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THE
**PREACHER'S
MAGAZINE**

DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY, 1982-83



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Suitable for Framing

To get at the core of God at His greatest, one must get into the core of himself at his least, for no one can know God who has not first known himself. Go to the depths of the soul, the secret place of the Most High, to the roots, to the heights; for all that God can do is focused there.

... Meister Eckhart

THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE

Proclaiming Christian Holiness

Volume 58, Number 2

December/January/February, 1982-83

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Litho in U S A



by
Wesley
Tracy



CHANGE AGENT! WHO? ME?

Don't you just hate it when the sermon or article begins with the inanity, "We live in a time of change." Talk about flailing away at the obvious. Nothing will induce yawns and disgust any quicker.

Another reason we hate to hear about change is because we hate change itself. Once we get life cornered and almost hog-tied, someone changes the rules and we have to start over without "passing Go" and without collecting \$200. Our penchant for repeating satisfying behaviors makes us resist change like we resist Mormon missionaries.

But like it or not, unless we want to become mere ambulatory antiques, we must face and cope creatively with change. This is particularly true of preachers. If we transform the changing times into a game of dodge ball, our sermons may become mumbled museums and our ministry nothing more than relic dusting.

Even flaming evangelist Bill Lane knows that change is necessary. Bill was mostly unemployed until he made a change. But since he changed one thing in his act, he says he gets enough calls for three evangelists. Bill's best hellfire-and-brimstone preaching fell flat until he got himself an asbestos suit like the Hollywood stunt men wear. His stunt is literally to set himself on fire as he reaches the climax of his sermon on hell.

With this change business really warmed up. Bill made the Chicago newspapers when he pointed his flaming fingers at 258 terror-stricken hearers in Cicero, Ill. As the flames spread over him, he shrieked at the sinners that they would burn like this in hell forever if they didn't shape up.

Bill's fiery fame soon earned him the coveted "green weenie" award from the *Wittenburg Door*. When they wrote him up Brother Lane had set himself on fire 75 times. Only once had he burned himself seriously. That happened when he posed for a slow-focusing photographer and Bill waited too long to flap the fire out.

Well, I doubt that Bill Lane can teach us much about change, except, of course, that change for the wrong reasons can be absurdity. Hopefully, the

articles in this issue will probe the matter of ministering in changing times more profitably.

Several articles in this issue call us to consider some basic changes in our concept of pastoral ministry. The simplistic idea of pastoral ministry which we have cozied up to for the last generation or so probably should give way to its betters. A more full-orbed approach prescribed by the Bible, history, and changing times should emerge. In recent decades we have thought of the pastor as a good-natured *man* concerned almost entirely with the personal salvation of his people. Paul D. Simmons says, "The pastor is encouraged to be warmhearted, develop personal piety and devotional resources, preach the gospel, and love the Lord and his people." The ministerial image is, Simmons adds, "that of the personable, friendly, compassionate, and competent pastor who is evangelist, counselor, and prophetic voice against personal vices" (*Search*, Summer 1981, p. 6).

The other half of the job to which the Bible and the urgencies of the times call us has to do with the pastor as change agent in relation to social structures that hinder the coming of the Kingdom and oppress people. It is not enough to be concerned with personal piety in the lives of converts. The evangelical pastor must concern himself or herself, as well, with the social structures, institutions, and customs which help produce the spiritual problems in the lives of our people. The structures and institutions to which the people are subjected are objects of ministry.

Certainly this type of ministry is in harmony with the scriptures, church history, and the Wesleyan tradition. Yet we holiness people seem to avoid this kind of change agency. Perhaps it is partially because we smell the smoke of the social gospel on the blue jeans of those who want to right the social wrongs of the world. More likely part of our reluctance to try to redeem society stems from our blue-collar roots. Historically, the Holiness Movement people have been, for the most part, poor people.

They were so far removed from the sources of temporal power that trying to change sinful social structures simply did not occur to most of them. Apocalyptic hope for a better world had more appeal. Thus, with some notable exceptions, the redemption of society was not stressed much. To be sure, social evils expressed in terms of personal vices such as dancing, drinking, and smoking were roundly booed and banned. The movement had great influence over the personal life, but little organized political power. Perhaps this background has made the halls of social and political carryings-on foreign soil for American holiness people.

Certain denominations, traditionally peopled with upper-class and upper-middle-class personnel, feel more comfortable challenging wickedness in high places. (For example, some Presbyterian friends of mine call their church "the Republican Party at prayer.") For generations the business and governmental institutions have been in the hands of people just like them and they don't mind shouting down their peers.

Another reason that many Evangelicals hesitate to get involved in social ministries such as feeding the hungry, clearing the slums, job training, and political reform is that the job is so overwhelming that there seems little hope of making a difference. To try to feed all the hungry children appears to be as hopeless as the foolish futility of Sisyphus. Yet we must not fail to do *anything* because we cannot do *everything*.

Whatever our collective reasons for falling behind in the ministries to human needs and for social justice, the time has come for us to catch up. Perhaps Paul Simmons is right when he counsels evangelical pastors that sometimes it may be more important to attend a Board of Aldermen meeting than to visit an errant church member.

Most articles on the church's social responsibility usually turn into a shriek at about this point. The author with pen akimbo and neck veins bulging orders us to picket General Motors, demands that we make obscene gestures at the City Council, calls us cowards if we won't burn draft cards, or commands us to bring potato salad to the ERA picnic. Indeed, Simmons ends his helpful article with a tirade against Exxon and the Hooker Chemical Company. His argument is not without strong truth which should be heard. But it also illustrates another danger. It is possible to become so out of balance in our mission that all we have to offer is bacon and beans, a cardigan sweater, and a petition to Congress. The hungry and cold people surely need food and clothing and "just" legislation. But they also need forgiveness of sin, freedom from guilt, purity of heart, and eternal life. If we give them only the bacon and beans, we have only done "the other half of the job."

And this can happen. More than one church has so humanized Christ, demythologized the Atonement, denatured the Bible, and explained away the Resurrection that they don't have much gospel left. All they have left to offer is prison reform programs,

**True freedom is to share
All the chains our neighbors wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free.**

—James Russell Lowell

mental hygiene centers, protest placards, and the Bloodmobile.

A related caution has to do with the fact that once we learn the knack of social services, we just may find that pushing for public piety is a lot easier than praying for personal purity. So what is the point of all this? The plea is for a balanced ministry. Evangelism and social action are complementary, not opposite points on a continuum. We must minister in Christ's name and power to the whole person in the context of these times. We must vigorously proclaim personal salvation, and at the same time accept what Susan B. Anthony told us years ago, "Give your heaviest raps on the head to every nabob who does injustice to human beings for the crime of color or sex."

