of passages that the New Testament Christians considered themselves to be the "people of God" referred to so often in the Old Testament.¹¹ Two passages illustrate with particular force the dependence of this people on God's action for their existence, 1 Pet. 2:9-10 and Rom. 9:25-26. This dependency probably is clearest in the 1 Peter passage where various Old Testament passages are combined and applied to the people of redemption, i.e., the Church. Four expressive predicates outline its splendid and unique status: "chosen race," "kingly priesthood," "holy nation," and "purchased people." The continuation "so that you may proclaim the great deeds of him who has called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" refers to Isa. 43:20 f., where the prophet promises "a new Exodus." In doing so he calls Israel (cf. LXXX), "My chosen race, my people that I have acquired for myself in order to tell my great deeds." Peter sees this eschatological Israel realized in the Church. The expressions "kingly priesthood" and "holy people" derive from Exod. 19:6 (LXX) which depicts both the sharing in God's kingship and also the priestly service of the people of God in the world. That the Early Church adopted as her own these attributes and functions is clear in Rev. 1:6 and 5:10.¹²

Further, it should be noted that 1 Pet. 2:9-10 and Rom. 9:25-26 suggest three specific inferences concerning the genesis of this people. First, the pre-

vious existence of this people was one of "shadowy nonexistence in darkness." To be sure, the persons had existence, but they lacked overriding purpose. Second their transition into meaningful existence coincided with the transforming operation of God's mercy. Mercy from God is a dominant characteristic of the "people of God." Finally, this transition was inseparable from the vocation of declaring God's wonderful deeds.¹³

We have moved, then, from a very broad misconception about "a people of God" who are considered intrinsically "holy" through the Old Testament declaration of a "chosen covenant people," to the New Testament affirmation that the Church is the continuation of this chosen people for the purpose of proclaiming God's redemptive act in Christ. The evidence assembled very briefly above regarding the identification of the Church with God's people of the old covenant not only suggests that the Old Testament is necessary to understand the New, it calls for a clear understanding of the basic unity of the two Testaments as the Word of God. The biblical concept of the continuing "people of God" under one God, with one purpose of God throughout, requires this understanding. This is not to say that the New Testament Church is synonymous with the Old Testament covenant people. There is one great difference—Pentecost. The New Testament Church began at Pentecost. God's purpose remained the same, the proclamation of redemption for and through the people of God, but the promised Messiah of the covenant people was the Resurrected Lord of the Christian Church.¹⁴

Having noted the historical identification of the Church with the people of God, beginning at Pentecost, it remains to examine theologically the meaning of this identification for the understanding of the nature of the Church. There are no less than seven implications which this historical continuity has for the New Testament Church as the people of God:¹⁵

1. The Church is a company of concrete living persons in the flesh. She is a visible, identifiable, human company, not an invisible, mystical phenomenon. It is the counterpart, not to the shell of ethnic Israel, but to the spiritual remnant Israel.

2. The Church is called into being by God himself. The people of God emerges as an expression of His prior purpose and are therefore an expression of grace. They are a people because He offered a covenant to them, which they accepted. They are a people because of God's election, not by their own endeavor. Just so the New Testament Church comes into existence by the gracious act of God in Christ; the new covenant is offered in the blood of Christ.

3. The Church can never be thought of as a merely human institution created as a voluntary compact by human beings interested in religion. She owes her life to God, and all those who are added to her are added by God (Acts 2:47). The Church is composed of created persons, but her point of reference is always transcendent, outside herself.

4. God determines the boundaries of eligibility for membership in His people. This in no way denies the responsibility of the Church to fix the spiritual requirements for membership or to set the parameters of separation from the world. It does mean though that the Church can set for herself no ethnic, natural, or cultural barriers.

5. God has determined in advance that He will have a people; He has predestined the Church; this is absolute. The election of individuals to be in the Church is conditioned upon their response, not the fiat of God. Individuals come and go, but the "people of God" go on forever.

6. Those who respond to God's call are those who comprise the people of God. Abraham did not choose his call or destination, but he had to follow God's call and leave his country and kindred or God could not have used him. The covenant was not effective at Sinai until Israel responded and pledged its allegiance and obedience solely to God. The Messiah could not minister to the Jews, His own people, because they rejected Him and did not bring forth the fruits of the Kingdom.

7. Finally, response to God's grace is only the beginning of a relationship; response must be a continuing action of the Church if the covenant relationship is to be continued. This is illustrated by the various images by which the New Testament writers speak of the Church. The members are disciples, followers, confessors, believers, witnesses, ambassadors, pilgrims, stewards, ministers, faithful ones—all of which connote response and activity by the members.

Therefore, we see that the "people of God" is not merely a subjective designation for an aggregate of human personalities, but a biblical way of referring

to a specific God-created and sustained quality of humanity exhibited in the form of persons who comprise this people. The Church is a concrete community of human persons who responded to God, and who continue to exist as the "people of God" only so long as they continue to respond.

* * *

Dr. Gunter's treatment of the Church as "Body of Christ" and "Fellowship Community" will be published in the next issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*.



NOTES

1. We use the feminine preposition purposely to connote the New Testament concept of the Church as the "Bride of Christ." (Cf. 2 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:22-31; Rev. 21:2-4.)
2. P. S. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960). (Hereafter cited as *Images*.)
3. P. S. Minear, "The Idea of the Church," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, G. A. Buttrick, ed. (New York: Abingdon, 1962), 1:608-17. (Hereafter cited as IDB.)
4. Cf. Walter Causer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans. by W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 439; and William Gesenius, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, eds. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907), p. 874.
5. Minear, "The Idea of the Church," IDB, 1:608.
6. Oscar J. Seitz, *One Body and One Spirit* (Greenwich, Conn.: The Seabury Press, 1960), p. 17. (Hereafter cited as *One Body*.)
7. Strathmann, "λαός," *A Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, G. Kittel, ed., G. Bromiley, trans. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 4:29-37. The chief exceptions are in Lukan writings. Ibid., p. 50. (Hereafter cited as TDNT.)
8. Minear, *Images*, pp. 67-68.
9. Ibid.
10. Cf. Exod. 19:5; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; Ps. 135:4; 2 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 8:10; Rev. 21:3.
11. Cf. Jer. 32:38 ff.; 24:7; 30:22; 31:1, 33; Ezek. 11:20; 14:11; 36:28; 37:23, 27; Hosea 2:3, 25; Zech. 8:8; 13:9.
12. Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Church in the New Testament* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1965), pp. 150-51.
13. Minear, *Images*, p. 69.
14. Cf. Floyd Filson, *Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord* (New York: Abingdon, 1941).
15. These are summarized from Harold S. Bender, *These Are My People* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1962), pp. 14-17. (Hereafter cited as *My People*.)

WHAT'S WORKING SUNDAY NIGHTS? (continued from page 15)

music package on a normal Sunday evening will include: a choir opening, at least two other special musical numbers, one of which is usually a small group or one of the graded choirs of the church. The evening choir sings a second number with real uplift. The offertory is usually an instrumental of special interest. The musical package is 35 minutes, including the offertory.

My sermon is approximately 20 minutes long. Series preaching helps to hold interest. Some Sundays I preach a two-part sermon. The first part on Sunday morning and finishing the message on Sunday evenings. We spend more time putting together our package for Sunday evenings than we do the morning service. At least once every six to eight weeks we plan a special feature. This may vary from full musicals or musical drama, to special guest artists and groups. People will come on Sunday evening if we make it, "The Shortest, Most Exciting Hour of the Week."

—Leon Wyss

FREEDOM AND FELLOWSHIP OUT WEST

Pastor Marlyn W. Anderson writes that at Beaverton, Ore., the Sunday evening service receives equal bulletin space with the Sunday morning service, begins at 6 p.m., is planned for 75 minutes, and follows a theme that is introduced by a choir followed by the pastor's words of welcome.



The theme for the evening characterizes the music, scripture, and messages, including a children's section of approximately 10 minutes.

Early in the service a friendship/get-acquainted time is observed when the entire congregation greets those who are new to the fellowship.

Freedom and praise characterize the service.

—Marlyn W. Anderson



Preparing to Preach from Romans 1:18—3:20

FIRST, THE BAD NEWS

by Alex Deasley

Professor of New Testament, Nazarene Theological Seminary

Scripture: Rom. 1:18—3:20

The passage under consideration is lengthy, which means that for the purposes of this article both exegesis and the exposition must deal with the broad outline of the thought rather than with the details. However, there is value in dealing with an extended passage from time to time, inasmuch as it enables us to gain an overview of the argument as a whole, rather than simply the magnification of a small portion. Inasmuch as Rom. 1:18—3:20 constitutes a distinct section of the argument of the Epistle, it is justifiable to deal with it in this way.

I. BACKGROUND

Two observations may be made which bear on the entire passage.

1. This section constitutes the baseline of the message of Romans. True, the gospel has already been stated in outline (1:16-17), but if there is one thing which is more fundamental than the gospel, it is the need which makes the gospel necessary. That need is universal sinfulness which calls forth the righteous condemnation of God. However, this universal sinfulness is presented from a particular slant. Paul offers not merely a documentary description of it, but an account of it as constituting the reverse of the faith-righteousness which God requires.

The point may be clarified by viewing the section under consideration in the context of Romans 1—8. It has been suggested that the words of Hab. 2:4a: "He who through faith is righteous shall live" quoted in Rom. 1:17,¹ constitute something of a "text" for the first eight chapters.² If this is so, then the first part of the verse, "He who through faith is righteous," is the theme of Rom. 1:18—4:25; that is, the first four chapters of the Epistle are concerned with the meaning of faith-righteousness. But these chapters themselves are very evidently subdivided by the strongly contrasting statement of 3:21, and the contents show that each subdivision deals with one side of a single idea: (I) What Faith-Righteousness

Is Not (1:18—3:20); and (II) What Faith-Righteousness Is (3:21—4:25). This demonstrates that the former subdivision, which is our concern in this article, handles its subject by displaying God's condemnation of everything that falls short of faith-righteousness. The range is surprisingly wide. It is not merely the debauchery of moral perversity that falls within the scope of this definition, but also the self-righteousness of moral self-satisfaction and religious priggery.

2. From time to time throughout this section Paul uses the direct form of address, as though engaged in debate with his opponent. Indeed, it is possible that as Paul engages in this imaginary debate, he also allows his adversary to reply. Thus in 2:1 Paul directs his words to "O man, whoever you are"; while it is possible that verse 3 represents his opponent's reply: "We know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who do such things." Paul then returns in verse 3 with his rejoinder. The same pattern of question and response may be present in 3:1-9, while 2:17-26 uses the second person thoughtout. This form of writing (known technically as diatribe) was not uncommon among letter-writers and philosophers of Paul's day, and it adds liveliness to their writings, as it does to Paul's here. It is useful to be aware of it since it can make a difference to the overall meaning if something is said by one speaker rather than another.

II. FROM BACKGROUND TO EXEGESIS

With these general considerations in mind, we turn to the substance of Paul's teaching. The argument appears to develop thus. It is introduced by a transitional verse (1:18) which serves as a link to 1:16-17 while also serving as an introduction to the remainder of the section 3:20. What, then, is this ungodliness against which the wrath of God is revealed? Paul seems to have three types in mind: the ungodliness of the Gentiles (1:19-32); the ungodliness of any who depend on their own moral uprightness (2:1-16); and the ungodliness of the

Jews (2:17—3:8). The sequence concludes with a summary statement to the effect that condemnation is therefore universal (3:9-20). An attempt will be made to justify this analysis and interpretation below, though it must be repeated that the treatment can only be sketchy in view of the extended length of the passage.

A. Introduction: The Wrath of God and the Righteousness of God (1:18)

In 1:17 Paul declares that the reason he is not ashamed of the gospel is: "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed." This is followed up by an exactly parallel statement in 1:18: "For the wrath of God is revealed." The two sayings are causally connected, implying that the revelation of God's righteousness is validated or explained by the revelation of His wrath. This comes down to saying that one aspect at least of the gospel is the revelation of God's wrath; or to put it otherwise, one aspect of the Good News is the Bad News. Why are the righteousness of God and the wrath of God related?

For one thing, they are related because a holy God cannot view sin with indifference. To look upon cruelty, injustice, and wanton wickedness and remain unmoved would not make God—any more than man—more holy, but less so. He must always be opposed to evil or cease to be God. For another thing, when God intervenes, as He does in the gospel, to put men right the only way in which He can do so is by condemning what is wrong and showing the fatal results of persistence in wrong. It is these truths that are embodied in the idea of a wrath of God. Wrath here does not mean, as a famous definition has it, "the irrational passion of anger,"³ but God's steady rejection of evil manifested in the terrible results which follow upon indulgence in the same. It is the only possible divine response to the "ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness suppress the truth" (1:18).

Paul now proceeds to show how God's wrath is revealed by describing who and what are condemned, as well as how and why.