We Won! We Won!

The *Preacher's Magazine* won the 1982 "Award of Excellence" in the denominational periodical category given by the Evangelical Press Association. This is a notable award and came the first year we entered the competition. The editor received the plaque (and plans to keep it), but I want to give a salute to Susan Downs, the assistant editor, and to the Nazarene Publishing House production and art staff, particularly Dick Fields, Crandall Vail, Bonnie Laffin, and Bill Lakey.

The Evangelical Press Association has more than 300 member publishers and periodicals with a worldwide readership of over 22,000,000. We prize the recognition the EPA has given us.

Good Hands

All-State is not the only outfit in good hands. Much of the fortune of the *Preacher's Magazine* has been in the "good hands" of Assistant Editor Susan Downs for the last three years. Susan's talented hands have vigorously mastered the many and challenging tasks that have found their way to her desk. Susan has put a lot of energy, courage, and dedication into the entity that is the *Preacher's Magazine*. This issue is the last one which will boast the benefit of Susan's "good hands." Susan, her three sons, and husband, David, are moving to Springfield, Mass., where David will pastor the First Church of the Nazarene. By the time this is read the Downsens will be enjoying(?) their first New England winter.



We Get Letters



Dear Editor:

Three cheers for Wil Spaite's article "What Do You Make of Baptism?" in the Summer 1982 issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*. He is certainly correct in calling it a "neglected sacrament," and his suggestions on how to make it more meaningful are good ones.

However, I was disappointed in one glaring omission. In acknowledging the cost of baptistries and their absence in many smaller churches, and in decrying the fact that "a church without a baptism must hold baptisms . . . in a nearby river or borrow someone else's baptism on a Sunday afternoon," he failed to mention a perfectly obvious solution. I am speaking of Spaite's strange silence regarding sprinkling and pouring as valid modes of baptism.

If pastors would utilize these modes, and instruct their people as to their availability, there is no church anywhere, however small, where baptism would need to be "a neglected sacrament." Sprinkling and pouring have always been valid options in the Wesleyan tradition. They are even named as such in Article XIII in the Church of the Nazarene's Articles of Faith. Wesleyans and Free Methodists also allow a choice as to mode, although not putting it into their doctrinal statements.

Thus the neglect of baptism in the Church of the Nazarene, which Spaite so clearly describes, is rooted in the failure to adhere to the church's own stated doctrines.

Respectfully,

Rob L. Staples

Nazarene Theological Seminary

Dear Mr. Tracy:

Please let me congratulate you on the excellent

work you are doing in the editing of the *Preacher's Magazine*. As an avid reader of the publication for many years, I am especially appreciative of its present format and content.

Sincerely,

Helen F. Rothwell

Bethany, Oklahoma

Dear Wes:

We have just received and reviewed the June/July/August issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*. You are to be complimented on the excellent work on the magazine. We have appreciated both the "theme" issues and now this "non-theme" issue format.

In reviewing the material, we note that under the section "The Minister's Mate," an article by Wendell Garrison has been reprinted from *Church Administration* titled "I Would Rather Have a Housing Allowance." As you are aware, in recent years this has been one of those lively issues that has been debated around the church and, in particular, in certain parts of the country. We were asked several years ago to publicize information on both the pros and the cons of the cash housing allowance situation. A copy of the memo: Church Management titled "Housing for Your Pastor: Parsonage or Housing Allowance" is enclosed for your review. As you can see, it continues to reflect the position taken by Dr. Stowe, in his book *The Ministry of Shepherding*, that for the most part the typical or "average" Nazarene church should continue to provide a parsonage for its ministry.

As recently as last year, we conducted an informal attitude survey on this question among district su-

perintendents serving districts in the United States. Nearly all the district superintendents responded and nearly unanimously continued to endorse the position that the typical Nazarene church should maintain a parsonage rather than sell the parsonage and pay a cash housing allowance. Obviously, we all recognize there are peculiar and unique situations where a large church with a stable financial base can provide a cash housing allowance without a great financial impact on the future of that congregation's ability to secure a minister.

With the current economic conditions, including the depressed housing markets and the inability of several of our ministers to sell homes they have purchased, the issue is not nearly as much of a concern as it has been in past years. In several recent telephone conversations, we have noticed a recognition that the Nazarene minister typically cannot count on any "equity return" on a housing investment since the tenure would be too short to pay anything except interest on the mortgage. At best, the minister may hope for some appreciation, but for the time being, that is a figment of yesterday's economy and not today's reality.

We continue to distribute this information at each of our Church Board Financial Seminars around the country and present this position to our church boards through various other means. We are concerned that the appearance of this particular article in the *Preacher's Magazine* will raise questions as to whether the "official" position of the church has changed and is shifting in the direction of a cash housing allowance in lieu of a parsonage. Obviously, that would not be the intent of the use of the article; however, sometimes perceptions speak very loudly to our ministers.

We felt you would want to be aware of the position we were taking and should you receive inquiries regarding the article or information, we will be happy to supply either you or the individual inquiring with the memo or additional information they might request.

Sincerely,

Dean Wessels

Director, Pensions and Benefits Services

Dear Wes:

Just a brief note to express my deep appreciation for your editorial in the March/April/May 1982 issue of the *Preacher's Magazine*. I thought it a most appropriate and fitting tribute to our mutual friend, Dr. Willard Taylor. I could not have imagined, or rather I should say I cannot imagine, a better way to give tribute to him than to quote, as you have, significant statements from his writings. I want to thank you for doing that. It is very inspiring and uplifting to read those words and I think you made a very good choice in the quotations which you gave.

Just to tell you also that I appreciate the work you're doing in the *Preacher's Magazine*. Its quality continues to increase and improve and I just want to say, "Thanks, and keep up the good work."

Sincerely,

Hal Cauthron

Trevecca Nazarene College

Dear Sir:

I must confess I'm shocked at your article in the December/January/February 1981-82 issue, "The Future Isn't What She Used to Be."

I wonder what will appear next? I cannot equate your (10,000 years ago) when man first learned about plants. Gen. 1:29. [sic]

This is the most disturbing article I have seen in a *Preacher's Magazine* [sic] reading for over 45 years.

I'm no "Kook," Wes; but I think you missed it.

Sincerely and prayerfully,

George M. Lake

Shawnee, Oklahoma

Dear Sir:

I just read the article on "Women's Ministries Meet Needs" and felt it was the most comprehensive article on the subject that I had seen.

Do you have more information that is available? Perhaps a book on the subject? I would be interested in buying anything you have on the subject.

Thanks,

Frances Skiles

Modesto, California



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DOES GOD REALLY TO AI

by Jerry L. Appleby

Ethnic/Urban Coordinator

Church of the Nazarene

Today, the Church of Jesus Christ is at a crossroad as it faces the major task of the change necessary to meet the ethnic challenge of the 80s. Refugees, migration, and immigration are concerns which are increasingly becoming the center-stage topics for church leaders today. At issue are not only the complex challenges given to us, but also the tremendous opportunities afforded.

Helen Temple said in a recent prayer, "Lord, we have not always done as well as we should in taking the gospel to 'them.' Help us to do a much better job, now that they are coming to us."

THE CHALLENGES

The complexity of our present communities is mind-boggling. There are actually four groups in the ethnic circles with which we must deal. First, there are cultural groups that are **American and speak English**. These would include the American Blacks and the Native Americans—North American Indians, etc. It is understood that many Native Americans still speak their native tongue. These people are definitely American but have both a culture and a worship style that often warrants separate churches.

Second, there are the **immigrants**. The U.S. Department of Immigration legally admits more than 200,000 people into the United States each year.

Then we must consider **undocumented persons** ("illegal aliens"). The United States Census Bureau believes that up to 6 million such persons currently live in the United States.

Refugees make up the fourth group. Hundreds of thousands of people have been allowed to enter the United States under the provisions of the Refugee Act of 1980. I talked to one such man recently who told a story of sorrow in leaving his native land. He started out with his wife and four children. He was the only one that made it alive. Some starved to death and others were killed in their escape attempt. His adjustment problems to a new land were made more difficult by the sorrow and the psychological adjustments necessary in his losses. Presently, few churches are equipped to handle such problems.

Large numbers of new languages are spoken within communities. Most longtime inhabitants have never heard these languages until recently. Often

we are called on to minister to people from countries in which our own church has no missionary experience. As an example, we now have a growing number of Cambodians meeting in various Nazarene churches across the United States and Canada. Few Nazarene Americans or Canadians know the Cambodian language or culture. Therefore, materials are difficult to obtain and training for new converts who wish to be ministers is limited. This is only one example of the complexity of the challenge facing us right now.

The ethnic challenge is a generalized one—ethnics are everywhere. The ethnic complexity of Florida, Texas, and California is much publicized. However, few communities escape the influx of both documented and undocumented immigrants. The challenge is immense. Add this to the gross neglect of resident cultural groups, the church faces a task like never before known.

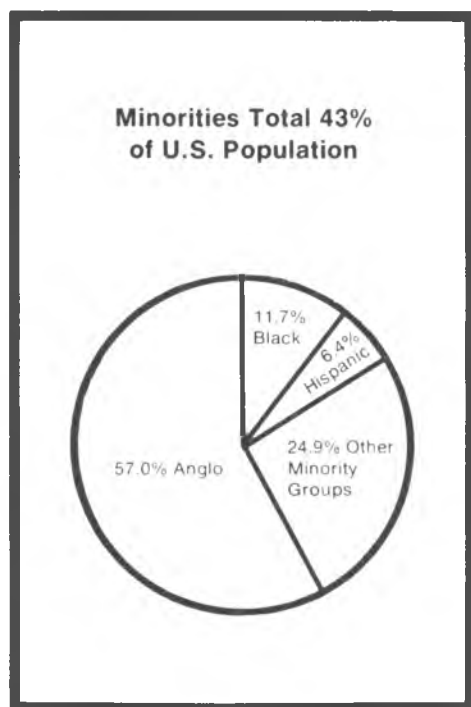
There has been a slowdown in "white flight." Economic conditions have made it impossible for people to move every time someone different moves into their neighborhood. Racially mixed neighborhoods are very common now. Most larger and smaller communities are a mixture of many different racial groups. Many people would look upon this as an advantage. However, it does create a complex situation for many churches. It is difficult for a church to single out one racial group among which they will minister. If they are going to reach their community, they must recognize the complexity of it.

In addition money is unavailable for new church buildings. Interest rates and availability of money keep us from necessary expansion. Churches that wish to help other racial and language groups start a ministry are finding it increasingly difficult because they cannot afford to rent, buy, or build new buildings.

Undocumented persons usually do not want to be contacted by the church or anyone else, especially if we wish to record their names on the Sunday School enrollment list or a membership roll. This, combined with their resistance to Protestant churches, makes it difficult to minister to these needy people.

But we must not rest in the problems. We must decide: Does God want us to win these ethnic and

EXPECT US TO WITNESS THESE STRANGE PEOPLE?



cultural groups in America? Of course, He does! Therefore, He must have solutions available for us if we will seek them. Each community must meet its own particular needs in a unique way. Some possible general steps toward solutions to your community problem might be found in the following.

STEPS TOWARD SOLUTIONS

1. It is most important to identify the need in a community. Identification of ethnic breakdown can partially be identified through the 1980 census. However, statistics may have changed drastically in the last two years because of the migration, immigration, and refugee influx. One should also check the Refugee Bureau, schools, churches, and other social activity centers. All of this will aid in identifying the ethnic and cultural makeup of a community.

2. Materials can be ordered to help in the organizational phase. For example, many helpful materials are available through the Nazarene Publishing House. These include helps on organizing ethnic congregations and forming committees necessary to put a plan to impact a community. Other

helpful books to assist a church or person facing a changing community are listed on page 11.

3. Form a Mission Action Committee. This is a group of interested individuals who would like to see the church meet the needs of its changing community. Study the needs and map out possible solutions, using the guidelines from such publications as the Mission Action Committee Extension Kit available through the Nazarene Publishing House. Of course, other denominations have similar materials to offer.

4. Offer yourself and your church to government agencies to teach English as a second language or host refugee families.

5. Recruit church people or college students who are fluent in the language of the people to be contacted. They will be effective ministers with the people in your vicinity who might not know English or prefer to have Bible lessons in their own language. Establish a Sunday School class or a weekday Bible class in that language with possible thoughts of forming this into a congregation in the future.

6. Tie into some of the specialized programs of the general church. An example of this is the Nazarene emphasis in the summer of 1983 for work in migrant camps. If there is any migrant activity in the designated area during the summer, a helpful program has been developed to meet the needs of these people and offer a chance for missionary service in your community.

7. A clear teaching of God's ownership of all church facilities will help to make members willing to share them with other ethnic groups. It is a dedication of those buildings for usefulness to reaching out to others that will result in God's blessing.

8. Prayer must be tied into the program from beginning to end. To reach the tremendous challenge we have before us, we must see miracles that parallel the magnitude of the miracles that Jesus performed while He was on earth; and miracles are dependent on prayer. These are miracles of relationships, miracles of facilities, and miracles of a breakdown in cultural barriers. Without the prayers and the resulting miracles, very little can be done.