B. The Condemnation of the Unrighteousness of the Gentiles (1:19-32)

While the Gentiles are not mentioned by name in this section, it seems as if it is they who are chiefly in Paul's mind. The vices denounced, especially idolatry and immorality, were far more characteristic of Gentiles than of Jews, even if they could be found among the latter. Paul's accusation of Gentile unrighteousness is made in two steps.

1. Its basis is the misuse of knowledge (vv. 19-23), or more precisely—to use Paul's own phrase—the suppression of the truth (v. 18). Paul does not claim that everything about God has been made clear; but he does claim that God's "invisible nature" (v. 20) namely, His eternal power and divinity, has been made clear in and through the visible creation. This is God's doing: "God has shown it to them" (v. 19). Consequently, man cannot claim ignorance of God: "They are without excuse" (v. 20). But this knowledge of God's invisible and eternal

nature man has suppressed and has fashioned for himself visible gods, styled after the very created order which points beyond itself to God. The perishability of the created order argues that God is imperishable; but man in his wicked and senseless folly constructs perishable idols to serve as his gods (vv. 22-23). This is indeed senselessness (vv. 21-22); but it is not just the senselessness of stupidity; it is the senselessness of depravity which rebels against the idea of a transcendent Lord, preferring a more "human" deity which is more manageable and tolerant of human wickedness.

2. The reply to this perverse misuse of knowledge is the divine abandonment (vv. 24-32). Three times over Paul uses the phrase: "God gave them up" (vv. 24, 26, 28). When men declare their independence of God, He does not enslave them, He abandons them, giving them what they want. In other words, one aspect of God's wrath is the withdrawal of His gracious restraint, allowing sin to take its course. The course which the sin of idolatry took in Paul's day (as in others) was sexual perversion (vv. 24-27). However, sinful conduct does not only spring from sinful desire (v. 24), it also ingrains and intensifies sinful desire; base action debases the mind, opening the door to evil of every kind (vv. 28-32). C. H. Dodd comments: "'It is an awful thing,' says the Epistle to the Hebrews (10.31), 'to fall into the hands of the living God.' Paul, with a finer instinct, sees that the really awful thing is to fall out of His hands, and to be left to oneself in a world where the choice of evil brings its own moral retribution."⁴

Yet while it is a fearful thing to be abandoned by God, the gracious purpose of God's withdrawal should not be overlooked. Elsewhere, when Paul speaks of divine abandonment, it is in order that those concerned should be brought to their senses by seeing the awful havoc which sin can create (see 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20). In the next chapter Paul refers to God's postponing of final wrath and judgment as "meant to lead you to repentance" (2:4).

The wickedness of willful sinners is thus shown to stand—justly—under divine condemnation.

C. The Condemnation of the Unrighteousness of the Moralists (2:1-17)

It is not only those who scoff at righteousness who stand under judgment, however. It is also those who imagine they are righteous *in themselves*. Such appear to be the subjects of these verses. It seems that Paul turns to the Jew and his need in 2:17. Equally, it seems that at the beginning of chapter 2 he is not addressing those who have surrendered themselves to sin but certain others who regard themselves as being in position to pass judgment on these (2:1-2). Not all pagans were perverts; some sought to live lives of moral decency and to speak up for it. Some Jews likewise showed an abhorrence of paganism that was more than simply inflated patriotism. It is probably such that Paul has in mind in these verses.⁵

Divine condemnation rests on the unrighteous, but it rests no less on those who are confident of

their own moral sufficiency—a moral sufficiency shown in their readiness to pass judgment on others. To these Paul says that in passing judgment on others they condemn themselves, for they do the self-same things (2:1, 3). This accusation has been taken in two ways. On the one hand, it has been taken literally: that there were both pagan and Jewish moralists who were not above doing themselves what they condemned in others. F. F. Bruce quotes Paul's pagan contemporary Seneca as teaching the loftiest ethical principles, and yet conspiring with his imperial patron Nero in plotting the death of the emperor's mother Agrippina.⁶

On the other hand, it has been suggested that Paul is thrusting to a new depth here: that it is not merely outward righteousness that God requires, but that inward righteousness which comes from himself alone; and consequently, anyone who purports to set himself up as a judge is thereby doing essentially what the pagans do in all their grossness: setting up man as God. As Barrett puts it: "Behind all the sins of 1:29 ff. lies the sin of idolatry, which reveals man's ambition to put himself in the place of God and so to be his own Lord. But this is precisely what the judge does, when he assumes the right to judge his fellow-creatures. All alike fall under God's judgment, and before him all are without excuse."⁷

In the final analysis the issue is righteousness of life (vv. 6, 13), not moral profession. This is a fair standard, for all are aware of it: Jews in the law of Moses, Gentiles in the law written on their hearts (vv. 12, 14-15). But it is also a fatal standard, for all have sinned against the law in whatever form they knew it (v. 12).⁸ Righteousness of life is the fruit of saving faith, not the ground of it, and any who depend upon it as the ground of their acceptance with God have shown not merely that they do not understand the nature of faith-righteousness, but that they are as much idolaters as the pagans, in that they are trusting in the creature rather than the Creator.

D. The Condemnation of the Unrighteousness of the Jews (2:17—3:8)

Paul's final target is the unrighteousness of the Jew. The precise aspect of this which he has in mind is shown in the piled-up phrases of verses 17-20 which constitute a prize collection of monuments to Jewish religious priggery. "Instructed in the law," "guides to the blind," "correctors of the foolish," "teachers of children": these were probably phrases which the Jews used to describe their own role in the world. Paul rounds on them exactly as he did on the moralists: by asking them if they practice what they preach. Again, Paul's examples (vv. 21-24) have been interpreted in two ways. Some take them literally, pointing to instances where Jews committed Temple robbery in their zeal against idolatry. (F. F. Bruce observes that this may be implied in Acts 19:37).⁹

However, there is no doubt that the general run of Jews were not thieves and adulterers as were so many Gentiles. It is probable, therefore, that as in

verses 1 and 3 of this chapter, Paul is pointing to a deeper level of law breaking. Barrett's judgment seems to be definitive: "Paul's argument is lost if he is compelled to rely on comparatively unusual events, and it is simply not true that the average Jewish missionary acted in this way. . . . What theft, adultery and sacrilege are strictly and radically understood, there is no man who is not guilty of all three."¹⁰

This is confirmed by the momentous conclusion which Paul reaches in verses 25-29; that the real essence of being a Jew consists not in physical but in spiritual circumcision; it is more than a radical qualification symbolized by a ritual act (vv. 28-29). Where the law is not kept, the physical rite is valueless (v. 25). Since he has just proved that all Jews are lawbreakers, it follows that there is no salvation for Jews in Judaism. (In 3:1-8 Paul deals briefly with objections raised against his teaching, most of which he takes up at length later in the Epistle.)

E. Conclusion: Universal Condemnation (3:9-20)

Paul is now ready to draw his conclusion. Having shown that the three main categories of people stand under condemnation on account of their sin: the unrighteous, the self-righteous, the super-righteous, he now calls from the Old Testament a chain of proof texts affirming universal human sinfulness. "None is righteous, no, not one" (v. 10). In thought (vv. 11-12), in speech (vv. 13-14), in action (vv. 15-18), man's failure is the same. Every mouth is stopped; the whole world is guilty before God (v. 19).

III. FROM EXEGESIS TO EXPOSITION

We turn now to the presentation of the above teaching in terms of the 20th century. Pagan idolaters, Jewish and Hellenistic philosophers, and self-assured devotees of Judaism may no longer constitute the proper names and descriptions of the main religious categories of men today, but beneath the skin they are the same. Indeed, if this is not so, the Christian gospel is irrelevant because its analysis of human need is passe. It is with God's condemnation of man's sin that Paul's gospel begins, by showing all men everywhere to be guilty before God. It is remarkable how astringent an effect is made, even on a self-opinionated 20th century ego, by confrontation with the law, that is the righteous requirement, of God. For Paul, the gospel was bad news before it was good news. Perhaps more attention would be given in our day to the Good News if it were proclaimed against the background of the bad. Such a presentation might be as follows.

THE SERMON

INTRODUCTION

The New Testament preachers often began by preaching the Bad News (Acts 2:23; Eph. 2:1; Col. 1:21 f.). The gospel is Good News only to those who realize how bad is the Bad News. The only man who can be saved is the man who knows he is lost. Paul therefore spends the first three and one-half chap-

(continued on page 45)

HELPING THE SUICIDAL TEEN

by Rickey Short,

Youth minister, First Church of the Nazarene, Hammond, Indiana

She parked her car on the railroad tracks.

This Indiana high school girl got out of her car, then sat on the tracks between the car and the onrushing train. Instant death.

With 13 or more teenage suicides daily in the United States, and over 5,000 a year, it will be the rare pastor who will not have to deal with teenage suicide in his local community.

Those of us who have struggled with the suicidal adolescent ask ourselves, "Why? Can I see it coming? When I spot it, what approach in counseling should I use?"

ADOLESCENT DANGER SIGNALS

Disruptive Early Childhood

(1) History of multiple separations from parents during the first three years of life. (2) One or both parents absent through separation, divorce, or death. More significant if separation or divorce occurs before the child is 12 years old. (3) Child has made a previous suicide attempt, or has a parent who attempted or committed suicide.

No Emotional Ties to Family

(1) Long-standing behavioral problems accompanied by gradually increasing dissension within the family. (2) Teen alienated from a family as a result of the battle between personal and parental restrictions. (3) Hate or indifference toward one parent; possibly the one absent. (4) One parent is an alcoholic.

Academic Difficulties

(1) Exceptionally poor school records. (2) Possible undiagnosed learning disability. (3) Con-

tinual behavioral or discipline problems at school. (4) Expulsion from school, dropout, or fails one or more classes.

Social Isolate

(1) Loner. (2) Poor self-esteem. (3) Complaints of headaches or stomach pains. (4) Uses drugs. (5) Feelings of anger, or "what's the use?" (6) Sudden, intense relationship to a "steady," related to alienation from parents and friends. A critical period occurs at the termination of that relationship.

If several of these danger signals show up in the life of a teenager, you should set up an informal appointment with the teen—especially if the signal is accompanied by one of these:

- Boy-girl breakups by social means or death.
- Circumstances which produce lower self-esteem, like not making the team or failing a class.
- Argument at home related to the teen's choice of social activities.
- Being grounded, or having the car taken away as punishment.

CAUSES

All behaviors have multiple causes, but in the case of teenage suicide two main reasons seem to stand out. They are *anger* and *manipulation*.

The teen operating from the framework of manipulation usually makes a suicidal gesture to communicate distress. This gesture could be a threat, discussion of methods, or a superficial wrist slash. The teen is attempting to manipulate the concern of others,

expecting them to respond by gratifying his wishes. Sometimes the teen who intends to manipulate, accidentally completes the act.

Teens who are motivated by anger usually make a serious attempt to end life. They intend to die. The more planned the act or the more lethal the means, the more intent they are on dying. Usually feelings of hopelessness or helplessness accompany the feelings of anger.

A COUNSELING APPROACH

Effective counseling depends on our ability to determine the motivation behind the act. Because of this, counseling should generally focus on building self-esteem.

The teen may feel that "circumstances will never change." This kind of shortsightedness fosters deeper and deeper anger. The pastor can help the teen by emphasizing that circumstances do change. Sometimes the pastor can help them change.

To begin helping a suicidal teen, the pastor should:

- Establish rapport with the teen.
- Ask for history (events which precipitate suicidal thoughts).

If the counseling is confrontational in nature, the pastor might make a statement such as, "Sometimes people have these types of feelings. . . . Do you ever have feelings like that?" Or he might ask an open-ended question like, "Can you tell me what has been going on?"

● Begin to explore nondestructive solutions to problems. "How can you express anger in a way that will not harm you or others?"

What are the possible consequences of verbalizing feelings like that? What other options are open to you?"

- Build a barrier against future suicide by helping the teen explore less destructive ways to get help. If suicidal thoughts are motivated by manipulation, the teen will not be helped by stressing how parents and friends are going to feel. Social stigmas might effectively be used to build a barrier.

- Help the teen respond to life situations in acceptable, constructive ways. This involves staying close to the teen and knowing what is going on in his life.

- Lay plans for the future. These must be realistic, and in line with the teen's goals. Short-term plans might include doing fun things with some teens from the church. Long-term goals will help the teen start doing things immediately, which will help him reach those goals.

With the family the pastor should:

- See that there is no ready access to guns, medicines, or poison.
- Explore sources of stress, tension, and anger within the family.
- Open communication channels—help the family members "hear" each other.
- Explain how Christ can help.
- Extend the support of the pastor and the church.
- Pray.

REFERRING YOUTH TO OTHERS

Sometimes the pastor is not able to help a teen. In those cases it is wise to refer the teen to a doctor or a suicide treatment center. The following criteria may help you make that difficult decision:

- Inability to establish rapport with the teen.

- Teen has:
  - neurotic depression (mental dysfunction)
  - endogenous depression (induced by physical illness)
  - anniversary depression (occurs on date of a death, divorce, etc.)
  - reactionary depression (anger or grief which last too long)
- Suspect schizophrenia (loss of contact with reality).
- Teen has attempted suicide before.

With the advent of puberty comes a marked increase in the suicide rate. In the 20-24 years of life there is another marked increase, almost doubling that of teenage suicides. The pastor who can spot and effectively counsel a suicidal teen—who is also a potential suicidal adult—has done a service to his community and has possibly reached a soul for Christ.



FIRST, THE BAD NEWS

(continued from page 43)

ters of Romans in showing how bad things are, because the gospel discloses God's righteous condemnation of sin. This includes:

I. BAD NEWS FOR THE UNRIGHTEOUS (1:18-32)

- A. Man knows enough right not to do wrong (vv. 18-23)
- B. Because man has abandoned God for sin, God has abandoned man to sin (vv. 24-32)

II. BAD NEWS FOR THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS (2:1-16)

To those inclined to join in condemnation of the unrighteous Paul points to the demands made on them by the law:

- A. The depth of the divine standard (vv. 1-11)
- B. The depth of human moral failure (vv. 12-16, especially 12)

III. BAD NEWS FOR THE SUPER-RIGHTEOUS (2:17—3:8)

None are more impervious or immune to the gospel than those armor-plated with religious pedigree. The apostle confronts them with two truths:

- A. The hypocrisy of religious pretension (vv. 17-24)
- B. The necessity of a religion of the heart (vv. 25-29)

CONCLUSION

All men are alike in their standing before God. None can claim anything on the basis of his own goodness. As Martyn Lloyd-Jones has expressed it: "You are not a Christian unless you have been made speechless!"¹¹ The picture Paul paints in these chapters is grim and unwelcome. Yet recognizing the seriousness of the disease is the first step towards seeking a cure. Only when the last rags of our excuses are torn away are we ready to receive His salvation.



NOTES

1. RSV, and so throughout.
2. The suggestion was made by the Belgian scholar Andre Feuillet: a brief account in English together with references can be found in Matthew Black, *Romans* (New Century Bible, London, 1973), pp. 25-26. It has been endorsed recently by C. E. B. Cranfield: *The Epistle to the Romans* (International Critical Commentary, Vol. I, Edinburgh, 1975) who constructs his analysis of Chapters 1—8 around it.
3. The definition is C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, (Moffatt New Testament Commentary, London, 1932), p. 24.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
5. So C. K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Harper's New Testament Commentaries, New York, 1957), pp. 42-44.
6. F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, Grand Rapids, 1965), pp. 86-87.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
8. Verses 14-15 do not assume that Gentiles have kept perfectly the law they knew, but merely that they have *sometimes* kept it and that this shows they have a knowledge of the law. If salvation were possible practically to the Gentile through the law this would stultify Paul's argument twice over: once in allowing the possibility of salvation other than by faith; and twice, in conceding to the Gentile an advantage over the Jews.
9. Bruce, *Epistle to Romans*, p. 93.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.
11. D. M. Lloyd-Jones: *Romans*, "An Exposition of Chapters 3.20—4.25" (Grand Rapids, 1971), p. 19.

GROWING PARSONAGE CHILDREN

by Patricia L. Wood

As I think back over the years, I am convinced that raising children in the parsonage is a unique experience—and one that can be very frustrating. The pressures of this time in your life are greater because often you get lots of advice and little help. It has been many years ago, but the memory is vivid. Our children were very young. I felt at that time that I was not intelligent enough to talk to adults. It seemed my purpose in life was picking up toys, washing clothes, and cooking meals. The years have sped by and the children are leaving home one by one. There are some things I wished we had done differently to have made this time in our lives easier, but in all areas, I'm glad we made most of the decisions the way we did.

I think the most important thing you can do for your children is love them. This sounds so trite, doesn't it? Yet, it is the most important thing you can do for them. Showing love is not always easy. It is often easier to show that tiny baby love with hugs and kisses, but when he grows older and is often mischievous, it comes harder. As the teen years come along, it is harder yet to give those hugs and kisses. However, this is the time they are needed most. Children must be shown by touch and affection that they are loved if they are to actually feel loved. We get so involved in our work we often have little time left to love our children.

Acceptance is another need each child has. Remember that he is a creation of God. Each one is different in a special way. Each one has his own personality and must be accepted for himself. We have found that each of the children has added greatly to the ministry in his own way. One child, as he or she grows up, may help in the music of the church and another in the children's ministry. Each one has his or her gift and ability and God uses them even as young children.

Remember you are responsible for your children, not the church families. I remember that in one

church we were criticized severely for allowing our son to ride his tricycle on the sidewalk on Sundays. No one likes to be criticized, especially from those you love and are working with. We had to decide if it was a disobedience to God if our son rode his tricycle on Sunday or was it a whim of the person in the church. Then, we had to decide was it more important what our child thought of the Lord's Day or what the people of our church thought.

There were many instances of this type. When the children got older the decision had to be made whether or not to insist that they attend all functions of the church. Again, we had to decide what was God's wish in this matter and what was the desires of our parishioners. These are not easy decisions to make, but necessary. When raising children, the Lord teaches us as we teach and train our children.

You are not a Super Mom. Priorities will have to be set. You cannot hold several offices in the church, be a perfect housekeeper, a gourmet cook, an enthusiastic wife, and still do a perfect job of raising your children. You have to decide which is important to God and to you. I always had a problem saying no when asked to take a job in the church. I found that I was running myself ragged and not doing a good job in any area. My husband was the strong one and started saying no for me. We talked it over and decided what I could do outside of the home and still keep up with my duties as a homemaker and mother. There was a time during our ministry that I had to go to work outside the home. It was at this time that I really learned to say no for myself. God does not expect us to be at the beck and call of every person. He made us human. You can say no in love. God will lead someone else to do the job and in this process help them to grow as Christians.

Enjoy your children. I was often a nervous wreck and worried about them. I had to learn to give them to the Lord and enjoy them while God allowed them

to be a part of our lives. In learning this lesson, it made it easier when they grew up and started leaving home. We must learn that they are only on loan to us from God. They really belong to Him.

Teach responsibilities. One of my greatest frustrations when the children were little was the messy house. I wanted my house to be perfect, but soon learned I could not have a perfectly clean house and live in it as well. My husband and I decided that we would have one room as the playroom. The toys could be brought out in the middle of the floor and left here all day. At night before going to bed, everything was picked up by the children and me—ready to start a new day. This kept the clutter out of the middle of the living room and kitchen just in case someone should drop in and kept my nerves calmed. We found that this taught the child responsibility for his things. If he wanted his room messy, OK, but the rest of the family did not have to live that way. It saved a lot of yelling and frayed nerves.

Admit your failures and hurts. Little ones have a keen sense of knowing when something is wrong. Whenever a problem arose in the church that upset Mom and Dad, they knew it. While they were young, we could explain that we were upset, but would be all right. As they grew older it was not that simple. We, then, had to explain a little further. We never told them all the details, but did let them know enough to satisfy them and prayed with them about the problems.

Praying together over certain problems made the children feel they had a part in the ministry. Another help in this area was to let them assist in any way they could. One day as we were talking of entertaining people in our home and how much work it was for Mom, the children made a suggestion. They said they would help with dishes after dinner while Mom and Dad visited with our guests. Our daughter also said when we had a family in, she would entertain the children so the adults could visit. You will never know how much help this was to me. Our daughter will be leaving home in a year or so and still she cleans up the kitchen after a meal when there are guests. If there are children, she helps to entertain them. What a blessing! We have done a lot of entertaining and the children felt they had a part to play in this part of our ministry.

Remember the children are laymen too. As the children grew older, the pressures became more acute. There was the pressure to be holding offices that they did not want to hold. Just because a child is a minister's son or daughter does not make them a born leader. It seems a lot of ministers' children are leaders, possibly because of the benefits of meeting more people, but not all children are leaders. They should have the right to choose what their part of the program of the church will be. Some will want to teach Sunday School, or be youth president, or whatever. Others will want to work with the music or another part of the program. We need to learn to pray with them and let God guide them.

Another pressure we found was that people assumed automatically that just because Dad was a

minister our son would be. We felt that God would lead our children in what He wanted them to do and that did not necessarily mean he had to be a minister. Not all laymen become ministers. Your child is a layman in the church and should be free to choose his own profession with the Lord's help.

Do not be poor. Don't let lack of a big salary make you poor. It is so easy to become depressed and constantly aware of the problems of finances that we give the impression to our children that money is all important. I admit it is important with inflation soaring and we have had our problems from time to time living on a budget. However, we need to constantly be reminding our children that there are other things in life that make us wealthy. A family with close ties is so important and I am grateful every day for our family. We cannot always take trips in luxury, but our family will always remember the trip west that we took—tenting all the way. We talk yet today about putting the tent up and taking it down 27 times, the rainstorm we hit in Cody, Wyo., or when it had not rained for six months in Carlsbad, N.M.—it rained when we were there. These and others will be precious memories to us and we certainly did not feel poor as we saw God's country together.

Your first responsibility, after allegiance to God, is the relationships in the home. This should, first of all, include Mom and Dad's relationship and then the children. God gave us this responsibility. When we are growing a tree, we plant the seeds, cultivate it and harvest the fruit. At harvesttime, will our children "rise up and call us blessed"? (Proverbs 31:28).



Me? A Minister's Wife?

What, Lord?

A minister's wife, me?

NO way, Hosea!

I don't want people to treat me . . .

like I treat her—my pastor's wife.

I talk about her unadministrative ability;

after all, she thinks she should run the show.

She dresses nice and has a nice figure—but she demands this and that and that and this.

I hate her last-minute plans and her tendency to take over when someone's not "good enough."

I hate the look in her eyes that says, "My way or else!"

And that tone of voice she uses drives me up a wall when she wants to "make a suggestion."

Have you noticed how the children back away from her

And she has such a hard time keeping things confidential.

I tire of hearing about the "meager salary" they receive and the "meager house" in which they live.

I guess, Lord, I'm afraid people will treat me like I treat her, because . . . she and I, Lord, we're so much alike.

A Future Minister's Wife

EXPOSITION MUST HAVE APPLICATION

By A. W. Tozer

Charles G. Finney believed that Bible teaching without moral application could be worse than no teaching at all and could result in positive injury to the hearers. I used to feel that this might be an extreme position, but after years of observation I have come around to it, or to a view almost identical with it.

There is scarcely anything so dull and meaningless as Bible doctrine taught for its own sake. Truth divorced from life is not truth in its biblical sense, but something else and something less. Theology is a set of facts concerning God, man, and the world. These facts may be, and often are, set forth as values in themselves; and there lies the snare, both for the teacher and for the hearer.

The Bible is, among other things, a book of revealed truth. That is, certain facts are revealed that could not be discovered by the most brilliant mind. These facts are of such a nature as to be past finding out. They were hidden behind a veil, and until certain men who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost took away that veil, no mortal man could know them. This lifting of the "veil of unknowing" from undiscoverable things we call divine revelation.

The Bible, however, is more than a volume of hitherto unknown facts about God, man, and the universe. It is a book of exhortation based upon those facts. By far the greater portion of the book is devoted to an urgent effort to persuade people to alter their ways and bring their lives into harmony with the will of God as set forth in its pages.

No man is better for knowing that God in the beginning created the heaven and the earth. The devil knows that, and so did Ahab and Judas Iscariot. No man is better for knowing that God so loved the world of men that He gave His only begotten Son to die for their redemption. In hell there are millions who know that. Theological truth is useless until it is obeyed. The purpose behind all doctrine is to secure moral action.

What is generally overlooked is that truth, as set forth in the Christian Scriptures, is a moral thing; it is not addressed to the intellect only, but to the will also. It addresses itself to the total man, and its obligations cannot be discharged by grasping it mentally. Truth engages the citadel of the human heart and is not satisfied until it has conquered

everything there. The will must come forth and surrender its sword. It must stand at attention to receive orders, and those orders it must joyfully obey. Short of this, any knowledge of Christian truth is inadequate and unavailing.

Bible exposition without moral application raises no opposition. It is only when the hearer is made to understand that truth is in conflict with his heart that resistance sets in. As long as people can hear orthodox truth divorced from life, they will attend and support churches and institutions without objection. The truth is a lovely song, become sweet by long and tender association; and since it asks nothing but a few dollars, and offers good music, pleasant friendships, and a comfortable sense of well-being, it meets with no resistance from the faithful. Much that passes for New Testament Christianity is little more than objective truth sweetened with song and made palatable by religious entertainment.