Many churches are developing new and unique methods of meeting the challenge (through the guidance of the Holy Spirit). We *can* make the gospel available to all languages and cultures of North America.



Changing Ministries for Changing Communities

by Joseph N. Holloway
Lynwood, California

Pastors working in cross-cultural situations are frustrated. We have let our new field of harvest sneak upon us without preparation for effective evangelism, fellowship, and worship. Thus, initially, we suffer negative responses which develop into negative tendencies within our congregations toward whatever ethnic group we are approaching. The most common way this expresses itself is in the loss of membership, finances, personnel, and purpose of mission. This leads to a flagellating of both our local churches and pastors. We need some direction in order that the call of ministry may become a facilitator instead of the annihilator.

We must not yield to the temptation to give up on cross-cultural ministry. It is easy to be so prejudiced by our early failure in this kind of ministry that we want to walk away from it. On the other hand, those intoxicated by their love for cross-cultural ministry may not be able to see why the church should bother with any other type of ministry.

As usual, the pastor is the catalyst for progress. It is easy for the pastor who is active within a community to see the ethnic trends of his parish. He sees his church as one that should reflect his

community in order to be effective. He begins feeling the frustration and challenge concerning others who cannot understand his sermons, counseling, or even an invitation to church.

Children are easily gathered by the Sunday School busses, but "those" kids become the target of accusation (rightly so much of the time) when the building is damaged, classes disturbed, and worship interrupted. The only thing that is heard is debate about what to do with "them." Often the finger can be pointed at the pastor, for it is his efforts which brought "them." It may go so far as to request the pastor to stop bringing "them." On the other hand, the pastor and the congregation may be willing to try. Yet, the effort only brings damage to property, unproductive visitation with parents, and the feeling that if any adults do start coming it will not work because they have a church that is following its traditional patterns of worship, program, and evangelism.

This program, when put together with the other traditions of the culture we seek to reach, becomes another burden. Is it not a wonder that many attempts by pastors and congregations either fall by the wayside or become a continual struggle for existence?

It is at this time that overwhelming guilt of failure takes up permanent residence within our hearts.

How do we deal with these issues? How can a pastor and congregation sidestep these frustrations in order to have more effective ministry? There is no package of preproved, do-it-yourself gimmicks that can solve the problems while you sleep. But here are some ideas that may help.

Keep a Pioneer Mind-set

Keep the fact that you are pioneering your work constantly in your thinking, planning, and reflection. No two situations are the same. Thus, you cannot expect yours to be like some other operation. Pioneers do not think of success as instant numerical growth. Cross-cultural situations state success in terms of long-range goals.

Do not expect an overwhelming influx of new people, even if you hire an ethnic associate. Such an expectation is naive, and will lead to great frustration sooner or later—usually sooner. Remember you are dealing with a new set of norms in regard to life-styles. Therefore, do not expect every convert to begin to look, act, or think like you exactly. The good news of heart holiness is such



Joanne Meldrum

that it will speak within the culture, rather than change to your particular cultural pattern. Do not expect to be free of the burden by hiring an ethnic pastor. This practice of having the ethnic congregation in the same facility with their own pastor may help out but it has its own problems.

Pray and Plan

The most effective preparation that can be done is prayer. Praying for patience, mercy, long-suffering, joy, peace, love, goodness, gentleness, and self-control

will go a long way in terms of keeping your ministry anointed. Before you ever start cross-cultural ministry, be sure of God's calling in both the congregation and the pastor. Often there is need for at least two years of preparing the minds and hearts before the feet can go to work.

Evaluate Resources

The way to start any sensible approach to ministry is to analyze what you have to work with. Many factors are to be considered.

1. Assess the potential pro-

gram to see if it can be more of a need meeter.

2. Do your people have a sense of mission toward the changing community? Do your visions develop as a singular dream of the pastor, or do the laymen share this vision?

3. Consider the congregation's past experiences, if any, in cross-cultural ministry.

4. How are other churches in your area approaching this ministry? With what success?

5. What resources can you get to train your people to effectively work in this ministry?

6. What do you need to do to make cross-cultural ministry a reconciling tool, instead of trying to reconcile the reasons for ministry?

What Is Success?

The cross-cultural church measures its effectiveness in how well the program is functioning. Thus, if the program is not running as smoothly as a Rolls Royce—or at least a Toyota—everyone gets a failure complex. Normally the approach to counteract this problem is to work harder yourself (suffering for the sake of the church), and search for anyone who will fill the positions that are yet untouched. Soon the new high-pressured recruits become

frustrated. In most cases there is no one to train them. Most of the results are slow in coming. Some took the positions because of guilt feelings rather than spiritual gifts anyway. The program becomes such a difficulty that many a good worker is discouraged, especially if we give them the idea that only a picture perfect operation will succeed.

Relationships Outweigh Program

The program we carry must come as an outgrowth of our relationships with our people. We would like to think that everyone likes Sunday School, missionary meetings, and all the rest of our traditional programs. This assumption says that all we have to do is train them in our way of doing things. Yet, all too often this is not the way it works out. The key to programming cross-cultural ministry is to put relationships ahead of program. This concept will dictate how we reach out to our people. Instead of focusing on the number we have at any given activity, we are more concerned about how well we are bridging the gap between those we do have.

The success of this type of programming is dependent upon the laity's willingness to become learners as well as teachers. We must become missionaries by adoption. We learn our field by taking the initiative to become close to someone of the ethnic group to which we seek to minister. This allows us to know their personal needs, cultural idiosyncrasies, and religious expectations.

The program you construct will be one that is permeated with the dynamics of holiness that calls for loving your neighbor as yourself. One of the complex variables that the church has to deal with is the system of relationships. Each culture has a different set of roles for personal interaction. Should you expect someone to see the same issues in the same way you do, you will find yourself frustrated when attempting to solve any crisis.

Cross-cultural ministry becomes a new challenge to put

The success of this type of programming is dependent upon the laity's willingness to become learners as well as teachers.

your life under the authority of the Holy Spirit, who will transcend traditions, assumptions, and expectations of each culture.

Get People Involved in Decisions

Getting the people involved with the decision-making process is easy enough if you are well adjusted to the real needs of the community beforehand. One of the problems of churches which are in changing communities is that they tend to shelter themselves from the events going on about them. You will have to take extensive amounts of time to share one-on-one with your laity in order that they may become sensitive to the needs of those who normally would be alien to them. You must struggle through the prejudicial questions and preconceived ideas of most every person, both of your congregation and of those in the community.