Probably no other portion of the Scriptures can compare with the Pauline Epistles when it comes to making artificial saints. Peter warned that the unlearned and the unstable would wrest Paul's writings to their own destruction, and we have only to visit the average Bible conference and listen to a few lectures to know what he meant. The ominous thing is that the Pauline doctrines may be taught with complete faithfulness to the letter of the text without making the hearers one whit the better. The teacher may, and often does, teach the truth as to leave the hearers without a sense of moral obligation.

One reason for the divorce between truth and life may be lack of the Spirit's illumination. Another surely is the teacher's unwillingness to get himself into trouble. Any man with fair pulpit gifts can get on with the average congregation if he just "feeds" them and lets them alone. Give them plenty of objective truth and never hint that they are wrong and should be set right, and they will be content.

On the other hand, the man who preaches truth and applies it to the lives of his hearers will feel the nails and the thorns. He will lead a hard life, but a glorious one. May God raise up many such prophets. The church needs them badly.

Taken from *Of God and Men*, by A. W. Tozer, and used by permission of Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, PA 17101.

women preachers

by Ruth O. Saxon,

Missionary, Church of the Nazarene

Maybe it's time to write the long-threatened article.

Last week after I delivered my soul in a missionary convention, a fine Christian layman shook my hand warmly. "I'm so glad you came," he said. "I was afraid you might be the stereotyped, old-fashioned woman preacher—but you're not."

I don't like the preacher-woman stereotype either. She's the one who wears black all the way up to here and fires away in thunderous tones at the congregation.

Despite these real-life stereotypes, I'm glad my church has never hesitated to ordain women who were called of God. (I can't say that for every District Board of Orders and Relations.) I'm glad they ordained me when I was hardly dry behind the ears. And I owe a great debt to the woman preacher who led my father to Christ.

But I don't like some women preachers.

Oops, pardon me, I mean I don't like some things I've seen in some women preachers. I really love you, girls. Tell you what, promise you won't get your feelings hurt, and I'll level with you. There are two stereotypes I find repulsive.

I don't like the **I'll-act-like-a-man** type of woman preacher. Her suit is so austere, so plainly

tailored in a dull color, contrasted only by a white shirt; I almost miss the dark necktie. And of course, out of her breast pocket protrudes a New Testament. Her uncurled hair is drawn back in an unbecoming knot. Her voice is as husky as she can make it, and her mannerisms are as much like those of her male counterpart as possible. I'm almost afraid to be seen with her for fear people will get the wrong idea.

The other stereotype I don't like is the one with the **poor-me-I'm-a-woman** complex. This one expects to be discriminated against because she is a woman . . . and she's never disappointed. No district superintendent can ever be kind enough to convince her he is standing behind her as much as he would be if she were a man. Sometimes she cannot detect a shred of unfair play, but she is sure if she had been a man, she would be on the District Advisory Board and pastoring the largest church on the district. And she gets her feelings hurt when people do not use the title "Reverend" when addressing her.

Really, ladies, I know it is true that most of my mail comes addressed to *Miss* or *Mrs.* instead of *Rev.*, but I think it would be most unbecoming in a man to demand that his title be used, so I don't intend to stoop that low either.

I also know it is true a woman

needs to be better than average if she is to be considered acceptable as a pastor or an evangelist. And some churches won't consider her no matter how good she is. But I also believe that God knows where I fit best, and my ambition is to be in the center of His will.

God has ways of putting you and me in the right slot. Stop feeling sorry for yourself. Work toward becoming the kind of person He can use—spiritually, educationally, socially, and whatever else. And really trust Him to use you.

God knew I was a woman when He called me to preach. He could have called some man instead. I figure God must want me, a woman, to do some job for Him which I can do better as a woman—something that perhaps no man can do quite as well as I can by His grace.

So, I will retain my femininity while doing what many consider a man's job. I will act and talk and look like a woman—frills and all—maintaining modesty.

I will smile like a woman, cry like a woman, and exercise all my God-give womanly personality and intuition.

And I will believe God to use me, this woman He has chosen, to His highest glory, honor, and praise, wherever He places me.



200 pastors change churches or drop out of the ministry every day.

PASTORAL BURNOUT

by Neil Hightower,

President, Canadian Nazarene College

Entire sanctification does not render a preacher invulnerable to stress or distress, nor to the temptation to self-pity or disgust with maintaining the *status quo*. A Spirit-filled preacher does not receive the "grace of stoicism," nor the ability to accept graciously apathy and disinterestedness in the life and work of the church on the part of a congregation. He eats meat and potatoes like the average flesh-and-blood people in his parish, not ambrosia or angel's food.

However, in his peculiar position of leading people from earth to heaven, he encounters more than average pressures and tensions. The pastor lives in a "glass house," and his family shares it with him. Coping with this tyranny is a monumental task at times. Increasingly "burnout" is occurring, and ultimately more pastors dropout. How can the church guard against this? How can pastors also guard themselves?

I do not pose as a professional counselor, for I have insufficient academic training in the disciplines of psychology. My approach to this article grows out of a very satisfying pastoral ministry of 20 years, and the challenging and rewarding assignment of being a district superintendent 7 years. My present ministry as a college president gives me a wider observation of pastors and laymen, and allows me the thrilling opportunity of being a part of preparing young people for ministry.

I suppose that I will always be a pastor at heart, because I find myself giving the rationale for every assignment in terms of its pastoral implications. I, therefore, bring a viewpoint that insists on the fundamental importance of the pastor. This, however, is not to insist on a clerical hierarchy, nor to undervalue the vital importance laymen have in the Body of Christ. It is to recognize the wisdom of St. Paul's concept in 1 Corinthians 12, that the individual members of the Body have distinct functions, and each depends on the other for the functioning

of the whole. Because of Christ's assignment of particular leadership ministry to those He calls as pastors, the health of the whole Body hinges on the health of the pastoral force. How, then, do we guard against burnout and dropout?

Helping people is a difficult assignment, that requires such an expenditure of time, effort, patience, and emotional identification, that it is possible for counselors and people-helpers to burn out physically and emotionally. Working closely with hurting people, with such intensive concentration and no opportunity for retreat, can be damaging. Fatigue often occurs, and worse, when people don't appear to improve, the added burden of self-blame sometimes becomes intolerable.

In the process of helping others, the helper may encounter problems which trigger insecurities and stimulate awareness of hurts within himself. When he is unable to cope with these internal assessments of himself, his own sense of self-worth and personal stability may be threatened. Dr. Cecil

Pastors become vulnerable to discouragement when they consider themselves able to heal others (or themselves) without help.

Paul, of Eastern Nazarene College, in a very perceptive series of addresses to Canada Atlantic pastors and their wives, remarked that pastors become vulnerable to discouragement when they consider themselves able to heal others (or themselves) without help. "We are helpers, but God is the Healer," he said. Dr. Paul went on to remind us that every minister has a shared vision with Jesus, one

that He described in Luke 4, which the Holy Spirit had inspired Isaiah to write 700 years preceding His application in the Nazareth synagogue. When this vision of healing, in the shepherd-tradition of Scripture, shifts or is obscured, the healer battles against burnout. The vision is under pressure from the parish, from the denomination, from the community, and from the minister's own internal pressures. Five sources of stress in the ministry become apparent: motivational uncertainty about ministerial vocation; marital tension over roles; parish problems; ravages of prolonged education; lost meaning in work.

Three key words suggest themselves as we look at the sources of stress: *conflict, distortion, inadequacy*. Conflict with the congregation, evidenced by unwarranted criticism, is an oft-repeated stress factor. Often it is reflected in unreal lay expectations of the pastor and his family; or in apathy by lay leaders.

Distortion of the role of the pastor is a stress-source. In this category is too much time concerned with administration; an overdemanding time and emotional commitment to smoothing ruffled feathers; insufficient time for study and personal interaction.

Inadequacy is a stress factor. A sense of professional and personal inadequacy, often fed by insufficient training, is all too real.

The symptoms of impending burnout are multiple, but key indicators can be identified. The common denominator of them all seems to *withdrawal*.

(1) Withdrawal from hurting people through detachment. The detachment may demonstrate itself in derogatory language symbols (e.g., "the old battleaxe"), misdirected humor, aloofness, or cynicism.

(2) Withdrawal from family members, characterized by the inability to leave the work at the church, or the inability to balance professional priorities with family priorities.

(3) Withdrawal from an interesting social life.

(4) Withdrawal from the people-helping environment, by changing churches or returning to school.

(5) Withdrawal from reality, by excessive day-dreaming.

A sense of professional and personal inadequacy, often fed by insufficient training, is all too real.

(6) Withdrawal from meaningful sermon preparation because of an inability to relate study with sermonizing.

(7) Withdrawal from decisive leadership because of an unreal fear of confrontation with governing boards.

(8) Withdrawal from influential leadership by procrastination in pastoral functions.

It may be easier to identify symptoms than to prescribe remedies; and doubtless there are no experts in this field. Deepening inner strength immediately suggests itself, and this is best accomplished by disciplined devotional exercises.

Increasing leadership strength is enhanced by spreading the base of helpers, through training lay-people to understand helping dynamics, especially how to handle interpersonal stress. Likewise one can increase strength by sharing the people-helping load with associates and perceptive nonprofessionals who are open and nonjudgmental.

Regularly taking time out from people renews inner stamina. Not only does this encompass regular days off, but also alternating other types of work with people-helping activities.

When it comes to overcoming the stress of organizational apathy and conflict and inertia, a sensitive and courageous church board is the greatest source of help. A carefully established, biblically based philosophy of ministry and strategy of church leadership is a platform for pastoral support in time of dissent and controversy. A pastor must take care that he is an adaptive leader and not exercising a dictatorial style. Adaptive leadership will be enhanced as a pastor learns to consult trusted board members who reflect, listen, and advise. This will help him keep organizational factors relational rather than mechanical.

One of the important factors in reducing both personal and organizational stress is evaluating time and relating this to priorities. A time inventory of the work of the church will help a pastor see the time availability for his laymen and himself. Planning and implementation which are related to priorities reduce frustration.

Another important factor in reducing stress growing out of congregational apathy is for the pastor to recognize this as a built-in hazard of all organizations (not just the church). Realizing this, he could help himself overcome personal frustration by committing some of the energy of his spiritual gifts to community involvement. Such involvement must be compatible with his ministry, and could be the means of broadening the impact of his church.

The Scripture has some very pointed and practical advice for reducing stress and tension: "Confess your faults one to another . . . that ye may be healed" (Jas. 5:16). Perhaps finding a listening brother would be a means of bringing inner healing. Such a consulting relationship would be a liberating tool.

Pastoral dropout is both a denominational and a personal problem. It will not go away by saying that it's the law of averages. Churches can improve leadership environments. Pastors can help themselves by openly looking at their attitudes, their priorities, and their commitments. They can periodically reevaluate and restructure the vision of ministry which they originally received in their divine call. Changing the application of the vision is a guarantee that the heart of the vision is kept intact in each stage of pastoral development.



THE THANKSGIVING PULPIT

by David Downs,

Pastor, Church of the Nazarene Lee's Summit, Missouri.

Something to Be Thankful For

THE PROPOSITION OF THIS SERMON

To tie the blessings which God has given to His children to His purpose in their lives. Show that God's goal for the Christian is holiness, for God's sake, and for the Christian's sake.

INTRODUCTION

For the Christian, Thanksgiving is more than a seasonal affair. For the Christian, Thanksgiving is a way of life. And why shouldn't it be? Consider all that we have to praise God for. Read Eph. 1:3-10.

I. THE POWER OF POSITIVE PRAISE (True praise, from the heart, has tremendous spiritual, therapeutic, value.)

We thank Him for:

- A. v. 3. Every spiritual blessing in Christ.
- B. v. 6. God's grace.
- C. v. 7. Redemption through His blood.
- D. v. 8. The forgiveness of sins.
- E. v. 9. The knowledge of the mystery (blessed secret revealed.)

The beauty of truthfully saying "thank You" to God is that eventually, in His own way, He will say "you're welcome" to us.

II. WE ARE THANKFUL BECAUSE WE ARE CHOSEN—v. 4.

We do not choose God. He chooses us. What an honor!

- A. We have a unique ministry.
- B. We are chosen because He loves us.
- C. No one is excluded by God. (Explain inclusive predestination. Illustration of the last player chosen for a game. God chooses every man first "before creation.")

III. WE ARE CHOSEN FOR A PURPOSE—v. 4. (That purpose is holiness.)

- A. Cleansing from sin (for our sake).
- B. Separated for service (for the Kingdom's sake).

Conclusion: Now that's something to be thankful for!

A Life of Thanksgiving

Text: Romans 12:1-2

INTRODUCTION

A. Do we need to be reminded to be thankful? "I think not."

B. Do we need to be told to whom we should give thanks? "I think not."

C. What I believe that the church really needs to hear is not "that we should be thankful," but rather, "How our thankfulness should be demonstrated."

1. Words are cheap.

a. Every parent has heard the words "thank you" vainly spoken (on Christmas especially).

b. It is important to sing praises to God, but those praises which are sung or spoken are totally in vain unless they are heartfelt. (Don't kid yourself into thinking that you can trick God into doing things your way simply by lifting your hands and singing or by shouting J-E-S-U-S cheers.)

c. It is easy to *sing* praise. But God wants more. Through His grace, it is actually possible for you to *live* a life of praise.

I. LIVING SACRIFICES.

A. Paul says to (v. 1) *Present your body as a living sacrifice to God*. We realize that as Christians our bodies belong to God, just as much as our souls. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit. (That is to say that it is through our bodies [eyes, ears, feet, brain] that the Holy Spirit works.)

B. So Paul is saying, take your body; take all the things that you do every day with it (on the job, in the car, at your desk, in front of your TV, with your family), take that body and offer it as an act of worshipful thanksgiving to God.

C. What is the meaning, then, of true worship? Is it sitting in a beautiful sanctuary listening to beautiful music, listening to profound words? That hour of spiritual encounter is only the beginning:

- 1. True worship is the offering of one's body to God.
- 2. True worship is the offering of everyday life to God (Barclay).

II. "DON'T BE CONFORMED"

A. Be not conformed to this world (or age), *aeon*.

1. Don't be the devil's fool! Don't expose yourself needlessly to spiritually dangerous material and experiences. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you.

2. There is an interesting twist to this business of conformity. We are born in this world (age), therefore we are originally conformed to this world. We cannot successfully "nonconform" ourselves.

III. CHRIST TRANSFORMS US BY GRACE.

A. We are not rescued from our state of conformity to the world by our own decision to be non-

(continued on page 62)



by C. S. Cowles,
*Professor of preaching,
Northwest Nazarene College,
Nampa, Idaho.*

CRAFTING THE BODY OF THE SERMON

"Beauty depends on order," affirmed Aristotle. Like a fine painting or a great cathedral, a sermon ought to be created in such a way that its constituent parts contribute to the whole in a unified and balanced manner.

A sermon intelligently planned is not a limitation, but a liberation. A kite that is released from its string gets its freedom, but it ceases to fly. The difference between a sermon that innocuously meanders all over the landscape and the one that flows with mighty force is to be found in the conciseness, clarity, and cohesiveness of its outline. Not only is it more exhilarating to preach, but a sermon is easier to prepare when it fleshes out an already clearly defined purpose and well-balanced structure.

"The form must fit the function" is a fundamental principle of good architecture—and good sermon building. There are a great variety of different types of outlines and differing ways to organize a sermon. Here are some of the most basic plans.

I. The Unitary Structure. This is the one-point sermon: indeed, every good sermon ought to focus on driving home one important message, one great truth, one indelible point. But the uniqueness of this style is that it doesn't use several subsidiary points in order to express its single theme.

There are two ways in which the unitary sermon can be constructed. *First*, it can be developed in a *linear* manner of following one story line (especially useful in the exposition of parables or personalities in Scripture), or it can string together a series of complementary truths (e.g., the Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments).

Second, the unitary structure can be organized in a *circular* manner: that is, it hits one important truth from a number of different angles, utilizing a variety of materials such as parallel passages, illustrations, personal experiences, secular sources, and quotations. The power of this kind of sermon lies in its redundancy: it keeps hammering away at the same truth. One Black preacher delivered a memorable sermon with just one point that he accented in a variety of ways: "It's Friday, but Sunday is coming!" By the time he finished, he was screaming, "FRIDAY!" And the people were shouting, "SUNDAY'S A-COMIN'."

II. The Binary Structure. The two-point sermon is especially effective in developing contrasts. First comes the bad news, then the good. First, we ought to preach the law, according to John Wesley. Then the good word of grace through Jesus Christ.

This structure is particularly well adapted to dealing with problem situations or facing some false doctrine. First, we put forward the clouded or controversial position, and deal with it both fairly and frankly. Then we lift up the truth of Scripture as it is revealed in the face of Christ.

The two-point sermon lends itself naturally to paradox. First, one side of the truth is developed, and then the other side of the same coin is examined. "Death and resurrection," "faith and works," and the Nicene christological formula "truly man and truly God" are examples of correlating and complementary sides of a single great truth.

III. The Trinary Structure. There is a reason why most preachers gravitate toward the three-point sermon. The treatment of many subjects works out most naturally in three movements: the case for it, the arguments against it, and the solution (Hegel's thesis, antithesis, and synthesis). Or another approach is to first build the house of truth, then furnish it, and finally move in. Many two-point sermons can be strengthened by adding a third: application.

The number three may seem to have mystical dimensions—the Trinity, the three dimensions, past-present-future, and the fact that a tripod forms the most stable base. A better reason for the preacher to favor three points, however, is that it lends itself naturally to the different ideas that can be adequately developed in a sermon of ordinary length. Also it moves the listener through several well-defined cycles of thinking about a particular subject, creating a sense of progress and development.

Most sermons are strengthened by making the basic structure visible in the form of clearly stated and logically connected major points.

First, keep the outline simple. Every major point ought to be stated in the form of a complete sentence. Clear communication is more to be praised than cleverness in alliteration.

Second, state each point clearly. A good transition sentence or question leading up to the major point helps to draw attention to it. Also, restating the point after its development serves to drive it home in the listener's mind. It is good form—and much appreciated by most congregations—for the preacher to number his points: "The first great truth which Paul puts before us is . . ." "The second provocative insight which this passage suggests is . . ."

Third, each point should be given balanced treatment. Here is the time-tested pattern of developing sermon segments: first comes exposition, then illustration, and finally application. Care in balancing the points gives to the whole a feeling of symmetry, proportion, and progress.

Fourth, vary the structures. Keep the congregation in suspense on how you intend to develop this particular subject by utilizing a variety of different styles and formats. Let each sermon be "custom made" to fit the scripture passage in a fresh and unique way.



HOW TO TREAT THE EVANGELIST

by Meredith Nelson Sharpe

My husband and I have been doing evangelistic work and holding Family Life Seminars for a number of years. I have been amazed and warmed by the lovely things that have been done for us while we traveled. And I think I have learned a few things that might be helpful in assisting any pastor in knowing how to make himself loved and appreciated by his friend, the "roaming preacher"—the evangelist. Here are nine suggestions.

1. Most evangelists, although generally gregarious fellows, value their privacy. Particularly those who travel continually, desire, ache for, even pine for some privacy.

For this reason, rather than staying in the pastor's home, most evangelists would prefer to be quartered in a motel (even if it is the ancient "Downtown Circle C Motel" instead of the "Holiday Inn." Private evangelists' quarters are fine, as long as they are reasonably clean and have a bed and bathroom. Thoroughly check out the place you plan to put the evangelist.

I will never forget one charming motel we visited that had mice. It was a lovely room to look at, and no one would have ever guessed there were permanent guests there (the Rodent family!). Nevertheless, we had a good time. I

banged on the walls to make the mice run so my little girls could hear them. Despite the mice, we were grateful to have a private place to stay. It was good to be alone and have a chance to enjoy some private family life.

2. When the evangelist first gets to town, or during your correspondence before the meetings, make it clear that you will either pay the motel bill for him, or you will include the money for the motel bill in his offering and let him pay when he checks out. (I think most evangelists prefer to have the pastor take care of all the motel arrangements. Often pastors are able to get special rates from motels they use frequently.) At the very least, evangelists like to know if they are responsible. No one wants to run out of town leaving an unpaid motel bill and a bad reputation behind simply because of a misunderstanding.

3. If you have the evangelist stay in your home, try to give him as much privacy as possible without making him feel ostracized. Communicate to him that you would enjoy fellowship with him, but want him to have all the privacy he desires.

Remember not to let your dog or cat or kid crawl all over him. (Maybe he doesn't like dogs or cats or kids.)

Offer him something to eat after services (even if it is only a bowl of Cheerios), as most preachers are starved after speaking. Encourage him to eat because sometimes evangelists are shy (and *very* hungry).

Make sure the bathroom is scrupulously clean. The same goes for the sheets on his bed.

Be friendly to him, because he is more uncomfortable than you. Put him at ease.

4. One of the nicest things we have experienced while on the road is having our host pastor tell us that he had arranged for us to be able to eat at a certain restaurant and charge our meals. We felt free to eat what we wanted and when we wanted. (Naturally, evangelists should not take advantage of this and eat filet mignon three times a day and lobster for in-between-meal snacks.)

Depending upon the evangelist and how often he is "on the road," you may want to offer him and his family a home-cooked meal. Since we go on weekends we don't have any preference for either home-cooked or restaurant meals. It is my guess, though, that evangelists who travel month after month probably long for a home-cooked meal once in a while.

I realize, having been a pas-

tor's wife for six years, that this puts an extra burden on the pastor's wife, so maybe you can encourage your members to help entertain the evangelist. Oftentimes your church members are eager to get acquainted with the special speaker, but are a little shy or unsure of how their invitation might be accepted. It might ease your burden of entertaining the speaker, and be a pleasant experience for both the evangelist and your members.

5. Unless you have been one, it is difficult to imagine how lonely and strange the evangelist (and especially his wife) can feel when coming to a church for the first time. The pastor and his wife have within them the power to make the visiting evangelist and his family feel very warm and at home.

Now, usually I can pick out which man is the pastor of the church we are visiting. However, I have had moments of panic when I have been very friendly to some man, thinking he was the pastor, only to discover he was a board member who had no idea who I was (and was probably thinking "Who is this aggressive woman?").

I have often had difficulty trying to decide which woman was the pastor's wife. I have been horrified at times, to discover that the one I thought was his wife was really his daughter or mother. Worse yet is when I think the song leader's wife is the pastor's spouse. I have found myself asking the pastor's wife, not knowing who she was at the time, such embarrassing questions as, "Do you attend here regularly?" I have learned to keep fairly quiet and be wildly observant until I get enough solid clues to make a fairly accurate identification of

the pastor's wife. For these reasons, it is a wonderful blessing when the pastor and his wife come immediately to the evangelist and his wife to introduce themselves. We have had some pastors who even introduced us to other members and staff. It is a heartwarming, pleasant experience.

6. One small favor which many ministers or their wives have done for us is to provide toys for our little girls to play with while we are visiting in their home. My girls don't care if the toys are broken or old. (They don't mind playing with measuring cups and kettles from the kitchen.) They just appreciate having something to do. One ingenious pastor's wife gave them a blanket to play on. They dragged it all over, giving each other rides.

When the host or hostess gives my children something to play with it does two things. First, it makes them happy. Second, it keeps them from getting into and tearing up things they shouldn't. It is extremely difficult to force a two-year-old to sit in a chair and listen to adult conversation. Therefore, out of self-defense (and in protection of your home) try to provide the evangelist's children something to play with.

7. Washing clothes can be an expensive hassle for those who travel month after month. The use of a washer and dryer can be such a blessing to the Laundromat-weary traveler.

8. It is very nice to know how to get to the church where you are supposed to hold the meetings. Oh, the frustration of getting into town at 6:45 when the service starts at 7:00 and you can't find the church! Be sure to give the evangelist explicit, correct, easy

directions to follow. Give street names and landmarks and mileage estimates. It helps immensely. (He may even be on time!)

9. One of the sweetest things we have had done for us was to have a bowl of fruit welcome us in our motel room. You can get mighty hungry in the middle of the night and a good crunchy apple is so satisfying.

We have had the pleasurable experience of finding flowers in our motel room. The first time it happened I was so touched I almost cried. Motel rooms can be rather drab and cold and those flowers meant so much to me.

Now, I am not saying that these are absolute *musts*. I realize some church budgets simply do not stretch that far. It is just the thought that someone cares about you and is showing Christian love and consideration. I tell you honestly, I would be equally tickled to find a bunch of hand-picked wild flowers in my room.

I remember when we were pastoring and had a visiting preacher. I was so proud of our parishioners. They brought oodles of food—everything from raw steak to cooked black-eyed peas—to the visiting speaker and his family. The evangelists were overwhelmed. And, we were proud of our people who, I am sure, greatly enjoyed being able to say "thank you" to the evangelists in this way.

Being an evangelist has been a thrill and joy for me. I love speaking and singing and ministering. But, I must be honest, feeling so loved and being treated so well by pastors and their wives, has largely enhanced the joy of ministering. We've made lots of good friends. Thank you, pastors!



"Let us pray: O Lord, give us a sense of humor with courage to manifest it forth, so that we may laugh to shame the pomps, the vanities, the sense of self-importance of the Big Fellows that the world sometimes sends among us, and who try to take our peace away. Amen."

—Sean O'Casey

SERMON OUTLINES



Andrew W. L. Young, pastor, Church of the Nazarene, Hartlepool, England, shares a series of sermons based on the "Basic Bible Studies" designed for new converts and written by Charles Shaver. He believed that these basics were good for the whole congregation as well as new converts.