Often you will find that the church will progress faster than the community in terms of acceptance of cross-cultural endeavors. Therefore, if these terms for ministry are put haphazardly together, you will find little success in building the bridge for relationships. As you can tell, this ministry takes time.

Look Out for "Used-tos"

The majority of early cross-cultural experiences that a congregation will have are negative. This is because of the lack of role models, sensitization, and terms of ministry that qualify as suc-

cess. After initial efforts the normal congregation is likely to return to more satisfying patterns. This shift in direction leads to a phenomenon that I have termed the case of the "used tos." We all suffer this in ministry, but I must confess that it carries more devastating effects in cross-cultural ministry. This case of the "used-tos" works on a set of subconscious principles that are virtually unknown to the person. What should we do?

Our remedy is one that the Lord has demonstrated already. We speak often of the incarnational activity of God in Jesus, and this is exactly where we shall find our model for ministry. How effective is someone who can put himself in the shoes of another in order to help him work through issues in his life? This is the same attitude we must have in order to relate to those of other cultures, and to find the answers we need to reach souls lost amidst the complexities of the city.

What I am proposing is not that we change our way of understanding things, or forget our feelings that we have carried with us from childhood. Rather, I would that all Christians grow beyond their normal limitations to become "all things to all men in order that some might be saved."

Talk to Each Other

John Wesley said that he received wisdom from much counsel. When cross-cultural workers get together to talk over certain problems, many alternatives come to life. Also, there is something to say about the supportive factor when we see someone else poring over the same problems with the same frustrations. I guess it's consoling to see each other in our bewilderment, and it's exciting to help each other broaden our horizons in cross-cultural ministry.

Don't Forget the Action Step

We move now to putting these observations into concrete action. How many of our people are trained to meet the needs that arise in each of these cross-cultural situations? Few, if any. It is

overwhelming to any pastor in the cross-cultural/city ministry to start assessing the needs of the community, church, and laity in such a way as to adequately meet them. Yet we must start with the laity and remember that God has chosen them to do the work we have before us. It is encouraging to meditate about God's supernatural ability, and we pray for that divine intervention. Sometimes each of us sits and wonders if it is possible. Bravely, we set out to tackle the task of leading these our brothers and sisters in Christ into fruitful ministry. We search high and low for material that is pertinent to our situation, to no avail.

I know of no better text than the Bible to teach these people to do their work with power and sureness. Professionally, the pastor or other laymen can take courses in colleges or seminaries in the field of missiology, sociology, and psychology. These will give a foundation to build upon, and many of our laymen are ready and willing to take this step if pastors will encourage it. Such studies, along with solid study of the Bible, will give occasion for dialog that otherwise might not occur. Always give the opportunity for dialog. This dynamic is almost unbelievably the mainstay of the congregation's future.

Let the laity take the initiative in developing and training each other through experiences and reflection. In addition, bring people experienced in cross-cultural ministry to talk to your congregation. Visit other churches of another culture, and seek opportunities that will bring the laity face-to-face with the needs. Take groups out for a visiting program with the contingency that time for a debriefing dialog about their feelings and experience will come immediately afterward. Work to see that everyone gets the freedom to express himself whether you like what you hear or not.


And in Conclusion Let Me Say . . .

Finally, we need to see the necessity to stop periodically to reflect upon what has been occurring in our ministry. Please do not

fall prey to the numbers game. Remember that we are more concerned about building relationships than attendance. I am not against attendance, but there are too many variables that will likely keep this from happening at first. Numbers will come in time. Do not be afraid to scrap a program. Just do not stop trying. We are too quick to grab on to one program, and then hold on for dear life.

It is my suggestion to organize a committee whose responsibility is to do one thing—reflect. The

danger in this process is to change too quickly. Set up criteria for change. Expect certain indicators for affirming your direction. Please do not make the mistake of using only board members or people who are rooted in the local church. The reflection process gives you an opportunity to use the talents of many people.

This type of ministry is demanding, but it is also rewarding. Remember that it is up to God to bring the harvest. We are but His laborers planting the seed. 

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4. Cole, Stewart Grant. *Minorities and the American Promise*. New York: Harper, 1954.
5. Craig, Ellison. *The Urban Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.
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7. Handlin, Oscar. *The Uprooted*. New York: Gosset and Dunlap, 1951.
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13. Tippet, A. R. *Bibliography for Cross Cultural Workers*. Pasadena: William Carey Lib., 1971.
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ETHNIC EVANGELISM

An Ethnic Pastor's Viewpoint

Greg Haleblan

A church growth principle, which perhaps is the most controversial and yet so crucial to the task of planting ethnic churches, is this: Individuals need not cross linguistic, social, class, or racial barriers in order to become Christians. This is based on, and is in line with, cross-cultural communication theories as well as on the conviction that the apostles laid no such demands on the early converts (see Acts 15). According to this theory, the biblical demands such as conviction for sins, confession, repentance, and sanctification are deemed enough hurdles for the convert to cross, and the communicator of the gospel need not add new and artificial ones to the list.

My purpose here is not to discuss the theological implications of this principle. Many have dealt with that problem already. My intention is rather to explore, within the short space allotted, the implications of this principle from the perspective of a member of a minority group, and make tentative suggestions for the Anglo church leaders who wish to use their churches as a base for winning the minorities.

This principle implies: (1) *THE ANGLO CHURCH cannot and should not assume it can carry out an effective evangelistic ministry to the minorities by inviting them to their church services.* Such efforts are doomed to fail from the start because the covert message involved in this approach to the target people is this: "Since you are living in

America you must worship God the way Americans do and go to God through our channels." But there are members of ethnic groups who are enjoying church services with the Anglos. What is my response to that? Two things: first, these people are the exceptions and not the norms; secondly, I am addressing my comments to leaders who are interested in *new converts*.

You may find many minorities who enjoy and attend Anglo churches, but my guess is that you will find very few individuals of a minority group actually converted in Anglo church settings.

The second implication of the principle is this: (2) *THE ANGLO CHURCH cannot and should not expect to plant successful ethnic churches unless the services are particularly tailored or designed to meet the ethos, or the worldview, of the target people.* Assuming that we have a church building ready for a new group (I say church building and not a fellowship hall, unless of course, it can be rearranged in such a way that it will fit the people's view of the house of God) the liturgy must be indigenous to the group in question. The type of hymns, the style of prayers, the kind of sermons, etc., must all be geared to meet the cultural patterns of the ethnic group.