WHAT HAPPENED TO ME

Sermon Theme: At the Heart's Door the Saviour's Knocking

Scripture: Rev. 3:14-22

Introduction: The coming of Christ into the life or heart of an individual is a personal thing between Christ and the one receiving Him. To help us understand this personal relationship, God has given us a number of word pictures through which this relationship is conveyed.

Revelation 3:20—At the heart's door the Saviour's knocking

I. The Closed Door

In our relationship to Jesus Christ we start with a closed door which needs to be opened.

- A. Sin Has Secured the Door.
- B. The Sinner Must Open the Door.

"If any man hear my voice, and open the door . . ."

II. The Waiting Saviour

"Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice . . ."

Sin has closed the door, but God still has access to the door. From the first He has knocked and some have listened. Examples: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Mary, Peter, Paul.

III. The Desired Response

"If any man hear my voice, and open the door."

The desired response is twofold:

- A. Hearing the Saviour's Voice (Conviction of Sin). This is necessary before any other move can be made.
- B. Opening the Door (Repentance and Faith).
  - 1. Acknowledge your sin.
  - 2. Believe that Christ has died in your place.
  - 3. Commit yourself to Him, accepting His forgiveness and pardon.

IV. The Double Promise

"I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

- A. "I will come in . . ." The relationship established.
- B. "I will sup with him, and he with

me . . ." The relationship cemented.

Conclusion:

The Saviour is waiting to enter YOUR heart, won't YOU let Him come in?

WALKING WITH GOD

Sermon Theme: Walking with God

Scripture: Psalm 23

Introduction: Once a child is born physically he must begin to grow. An important step in this process is learning to walk. The same is true spiritually. The child of God (one who is born of God) learns to walk with God. To describe the Christian life as "walking with God" indicates that Christianity is a relationship ("with God"), that it is ongoing—not standing still ("walk"), and that it is a reasonable growth—a step at a time ("walk") (*Basic Bible Studies*). In Psalm 23 we have a beautiful picture of this ongoing relationship . . . WALKING WITH GOD.

I. Walking with God—A Relationship Based on Trust. Verse 1—"The LORD is my Shepherd." The trust comes from knowing with whom we are walking. We can trust Him in all things. "I shall not want." We shall not want for:

- A. SUPPLY—v. 2 (He provides.)
- B. SUCCOUR—v. 3
- C. A Continuous SALVATION—v. 3
- D. A Source of STRENGTH—v. 4
- E. A Place of SAFETY—vv. 5-6

II. Walking with God—A Relationship Controlled by Love. Verse 1—"The Lord is MY Shepherd." The Good Shepherd has a "love relationship" with His sheep. We walk with Him because we love Him.

- A. We respond to His voice (John 10:27).
- B. We respond to His hand (Heb. 12:6).

III. Walking with God—A Relationship Giving a Sense of Security. Verses 4, 6. The Shepherd before us . . . goodness and mercy following us we are SECURE.

IV. Walking with God—A Relationship Leading to Heaven. Verse 6—

If we are walking with God, then we are on a heavenward course.

Conclusion: Walking with God . . .

The Direction Is Forward

The Destination Is Heaven

The Desire of Our Heart Is to Please Him

TALKING WITH GOD

Sermon Theme: Talking with God

Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

Introduction: If any relationship is to mature, there needs to be communication between the ones involved. The reason some relationships break down is for this very reason . . . couples have ceased talking or relating to one another. In the spiritual realm TALKING WITH GOD (prayer) is VITAL. It is not an optional extra. Luke 11:2—"Jesus said, *when* you pray . . ." Talking with God helps us to deepen our relationship with Him.

I. The Habit of Prayer

When we enter into a love relationship with another we make plans, sometimes rearranging our whole programme, to be with the other. When we love the Lord we want to meet with Him regularly.

- A. At a Set Time (Psalm 5; Daniel 6; Mark 1:35).
- B. In a Set Place (Daniel 6; Hab. 2:1).
- C. With a Set Purpose (Song of Sol. 3:1).

The habit of prayer is such that when we are not actually praying at a set time yet we are conscious of the presence of the One we love.

II. Hindrances to Prayer

- A. Unconfessed Sin (Ps. 66:18).
- B. Wandering Thoughts. Wandering thoughts indicate that we are not totally captivated by the one we love. See Ps. 73:25 for a picture of total captivity to the one loved.

III. Help Through Prayer

Talking with God:

- A. Deepens Our Relationship and Love for God. As we talk with God we learn more about Him.
  - 1. He is a loving Father.
  - 2. A loving Father who listens.

3. A loving Father who has limitless resources.
4. A loving Father who shares His innermost thoughts with His children. The more we get to know Him, the more we love Him. The more we love Him, the better we will get to know Him.

B. Deepens Our Feelings for Other People.

1. Praying for someone else. As we talk with God, so we will want to tell Him about others.
2. Praying with someone else. This strengthens us in our individual faith.

Conclusion: Are we talking with God? Is our relationship with Him deepening? Does our love for Him show in our prayer life? Does His love for us show in our practical application of our prayer life?

SHARING WITH GOD

Sermon Theme: Sharing with God

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6

Introduction: When we "give" to God sometimes we are of the opinion that we are doing God a favour. Yet what we have comes from God in the first place. St. Paul was convinced that we couldn't just do as we pleased as Christians if in the so doing we went contrary to the will of God. We are stewards. . . . We are responsible to God for all we have and are.

I. We Have Been Bought with a Price (6:20)

We have been redeemed. (See 1 Pet. 1:18-19.)

We are the property of another.

II. We Are Not Our Own (6:19)

We are responsible to another.

We are accountable to another.

—CHRIST

A. We are Christ's by redemption.

B. We are Christ's by personal response (love slaves).

III. Our Responsibility in the Light of These Facts, Then, Is—We Are to Glorify God in Our Bodies

Our testimony should ever seek to be "Christ is enthroned in my life."

Evidenced in:

A. How we use our TIME.

B. How we use our TALENTS.

C. How we use our TREASURE (whatever may constitute our treasure).

1. Money

2. Intellect

Over all our life this motto should hang: SACRED TO JESUS.

Conclusion: In all and through all—Christ has all. Is that your testimony?

SPEAKING FOR GOD

Sermon Theme: Speaking for God

Scripture: Acts 8:4-8, 26-35; 18:14-28

Introduction: We speak for God because we want to share Him with others. He is too good for us to keep Him to ourselves. We are not afraid to share Him with others, for the more we give Him away, the more securely we have Him. As we consider this theme it is important to realise that there are various approaches when we come to speak to others. The outline seeks to look at three instances of individuals speaking for God.

I. The Scattered Believers (Acts 8:4-8; 11:19f.) Here we see believers in Jesus sharing in a general way. Their desire to share with others was an overflow of the love which filled their hearts.

A. It Was Natural. They were children of God wanting to talk about their Father and their family.

B. It Was Important. It was important because Jesus was important to them.

C. It Was Captivating. Many stopped to listen as the believers spoke from their hearts.

II. Philip and the Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-35). Here we have an instance of speaking for God when someone special is literally laid upon your heart. Philip ministered person-to-person with the Ethiopian and led him to Christ.

III. Apollos and Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:24-28). The ministry here was to lead deeper into the truth someone who had a sketchy understanding of the things concerning Jesus Christ. From their experience of Jesus Christ, Priscilla and Aquila "explained the way of God more adequately." We can only adequately and effectively share with others what we have experienced ourselves.

Conclusion: God wants to speak through you and me.

1. He is looking for a readiness in us to speak for Him.

2. He is looking for a willingness in us to speak for Him. Let us talk freely about Jesus that others hearing may glory in His wonderful name.

FILLED WITH GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT

Sermon Theme: Filled with God's Holy Spirit

Scripture: Eph. 5:1-20

Introduction: The baptism of the Holy Spirit helps deepen our relationship

with God through dealing with those things in us which disturb and distort that relationship. When the Holy Spirit fills our hearts, He deals with those things which stop us functioning as we ought to. As we open our life up to Him, He takes possession of every area.

I. Who Can Be Filled with the Holy Spirit? This act is for believers in good standing with God and with one another. The candidate for the fullness of the Holy Spirit is someone who has already been "born again." When the Holy Spirit came upon the 120 on the Day of Pentecost they were:

A. PRAYING

B. FOLLOWING THE LORD (Obedient)

C. SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

D. MEETING TOGETHER IN FELLOWSHIP

They were believers yet they recognised their need of power. There were things yet needing to be dealt with.

II. What Does the Holy Spirit Do When He Fills Us? He deals with those things which may well be disturbing our relationship with the Lord.

A. He Makes Us Better. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of WHOLENESS.

B. He Makes Us Bolder. When the Holy Spirit came these believers were empowered both in tongue and feet to spread abroad the news of Jesus.

C. He Makes Us Brighter.

1. He helps us REFLECT CHRIST (speaks of presenting a true picture).

2. He helps us RADIATE for CHRIST (speaks of warmth).

III. When Can We Be Filled? Right now (See Luke 11:13; Matt. 5:6.)

IV. Would You Like to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit?

A. Admit your need of inner cleansing (Acts 15:8-9).

B. Yield your whole life to God (Rom. 12:1-2).

C. Ask God to give you the Spirit in His fullness (Luke 11:13).

D. By faith accept that God will do what He promises (Acts 15:8-9).

Conclusion: Is it your desire that God might have all of you? Open every door and let Him in.

UNITING FOR GOD

Sermon Theme: Welcome into the fellowship of the church.

Scripture: Acts 2:36-47

Introduction: What does it mean to
(continued on page 62)



TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

TOWARD AN OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

By Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. (Zondervan, 269 pp., hardback, \$10.95)

Question: How does a minister overcome the temptation to moralize on characters and events of the Old Testament, and come to grips with the vitality of Israel's faith? **Answer:** By developing a theology of the Old Testament.

The ready acceptance of *God, Man, and Salvation* and other similar books testifies to the growing sense of need for an Old Testament theology geared to the preacher. Such a book is *Toward an Old Testament Theology*.

The book examines the traditional methodologies, like systematic theology, and finds them wanting. They impose upon the Old Testament hermeneutical "keys" that are uncharacteristic of the Old Testament, according to Kaiser. The author says an "inner" hermeneutic is needed; an interpretive principle discoverable within the Old Testament itself.

Kaiser's thesis is, "There is an inner center or plan to which each writer consciously contributed." That "inductively derived theme, key, or organizing pattern which the successive writers of the OT overtly recognized and consciously supplemented in the OT" is what the New Testament was eventually to call "the promise."

Upon the fulcrum of "promise" and its associated terms, Kaiser levers in to place the faith world of the Old Testament. His approach cuts down on the problems usually associated with predictive elements of Old Testament studies, and creates a theology that is accessible to people with limited knowledge of the Old Testament world.

The conservative student will appreciate Kaiser's gentle way of dealing with the Scriptures, along with his detailed word studies and clarification of historically significant events.

But the major contribution of this book is its focus upon "promise." The doors to the covenant and King-

dom are opened by the promises of God.

—Daniel Berg

THE CULTURAL SUBVERSION OF THE BIBLICAL FAITH

By James D. Smart (The Westminster Press, 128 pp., paperback, \$4.95)

During the past decade many scholars have evaluated America's "civil religion"—some finding it a useful cohesive force, others judging it an idolatrous threat.

James Smart, author of *The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church*, concerns himself "with the contradiction that exists in all our Western nations between the biblical faith to which Christians are, or ought to be, committed and the policies they support in their national life which in this twentieth century have brought the world to the edge of an abyss. Something is wrong. Something is desperately wrong" (p. 9).

What's wrong stems from a "misuse of scripture in defining Christian citizenship" (p. 47), leading to a distorted view and worship of nation disclosed in the rhetoric of a divinely chosen people. In contrast, a truly biblical view resolutely resists the identification of God's kingdom with any state. Given our "present dilemma," Smart calls for Christians to examine their faith, divorce it from the trappings of nationalism, and apply God's plan (salvation in the fullest sense) to our world.

—Gerard Reed

THE PERSON IN THE PULPIT

By Willard F. Jabusch, William D. Thompson, ed., Abingdon Preacher's Library (Nashville: Abingdon Press, paperback, 120 pp., \$4.95)

Every pastor should read one book a year on preaching. In the reviewer's mind, this is that book! Dr. Jabusch writes with beauty, interest, and relevance.

Beginning with "Our Biblical Job Description," emphasizing that "special sparkle" and concluding with a call to "boldness," the author is sensitive to both the task of the preacher and the needs of the responding congregation.

I was deeply moved by the chapter entitled, "When You Care Enough." Caring becomes the ethical core of the character of the preacher. It also shapes the preacher's ministry. Care means devotion, it is not "rushed or frenzied"; it means honesty and trust. Interestingly enough, care concludes in competency. Jabusch writes, "When you care enough, you do preach your very best" (p. 63).

—Oscar F. Reed

TRUMPETS IN THE MORNING

By Harper Shannon (Broadman Press, 156 pp., paperback, \$2.75)

This is the perfect book to read on Monday morning.

In those moments when you want to give up and quit, turn to the counsel of a pastor who *knows* the feeling, yet thinks "the Gospel ministry is the most thrilling and dynamic experience a person can have on this earth."

I often wish I could "pick the brain" of a successful pastor about a variety of subjects and, when I finished *Trumpets in the Morning*, I felt I had been with Pastor Harper Shannon. It was as if I had a free session with Rev. Shannon, asking questions I have wanted to ask, and some I am not wise enough to have asked.

I believe every pastor, from the large to the smaller churches, will gain greatly from the fresh counsel on moving ministers, biblical confidence, preaching, the role of laymen, staff, time, jealousy, integrity, and other areas.

Since reading the chapter "Calling Out the Called," I have had three young people testify to experiencing a call to full-time Christian service. A lot of credit belongs to this one chapter.

You won't be able to put this book on the shelf labeled "Church Growth." Instead, label a new shelf for "Pastor Growth."

—LeDon McAnally

HOW CHRISTIANS GROW

By Russell T. Hitt (Oxford University Press, 153 pp., cloth, \$8.95)

In a unique way, the author helps you to see that the quiet, selfless, in-

ternal ministry of the Holy Spirit, that the instrumentality of Word and sacrament, and the fellowship in the Body of Christ are parts of a holy mosaic.

Hitt provides some fresh thought to arouse the multitudes within the church who float with the stream devoting themselves to "evasion of growth."

The chapter on tribulation as a part of the growth process is worth the price of the book. He says of John 15:2, "There is cause for rejoicing when we realize we are being pruned by a wounded hand. The Gardener is never closer to us than when He is pruning the branches."

Hitt believes we should not be concerned about the perfection of our love, it is the direction of love that must engage our attention. Walking in love is the primary evidence that a believer is maturing. I believe the reading of this book will enhance that process and the direction of that walk.

—Wallace R. Renegar

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES IN CHURCH EDUCATION

By Patricia Griggs (Griggs Educational Service, printed by Abingdon, 75 pp., paperback, \$4.95)

The target audience for this book is the teacher who "feels uncomfortable with creative activities—has not had much success with creative activities—is not sure of the value of creative activities—needs some new ideas." And that takes in most of us who teach.

Firmly convinced that "creative activities should be a vehicle for learning and not something to put on the end of a lesson to fill up time," Pat Griggs shares why she feels this way. She gives guidelines for deciding which creative activity to use, and then directs the teacher in how to plan an activity, introduce it to the students, and carry it out. A sample lesson plan is included.

Most of the pages are given to directions, illustrations, and helpful hints for using a variety of creative activities. Many teachers will welcome the section on puppets, which gives specific instructions for making over a dozen simple puppets, plus plans for building a foldaway puppet stage.

The author includes in her discussion the more traditional creative activities, such as making montages, finger painting, and making a banner; but she also explores many activities that will be new for most teachers. One section deals with using the

overhead projector and the tape recorder. The suggestions in the sections on visual expression and three-dimensional media are outstanding. She lists interpretive dancing in her consideration of musical expression, but does not give any further discussion of it.

Included in the book are detailed plans for three creative activities workshops, designed to help teachers experiment with various media so they feel comfortable when using them. The director of children's ministries will find these plans very helpful.

Every church worker who ministers to children and youth will find help in this book. Every church, large or small, should make it available to its teachers!

—Robert D. Troutman

PREACHER TALK

By Herschel H. Hobbs (Broadman Press, 168 pp., paperback).

The author dedicates this book to "all young ministers with a prayer that your ministry may be as happy as mine has been."

Dr. Herschel H. Hobbs served for 50 years as a pastor. For a time, he was also speaker for the "Baptist Hour" radio program and president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Ten chapters discuss the various aspects of the pastor—his call, preparation, priorities, platform manners, ethics, and staff relationships.

After having served as a pastor for over 30 years, I found *Preacher Talk* helpful and recommend it to all pastors.

—George P. Psaute

GREAT WORDS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

By Donald Coggan, Archbishop of Canterbury (Abingdon Press, 128 pp., hardback, \$5.95)

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Donald Coggan, is a deep and sensitive man of God. It has been said of him that he "is not only one of the world's great church leaders, but also a man of exceptional evangelical warmth."

In *Great Words of the Christian Faith*, he brings to life 15 one-word terms that have a tendency to become abstract, meaningless, and insipid. These words are: *Humanity, God, Jesus, Church, Love, Faith, Grace, Peace, Life, Suffering, Anxiety, Discipleship, Guidance, Prayer, and Bible.*

Bishop Harold B. Robinson says in the preface to *Great Words of the Christian Faith*, "Many people in our churches today are theologically illiterate. Yet they yearn for meaning in their lives. They want to plumb the depths of their Judeo-Christian heritage, their religious roots. They want to respond to life in the light of that heritage. They want to understand eternal truths in a way that a 20th-century person can comprehend them."

This is precisely what the archbishop offers. With clarity and simplicity he brings these words into focus. To those who still question the reality of the person and activity of God, *Great Words of the Christian Faith* offers substance for believing faith. Hurting, needy, eager-to-learn parishioners deserve the messages this book inspires.

—Richard H. Neiderhiser



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lated by Paul Henry; and loose-leaf Bibles by the International Bible Co. for use in Teen Bible group. Rev. Rosa L. Halbruner, 112 Shunpike Rd., Rio Grande, NJ 08242.

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OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Charles Isbell



In this article I shall examine the function of the Hebrew root *r'h*, translated into English as the verb "see" or "be seen" ("appear" in English), or as a noun "sight." We first encounter the root *r'h* in Exod. 1:16. There the Pharaoh commands the midwives that they must kill any male child born to a Hebrew mother whom they see. Their refusal to comply, of course, is a high point in the little drama of which they are a part in this opening chapter.

The story of Moses' birth furnishes the next three references for *r'h*. When the child's mother saw that he was "beautiful" (or "healthy"; the Hebrew term is simply "good"), she knew she must do something to save his life. How cleverly she outwitted the Pharaoh. He had commanded every male child to be cast into the Nile River (1:22), but the law did not mention using a basket! And so she complied technically with the evil decree (2:4). Surely this baby was going to slip through the clutches of the tyrant. But no! Right at the spot where the loving mother had placed his basket, the daughter of the evil one came to bathe. And horror of horrors, she saw the basket (2:5). Worse yet, she soon saw the Hebrew male child inside too (2:6). Scarcely have our spines been thoroughly chilled by this news, however, than we hear the next phrase bringing welcome relief. "She felt compassion upon him." Again someone has seen a male child, as the midwives had earlier, and again someone has dared to defy the orders of the Pharaoh. Surely this child will be special.

And so it seems as the story opens, its next scene featuring the adult Moses. Notice the repetition of see in 2:11-12. Walking about among his brothers (and how did he know who he really was!), "he saw their burdens; he

saw an Egyptian male beating to death a Hebrew male, one of his brothers. So he turned in every direction and saw that nobody was around." Aha! Now we have a real hero. A *man*. One who sees the real problem. One who will act. Notice the next phrase. "He struck the Egyptian down." Moses not only saw as the women (midwives and Pharaoh's daughter) had seen, he added to their passive resistance active violence to stop oppression.

But not so fast. With rapid strokes, our narrator tells us the tragic result of Moses' action. His own people distrusted him (2:14), the Pharaoh learned about his homicide and put out a warrant for his arrest (2:14-15), and our hero ended up in a foreign country far away from the struggle for freedom in Egypt. Note well that he not only went to Midian, he appeared there as an Egyptian (2:19) who married, took a job with his father-in-law, and settled down, apparently for good. Some hero. And the story gives us absolutely no indication at all that Moses ever plans to return or that anyone else is available to carry on the fight for freedom.

Finally, in 2:25, we get one glimmer of light. "God saw," we are told, and that is all. But we are led to believe that things may be about to change. And indeed they do. In the next scene, Moses begins to see God. As he had seen his own people and their troubles earlier, now he sees the One who can end their woes.

Notice 3:2-4. Six times the word see resounds. The NIV obscures some of the roots, but still the repetition impact is forceful. "There the angel of the Lord appeared ['was seen'] to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. So Moses thought, 'I will go over and

see this strange sight—why the bush does not burn up.' When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look [Hebrew reads 'see'], God called to him from within the bush" (italics added).

What a tremendous message is contained in these three short verses! God lets himself *be seen* ("appears") in a forsaken, foreign land. He watches as His man *sees* signs of His presence in the fire, *sees* when Moses is ready, and calls him by name! Now God not only *sees* (2:25) He is evidently ready to become actively involved with His people. His assurances to Moses include the fact that He has *seen* (3:7, 9) what is going on and wills now to *be seen* (3:16; 4:5). Surely things are going to happen now.

But again, the road to redemption is not a straight or easy one. As we learned in article three, the first response of the Pharaoh was an increase in the intensity of the slavery/oppression. "The Israelite foreman saw (NIV, "realized") they were in trouble" (5:19). They even prayed that Yahweh would "look upon" (Hebrew, "see") Moses and Aaron and judge them for the increase in trouble they had caused (5:21).

Clearly the Israelites had a problem. Moses had seen God, God had seen the situation and had determined to change it, but the people could only see their own troubles. To them, there appeared to be no way out. Significantly, therefore, section "C" ends with a promise to the people that is beamed to the future. "You *will see* what [Yahweh] will do" (6:1, NIV, italics added). To see something new, to see the activity of God in their behalf, would make all the difference in the world for the Israelites. As yet, such a sight remained in the future. But the promise of God had been made. There was hope.

(continued on page 63)



NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

John 3:16—5:3

Everlasting Life (3:16)

In the Greek the last two words of verses 15 and 16 are exactly the same—*zoen aionion*. The KJV translates them “eternal life” in 15 and “everlasting life” in 16.

The adjective *aionios* comes from the noun *aion*, which was first used for “lifetime” or “age.” But Plato used it in the sense of “eternity.” Sasse writes: “Plato distinguishes between *aion* as timeless, ideal eternity, in which there are no days or months or years, and *chronos* as the time which is created with the world as a moving image of eternity” (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1:198).

When it comes to the adjective *aionios*, the first meaning given is “eternal” (TDNT, 1:208). Evidently the KJV translators used “everlasting” in verse 16 to avoid repetition. But one of the key expressions in John’s Gospel is “eternal life,” which has qualitative force, not just quantitative meaning. It is the life of eternity which God plants in our hearts when Christ, the Eternal One, comes in to abide. So it is better to use “eternal” also in verses 16 and 36 (RSV, NASB, NIV).

Incidentally, *aionios* occurs 17 times in John’s Gospel and not more than 6 times in any other NT book. In the KJV it is translated “eternal” in 42 of the 71 times it occurs.

Reproved (3:20)

Arndt and Gingrich give as the first meaning of the verb *elengcho*: “bring to light, expose, set forth” (p. 249). It seems that the best translation here is “exposed” (RSV, NASB, NIV). Buechsel writes: “This meaning is suitable in Jn. 3:20” (TDNT, 2:474).

Well (4:14)

The Greek word for “well” in verses 11 and 12 is *phrear*, which

means “a well purposely dug,” and also a “pit” or “shaft” (AG, p. 865). But Jesus used a different word in verse 14—*pege* (paygay), which means a “spring” or “fountain” (AG, p. 655). The woman was talking about a hole in the ground. Jesus was promising her a bubbling “spring of water welling up to eternal life” (RSV, NIV).

A Spirit (4:24)

The Greek language has no indefinite article. So *pneuma ho theos* might possibly be translated “God is a spirit” (KJV). But since *pneuma* is first, it has almost an adjectival force: “Spirit”—not material body—“is God.” This is brought out best by the translation, “God is spirit” (RSV, NASB, NIV).

The Woman (4:27)

There is no article in the Greek. So the correct translation is “a woman” (RSV, NASB, NIV). The Jewish rule was that no man should ever talk with *any* woman in public—not even his own wife, sister, or mother.

Is Not This the Christ (4:29)

In English this question suggests that a positive answer (“Yes”) is expected. But in the Greek *meti* indicates that a negative answer—“this is not the Christ, is it?” (NASB)—is anticipated. B. F. Westcott writes: “The words suggest the great conclusion as something beyond hope. The form of the sentence grammatically suggests a negative answer, but hope bursts through it” (*The Gospel According to St. John*, 1:163). Perhaps this is best brought out by “can this be the Christ?” (RSV) or “Could this be the Christ?” (NIV).

Master (4:31)

The Greek word is *Rabbi*. It is used for Christ 14 times in the New Testament—translated (in KJV) “Master” 9 times and “Rab-

bi” 5 times. Three times it is used for a Jewish rabbi (Matt. 23:7-8). The best way is to transliterate it here as “Rabbi” (RSV, NASB, NIV), since the KJV translates 6 other Greek words as “master.”