True, there are situations where indigenous hymns or liturgies are scarce or not available at all. In such cases one has to improvise as best as possible. In a newly planted Armenian church which I have the privilege of pastoring,

out of western hymns translated into Armenian only those which have "Armenian flavor" and speak to the hearts of my congregation are sung. For example, "Onward Christian Soldiers" is out of the list not because it is theologically bad or wrong, but because it signals a warlike conquering spirit. Armenians who have been raised in the West may enjoy this song but those who have been living in the Middle East under Muslim rule and have all along been on the defensive, have difficulty appreciating such songs.

(3) *THE ANGLO CHURCH must look to indigenous leaders.* From the outset a Christian member of the target group must be located and invited to pastor. Whether this person is a layman or a trained minister will depend on the cultural pattern of the group in question. There are, of course, exceptions to this suggestion. In situations where no indigenous leadership is available, the Anglo church can provide a local person. I know an Anglo pastor who is ministering to an ethnic church and doing an excellent job; however, he is an exception. As a general rule, it is better to have a less-qualified indigenous person than a well-trained Anglo pastoring an ethnic church.

It goes without saying that these are neither the only guidelines nor the only solutions for planting ethnic churches. Every situation is so unique and complex that it requires a particular set of answers.



Where Is Samaria?

by Sylvester Ballard*

There was a young Black man who returned to the United States from fighting in a war. Before reaching his home state of Mississippi, he prayed a prayer and received an unusual answer. He said, *"Lord, I thank You for being with me in England, Germany, and Spain. Now, Lord, please give me a safe trip across the ocean to New York and all the way home to Mississippi. Please be with me as I go home."* The Lord said, "I have been with you in England and I cared for you in Germany, and I will protect you in New York, but I'm not going to Mississippi."

When I think about the missionary program of the Church of the Nazarene, I sometimes feel as if I heard an answer from God like that of the Black man in this story. We feel that God will be with us to spread the gospel in South America, Mexico, Africa, and India but that He will not really help us in certain parts of our own country. Many times I have heard preachers speaking from Acts 1:8 saying that Jerusalem represents home and we should start our witnessing there and move out to the rest of the world. Very little is said about the possibility of what

Judea and Samaria could represent in relation to our mission today.

WHERE WAS SAMARIA IN THE TIME OF CHRIST?

If a person looks at a map of Palestine he sees that Jerusalem, the place where Jesus told His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit, is located in Judea. In other words, Jesus was telling His disciples to start witnessing in the city and then move out from there. However, Jesus specifically named Samaria. He could have said, "Go throughout the land, east, west, north, and south." Jesus did not say that. He said "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

It is important to note that the disciples were not very interested in Samaria. Earlier in Jesus' ministry we find out that the disciples "entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him." The Samaritans "did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem." And

*Sylvester Ballard, a 1982 graduate of Nazarene Theological Seminary, is planting a new multiethnic church in Topeka, Kans. Under the auspices of the Fairlawn Church of the Nazarene, the old Monroe school has been obtained for use as a church. The Monroe school was the site of the controversy which led to the first test case carried to the U.S. Supreme Court that appealed to the court to make legal attendance at public schools by Black children.

when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:52-56).

It was not that the Samaritans did not like Jesus or His disciples but rather they did not like Jews. The woman at the well asked Jesus, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, asketh drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). We can accurately say that there was a racial problem between the Jews and the Samaritans. Jesus was aware of it and would not challenge His disciples to deal with it in their early ministry. He told them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5-6). Jesus knew the attitude of His disciples and He understood that they could not deal with the racial problem until they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus' later commandment to go to Samaria and deal with those people of another race was a must for the Spirit-filled disciples.

The Jews hated the Samaritans for a reason. The Samaritans were a racially mixed people. When the Northern Kingdom was captured many of the people were taken into exile, the remaining Israelites in the former Northern Kingdom intermarried with the Assyrians as well as with other Gentiles. When the Jews of the Southern Kingdom returned from Babylon and set out to rebuild the Temple, in Jerusalem, the Samaritans opposed them (Ezra 4:2; Neh. 2:19; 4:2). The Jews considered the Samaritans to be an unclean race. Both groups avoided each other. This attitude of not having anything to do with the Jews became a tradition that was strong during the time of Christ. In many cities in our country there are people who are left out of the main mission of the church for similar traditional reasons.

WHERE IS SAMARIA TODAY?

Some may disagree, but I believe that we have a Samaria in the mission of the Church of the Nazarene. That is to say, an area of the country, a type of people that we do not have any dealings with. A people that we have avoided for traditional reasons. They are the poor, Black Americans and other minority groups that are just across the railroad track. They are close by, but we have our reasons not to deal with them. We tell each other that many of the Black Americans are prejudiced against us. "They are not very clean—just look at their neighborhood. Many of them are involved with crime; check with the police department and you will find that it is true. There are many other places that the gospel is needed, so we will go somewhere else." The list could go on.

These may seem to be good reasons. If the Jews were asked to give reasons for their conduct, they could have given an excellent list. However, Christ was not interested in avoiding bad situations; He

was interested in changing them into good ones through the gospel. He knew that someone would make this tradition of avoidance (separation) an issue. He made it very clear before He left. The disciples were to receive the Holy Spirit. He gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised . . . you will be my witnesses in . . . Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:4, 8, NIV). We have a responsibility to minister to our Samaritans. This is a must for Spirit-filled Christians. We must witness to the poor, the Blacks, and other minority groups in our country.

WHO WILL GO TO SAMARIA?

In Acts we read that Philip went down to a Samaritan's city and proclaimed the gospel. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he performed they believed and were baptized (Acts 8:6, 12). I believe with all my heart that God will not allow us to fail in Samaria if we go there. God opened a door for Philip and He will open a door for us. However, Philip did not see the power of God at work until he went to his Samaria. God is still looking for some Philips who will go and be instruments for Him. He loves all people: the ones across town; the ones in the suburbs as well as the ones in the inner city. The Lord is looking for a person who is willing to say, "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

We started mission work in Africa in the early 1900s. However, the mission work among Blacks in the United States (especially in the southern states) did not start until the late 1940s. Why was it easier to go to Africa rather than just across the railroad tracks?

Generally, White Christians have had no dealings with their Samaritans. There is a tendency among Christians to keep to themselves. A person's religious and social life (including dating and marriage) tends to take place within the same church. By looking at the traditional approach of the Nazarene church, we see that there has been a fear among Whites that ministry to Blacks in this country would lead to mixing the two communities within the church. This was not seen as being good according to the tradition of being separate from Samaria. Yet we felt that it was important to be obedient to Jesus' commandment in Acts 1:8. We considered ourselves to be obedient by going to all the other parts of the world. Our work in Africa showed us that we could minister to Blacks without mixing the two communities together in the church. Our love was shown at a distance. We could love better with an ocean between us.

The scripture does not allow us the freedom to take this option. Christ has commanded us to go to Samaria as well as to the other parts of the world.

Now is the time for us to be truly obedient to the whole commandment of Christ in Acts 1:8. Are you willing to say yes to the call of God to go to your Samaria? You can go by giving yourself to prayer about this matter and promising God that you will be obedient to whatever He says.



CHURCH GROWTH IN CHANGING TIMES

An Interview with Peter Wagner

Wesley Tracy: I want to invite you to share in an informal dialogue with Dr. Peter Wagner. He is an outstanding leader in the Church Growth Movement, he is a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary and holds a Ph.D. degree in Social Ethics from the University of Southern California. Well, let's let him tell us about himself. Peter, would you tell us a little about your professional background and experience.

Peter Wagner: I think the most significant thing in my early Christian ministry was spending 16 years in Bolivia as a missionary along with my family. We worked in eastern Bolivia in general missionary work, in evangelism, and church planting. Our second term was spent teaching in the Bible Institute, our third term in directing the missions. In 1971 I returned to the U.S., accepting an invitation to teach at the Fuller Seminary School of World Mission. Simultaneously I became a vice-president of Fuller Evangelistic Association, which is a group which implements the kinds of theories that we work out in the more academic situation.

Tracy: I want to ask you some questions, from the Wesleyan view in general, and the Nazarene view in particular. As you see the Church of the Nazarene and other Wesleyan groups, what do we have going for us that would make us effective users of church growth principles?

Wagner: I think the most important thing that Wesleyans have going for them is that they have never lost the gospel. The gospel has always been present in the heart of Nazarene preaching, teaching, thought, and action, unlike certain other denominations which in recent years seem to have lost that cutting edge of the gospel. The Church of the Nazarene preaches the gospel and that, of course, is the very starting point of church growth. The second thing that is more characteristic of Wesleyan thought than Calvinistic thought is that there is a

very realistic facing of the human responsibility in carrying out God's will on earth. Certainly that is a very important dimension of church growth. We need to recognize that the Lord of the harvest is the Lord and that He produces the harvest. As Paul says, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." He gives the increase. He ripens the field, and yet He does not reap the harvest. He asks us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers. I feel that scripturally it is legitimate to say that the world will not be evangelized unless we evangelize it. I'm not trying to forget that this is done by the power of God, but it is also done by human agents whom God uses. One doesn't have to argue that point with Wesleyans.

Tracy: Do you see any particular obstacles that we need to overcome to make church growth principles effective in our circles?

Wagner: Well, I think there are some problems in the Church of the Nazarene. I think that one thing we have learned through the leadership of Dr. Hurn is that the rate of growth of the Church of the Nazarene has been declining in recent years. The church is still growing, but the declining growth rate of the 70s constitutes a danger sign, which I understand leadership is taking very seriously. I feel that one thing we can speak of, on a denomination-wide basis, is that the number of *new church starts* has not been keeping up with past patterns. I think this is probably the major reason for that decline in growth rates, and I think that by picking up new church starts, that this can fairly easily be overcome.

Now we realize that while we start new churches we also lose some in disorganized churches every year. I think that Nazarenes have to be a little more ruthless about disorganizing churches than they have been. I think they need to recognize that some churches, due to circumstances usually beyond control of the local church, are suffering terminal

illnesses. In many cases, if proper action is taken, these churches can, so to speak, die with dignity. This needs to be recognized and I think that Nazarenes have been feeling guilty about certain local situations that they need not feel guilty about at all.

Tracy: What other counsel do you have for us?

Wagner: Somehow the system has to be reorganized so that pastors have longer tenure. There is a relationship between pastoral longevity and church growth to a point. Churches that change pastors every three or four years won't grow. Your "super churches" tend to have "lifetime" pastors. Those pastors do not expect to leave their churches for the rest of their lives. If not lifetime tenure, then something in the order of 12 to 15 years would be a good target. That's better than what it is now.

Tracy: I think that 3 years and 1 month is now our average tenure.

Wagner: That's too bad because as Lyle Schaller teaches us, the effective years of a minister usually begin between years four and six.

Tracy: It seems to me, from my knowledge of the church growth materials, that probably the most controversial thing is the homogeneous unit concept. I think nothing in the whole movement has been more misunderstood. In fact, I know that in some places it has really been used to sanctify our flight to the suburbs which I know is a distortion of the homogeneous unit principle. Would you just tell us whatever it is you think we need to know about the homogeneous unit principle?

Wagner: Yes. Unfortunately, some people have taken the homogeneous unit principle and used it contrary to God's will. The homogeneous unit principle is just a tool; it is not a doctrine or a dogma. It has been found to be a useful instrument for world evangelization. Like any tool, people can take it and use it for evil as well as for good. For example, a group from South Africa taped Dr. Ralph Winters' address at the Lausanne Conference and played it on the radio to prove that Lausanne was justifying apartheid. That was the farthest thing from his mind. The homogeneous unit principle is a way of looking at the world in its natural groups of peoples. It's seeing the world in terms of "peoples." The gospel spreads not individual by individual, not country by country, but between those two extremes, people by people. Each country has many, many different peoples or, as we call them, homogeneous units. We calculate roughly that there are still 16,750 peoples in the world today that have not yet received the gospel. E-2 and E-3 evangelism has to be done to plant the gospel in those cultures. We must plant the gospel among them in a way that turns out to be relevant to their culture. That is without all the excess cultural baggage that many missionaries carry in, actually confusing the gospel with the culture of the missionary.

Tracy: A homogeneous unit could be a racial unit, it could be a vocational unit, such as coal miners, or



Jim West

something like that. Further it is simply a strategizing tool for evangelism.

Wagner: Can I give you a formal definition of what we mean by a homogeneous unit?

Tracy: Yes, I'd like that.

Wagner: This is a Lausanne Committee definition. "A people is a significantly large sociological grouping of individuals who feel a common affinity for one another." There are many groups of people who feel a very, very strong affinity for certain others. For example, we recently discovered in Los Angeles that there are 5,000 gypsies. Now, those 5,000 gypsies constitute a homogeneous unit. They know each other, they have communications networks, they have their own social clubs, they have their own marriage patterns, they have their own styles of dress, and that in itself means that we need to evangelize gypsies in a way that we would not evangelize, let's say, Jews or Mexicans. It's a different homogeneous unit. Now, this is not always determined just by national origin. Gypsies don't even know where they come from, but they all speak the Romany language.

Look at the Hispanics. Now, Hispanics are very prominent in America, but among Hispanics, Cubans, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans form separate groupings and they feel common affinities for their own subgroup. Cubans do not feel very much affinity toward Mexicans; they feel much more toward Cubans. Again, third and fourth generation

Mexicans living in America form a kind of people different from those who have recently immigrated, in particular the undocumented aliens.