Nobleman (4:46, 49)

The Greek word is *basilikos*, which is an adjective (from *basileus*, “king”) and is properly translated “royal” in the KJV in the other three places where it occurs in the New Testament (Acts 2:20-21; Jas. 2:8). The best translation here, where it is used as a substantive, is “royal official.”

Sheep Market (5:2)

The Greek simply has the adjective *probatikos*, “pertaining to sheep”; so the KJV translators supplied *market* (in italics). But all authorities agree that the correct reference is to the “Sheep Gate” (NIV) in the wall of Jerusalem, through which sheep were brought to the Temple.

Hebrew (5:2)

The Greek word is *Hebraisti*, which originally meant “Hebrew.” But there is general agreement that here (as well as in 19:13, 17, 20) it means “Aramaic” (NIV). Gutbrod gives that meaning for *Hebraisti* in John’s Gospel (TDNT, 3:389).

Porches (5:2)

The Greek word here is *stoa*, which students of Greek history and philosophy will connect with Athens, where the philosophers taught. Besides this verse, the word occurs (in NT) only in 10:23 and Acts 3:11; 5:12. In those three places it is “Solomon’s porch” (KJV). We know that this was a covered colonnade inside the east wall of the Temple area. Since we think of “porches” as on the outside of buildings, that term hardly fits in these passages. A better translation is “covered colonnades” (NIV).

(continued on page 63)

THE THANKSGIVING PULPIT

(continued from page 52)

conformists. We are rescued by Christ's decision to transform us. (Sanctification by grace).

B. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Let God place within you the "mind of Christ."

The Greek word used for transformed is *metamorphosis*. Christian transformation is much like the metamorphosis process of changing a caterpillar into a beautiful butterfly.

CONCLUSION

Why, then, are we transformed? "So that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (v. 2).



SERMON OUTLINES

(continued from page 57)

belong to the fellowship of the Church?

I. The Basis of Fellowship (Acts 2: 47). Those who were added to the Church:

- A. Had Experienced Conviction of Sin.
  - 1. Jesus was the Object of Conviction. "When they heard the story of Jesus."
  - 2. The Holy Spirit was the Instrument of Conviction. "They were cut to the heart."
  - 3. Through grace they were awakened by conviction. "What shall we do?"
- B. Had Experienced Conversion of Life. Conviction must lead to conversion if it is to be of eternal

value. Conversion evidenced by:

- 1. Repentance
- 2. Remission of sins
- 3. Regeneration
- C. Had Made a Confession of Faith. (See Rom. 10:9.) "They were baptised."

II. The Bulwarks of Fellowship. The things which make for strength . . . "The Bulwarks of Fellowship." "They continued steadfastly in":

- A. "The Apostles' Doctrine"—TEACHING
- B. "The Fellowship"—TOGETHERNESS
- C. "The Breaking of Bread"—CELEBRATION
- D. "Prayers"—DEDICATION

Those who were added to the Church experienced . . .

III. The Blessing of Fellowship.

- A. The Blessing of Activity (v. 43).

B. The Blessing of Community (vv. 44-46)

- 1. Sharing (vv. 44-45)
- 2. Caring (v. 46)

C. The Blessing of Reproduction (v. 47)

Conclusion: This is the Church we should desire to belong to. Where the members have:

- 1. Been convinced of sin.
- 2. Experienced conversion from sin.
Are . . .
- 3. Living out their confession of faith.
Are . . .
- 4. Steadfast in the things that make for growth. (The study of the Word, fellowship, celebration, prayer.)
And where . . .
- 5. The members are active in promoting the life and health of the fellowship.



WESLEY'S VIEW OF WAR

(continued from page 35)

In a series of tracts addressed to the people of America, of England, and of Ireland (*Works*, 11: 80-154), Wesley admonished Christians, in particular, of their responsibility in time of war. A part of the corruption of war was that it caused Christians to forget who they were and what principle must govern their lives. As Wesley wrote, ". . . let not those who were designed to save the earth destroy it" (*Works*, 11:124). War ought to drive Christians to self-examination, confession, and repentance rather than to hatred, accusation, and violence. Wesley's attitude was expressed as follows:

Let no individual attempt to clear himself from the dreadful

charge of being accessory [sic.] to it. Let no one presume to look on himself as unconcerned and innocent. Let no one "wipe his mouth and say, What harm have I done?" but rather let him know that his sin in particular has added to the general account, and not a little contributed to the fierceness of the divine contention (*Works*, 11:128).

Wesley compared war to a burning building. One should not add fuel or seek to place blame, but he ought to seek to put it out. Confession represented such an attempt to extinguish the flames of war.

In a letter to the American printer, Thomas Rankin, dated May 19, 1775, Wesley pointed out perhaps the most damnable consequence of war. War has eternal effects.

. . . whenever war breaks out, God is forgotten, if he be not set at open defiance. What a glorious work of God was at Cambuslang and Kilsyth, from 1740 to 1744! But the war that followed tore it all up by the roots, and left scarce any trace of it behind; insomuch that when I diligently inquired a few years after, I could not find one that retained the life of God! (*Works*, 12:327).

In a day of international beligerence among nations and revolutionary groups, all God's people would be well served to recall these counsels of the man who saved England from a French Revolution but who, much to his regret, could not save her from an American Revolution. "For who knows, when the sword is once drawn, where it may stop?" (*Works*, 11:120).

OT WORD STUDIES

(continued from page 60)

We must now jump quickly to the final section which chronicles the victory of this *seeing, appearing* God over the Egyptians. We will pause only to note how the identity of this decisively acting Deity is tied to the past ("I appeared [was seen] to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" [6:2]). Section "G" marks, among other things, the moment when the eyes of the Israelites were opened to the sight of their God at work. Our

root, *r'h*, occurs six times throughout the section.

First, God realizes that the people would be afraid if they saw war (13:17) and so alters their route out of Egypt. Then, in response to their paralyzing fear at the prospect of facing the on-rushing Egyptian army, Moses speaks these words. "Stand still and see the deliverance from Yahweh that He will create for you today. The way you see the Egyptians today you will never again see them forever" (14:13). The following verses, of course, give the details of how Moses' prediction was fulfilled.

And so we arrive at 14:30, virtually the end of the narrative, with this word: "Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the beach." Everything has changed now, and the narrator can finally wrap up the story. Notice the structure of 14:31, which serves the dramatic needs of the moment so brilliantly. "When Israel saw, . . . then they believed!" Now the Israelites can see the real truth. Their God is able to deliver. And now we know the full truth of what it means for God to look upon the suffering of His children, to appear, and to act. Who would not believe in a God like this!



NT WORD STUDIES

(continued from page 61)

Waiting for the Moving of the Water (5:3)

This last part of verse 3 and all

of verse 4 are not found in the two third-century papyrus manuscripts of John's Gospel (66 and 75)—made only about 100 years after John was written—in our only two fourth-century manuscripts, or in two of the four manuscripts from the fifth cen-

tury. It is completely clear to any honest observer that this legend, about an angel who came down and "troubled the water," was not a part of the original Gospel of John. It was added centuries later to explain the man's reference in verse 7.



DAY FOR LEADERSHIP

(continued from page 29)

boldness. Jesus sent His disciples forth as witnesses, or as the word literally translates, "martyrs" (Acts 1:8). Far too many of us have yet to practice that kind of reckless abandonment to the will of our crucified and risen Lord. The obedience of martyrdom is more theory than fact. We like to keep our witness within the protection of secure traditions and comfortable living. It is great to promulgate sanctity, as long as it doesn't cost us too much.

The challenge of this hour, then, is to take up the cross, and daily renouncing our own rights, to live like fools for Christ's sake. Our highly sophisticated society may look upon such unfettered zeal as madness, but it is what happens at Pentecost.

The German pastor Pregizer of Haiterboch, once aroused his lethargic congregation by suddenly exclaiming in an Easter Monday sermon: "Fire! Fire! Fire!" "Where?" the startled congregation asked. Whereupon the pastor answered: "In disciples' hearts."¹³

To be sure, that is where revival comes—in the hearts of God's people. May I ask, are we combustible material? Are we fuel for the flame of God to consume?

General William Booth of the Salvation Army was asked by Wilbur Chapman to tell him what was the secret of his success. The great general hesitated a moment, then as tears came into his eyes and ran down his face, he said: "I will tell you the secret. God has had all there was of me to have. There may have

been men with greater opportunities; but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ could do, I made up my mind that God would have all there was of William Booth. If there is anything of power in the Salvation Army today, it is because God has had *all* the adoration of my heart, *all* the power of my will, and *all* the influence of my life."

Would that this could also be said of us. Here finally is the secret of true holiness leadership. Its meaning and wonder never ceases to grow as our experience of His grace enlarges. Though we have infinitely more to learn, still as we know ourselves today, may it be that God has all the adoration of our hearts, all the power of our wills, and all the influence of our lives.



FOOTNOTES

1. *The Lausanne Covenant*, Article 2.
2. John Wesley, "Preface," *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* (London: The Epworth Press, 1950), p. 9.
3. John Wesley, *The Journal of the Reverend John Wesley, A.M.* (London: Charles H. Kelly, n.d.), 6:117.
4. John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley* (London: John Mason, 1830), 11:429.
5. John Wesley, *Journal*, 5:169.
6. Reported to me by Dr. Delbert Rose, for many years historian of the National Holiness Association. Confirmed by Dr. Wilbur Dayton.
7. Cited in the *Mississippi Methodist Advocate*, July 24, 1974.
8. *Methodist Discipline*, 1784, p. 12.
9. Thomas Ware, *Sketches of the Life and Travels of Reverend Thomas Ware* (New York: 1842), p. 189; cf. p. 263.
10. Francis Asbury, *Journal* (New York: N. Bangs and T. Mason, 1821), 3:367.
11. C. T. Studd, "The Real Thing Is the Heart," *Decision*, July, 1961, p. 3.
12. Samuel Chadwick, *The Way to Pentecost* (Berne, Ind.: Light and Hope Publications, 1937), p. 7.
13. Recounted by Paulus Scharpff, *History of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1966), p. 118.



- Answers:** 1-D; 2-C; 3-C; 4-C; 5-B; 6-A; 7-A; 8-B; 9-E; 10-B; 11-C; 12-C; 13-B; 14-B; 15-B; 16-C.



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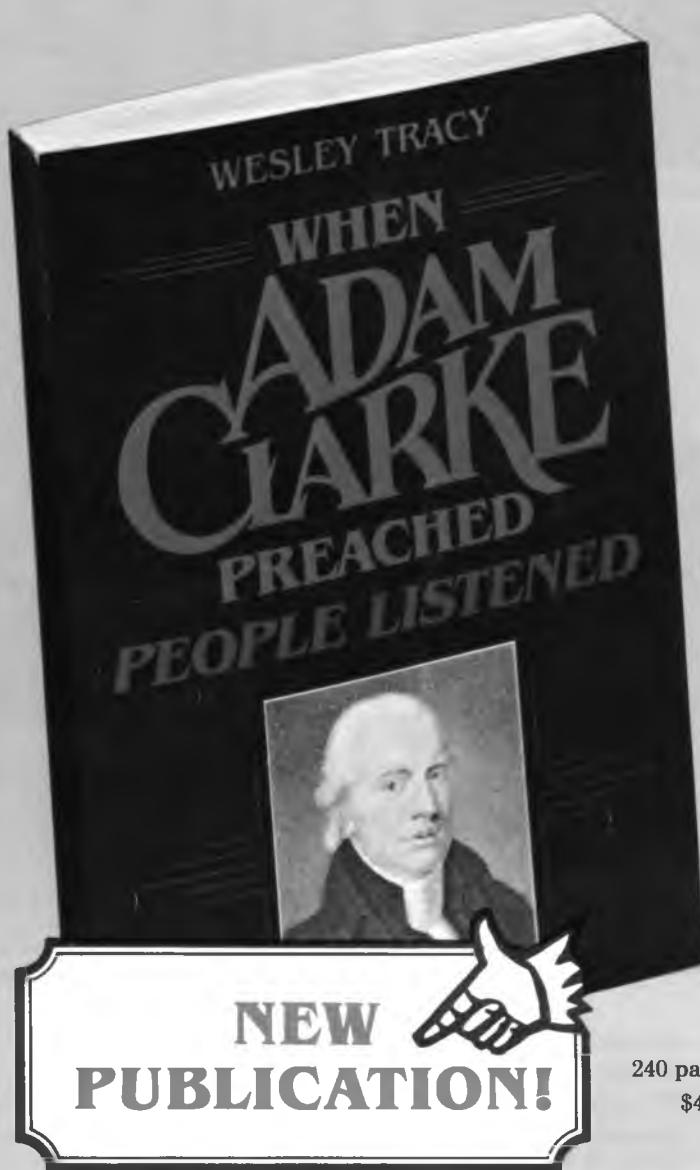
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