All these groups have different needs. They can't be expected to reach each other. They must be evangelized, each group in their own terms. So this is more or less what we mean by the application of the principle.

Tracy: Alright, somewhere, then, E-2 evangelism has to occur. Let's assume the gypsy community in Los Angeles has no evangelical witness. Should we feel responsible for an E-2 effort here?

Wagner: Yes, definitely. The Great Commission tells us that we must preach the gospel to every creature. We must preach it, but we must preach it effectively. Now, if my church, which is an upper-middle-class Anglo-American church, thinks they are going to evangelize gypsies and bring them into the kind of worship service we have, we have a no-win situation. We will be confusing E-1 methodology with an E-2 situation. We would have to move in and either learn the Romany language or identify with the gypsies in some way or preach to them and then allow them to form their own church. Now, happily, God has blessed and there already is a gypsy church of 300 members. And it's a church quite different from, let's say, the Church of the Nazarene. For example, in their Communion service they serve a large glass of real wine. They do a lot of things we don't.

Tracy: Our typical mistake in an E-2 situation is to be paternalistic. We want to get in there and run everything and teach them how to do everything our way. And we've made that mistake again and again, to the detriment of the Kingdom, I'm sure.

Wagner: That's one of the greatest obstacles to the spreading of the gospel. It reminds me of Methodist missionaries who went to evangelize the Kiowa Indians. I understand that when some Kiowa men decided to follow Jesus one of the missionaries said, "Now, the first thing you have to do is cut your hair." So they cut their hair. And then they were told, "Now, you have to put shoes on, because we only worship God with shoes on." So they put shoes on. Then they told them, "Now, you'll have to tie up your necks on Sunday to worship God." So they learned how to put string ties around their necks, which many of them still use. And then they were told, "We worship God inside houses." So they went in the church. As soon as they went in the church there they saw a portrait of a man on the wall with long hair, a loose flowing robe, preaching barefoot in the open air.

Tracy: Not even a necktie.

Wagner: Not even a necktie, and they became a little confused. That's just one little illustration of the way many missionaries confuse their own culture with the gospel and become very paternalistic.

Tracy: One problem which faces one Nazarene church after another, is what you would call *ethnic-*

itus. It frequently starts in a white church. The poor people in a white area get saved. They start paying their tithe and sending their children to college. "Redemption and lift" occurs. Now the old neighborhood isn't good enough anymore—especially if another racial group begins to move in. Their attempts at ministering to the changing community meet with a great deal of failure. They simply don't know how to handle the problem. What are the options for a church that's suffering from *ethnicitus*?

Wagner: Well, first they need to recognize the fact that *ethnicitus* generally is caused by what we label local contextual factors, which means that the cause is beyond the control of the local congregation. They need to recognize the fact that they should not feel guilty about this any more than a human being should feel guilty about getting leukemia. They can't control it. Also, they have to recognize that *ethnicitus is terminal*; that the church is going to die. Now, what they do about this determines whether they die with dignity, or whether they go out kicking and screaming.

Unfortunately, too many churches have gone out kicking and screaming and not being a blessing to the kingdom of God. The options are: first the church can die a lingering death. I don't think that's a very good option. I think that's the kicking and screaming kind of a thing. The second option is to change the philosophy of ministry of the church so it becomes a mission, and so in a sense the church uses its human and financial resources to meet the social needs of the people who have moved into the neighborhood. And that's a good thing to do. The church will die, but as it dies, it will pour out its own lifeblood to help the people socially. In cases like that, not too much evangelism has resulted when this has been experimented with, but it's still one way to die with dignity.

Another option is to move out. And many churches choose it. They either merge with other churches, or relocate as a unit. In one sense you might say that that's not dying because the church isn't a building, it's people. But as far as the community is concerned, if they move out, the church is dead; there's no more church, there are no more people.

And then the fourth option which I think is the best of all, is to make a transition. A transition may be called a complete blood transfusion. Get rid of the old blood and fill it up with new blood. That is, the people change the whole nature of the church so that the new congregation, the new leadership, the new people, the new evangelistic program is made up of people who now live in the neighborhood, not those who commute in from the outside. And this has been done in many cases in the Church of the Nazarene. I think by far this is the best route. The old congregation is not there anymore, but a new one is. It's still a Church of the Nazarene, or whatever, it's still preaching the gospel, it's still preaching holiness, but is preaching it in a way that it could be understood and accepted by the new people in the community. The older congregation never could have done that.

Tracy: I want to ask you a question about spiritual gifts. Twenty years ago we were teaching our people that everybody had to be a soul winner, an evangelist. We made everybody feel guilty if they couldn't win souls to Christ in the cafeteria line, in the taxi cab, or even the rest room. We all went dashing out with the "Four Spiritual Laws," or our version of them, thinking we had the answer. Now we've gone to the extreme and some people have recruited the doctrine of spiritual gifts to say, "Oh, I don't have the gift of evangelism," and so they simply do not witness anymore and don't feel guilty about it at all. It seems to me that the most frequent "I don't have the gift" evasion deals with this matter of soul winning and witness for Christ. Is that not a misinterpretation of the spiritual gifts doctrine?

Wagner: Well, the pendulum swings back and forth. I think you described two extremes of the pendulum. I think that the old idea of saying that everyone is an evangelist, is an extremely counterproductive idea for church growth besides being unbiblical. To use the doctrine of spiritual gifts as a copout for effective evangelism is equally counterproductive and unbiblical. I think there's a middle ground where people have to distinguish between the *gift* of evangelism and the *role* of witness. I think we need to teach Christian people that every Christian is a witness. I think that every one of our church members should be trained in a witnessing program and consider that part of being a Christian, just as much as tithing, prayer, or worship. However, it appears that about 10 percent of Christians have been given a special gift from God, the gift of evangelism.



"If You're the New Pastor, Will You Take This In? It Goes with the Job."

The people with the gift of evangelism should be put to work. I think they should have structured time in which they witness and bring people to Christ. Those that don't have the gift of evangelism, but only the role of witness should be instructed to concentrate on discovering what spiritual gift they do have. Because if they don't have the gift of evangelism, they have some other gift. They must use them too. For the new converts the evangelists bring into the church won't stick unless the other gifts are operating.

Tracy: Peter, there is nothing as far as I can find in my examination of the church growth literature that conspires against the primacy of preaching. However, the church growth persons don't say a lot about preaching. Would you comment on the relationship between strong pulpits and church growth?

Wagner: It just so happens that I was talking to Oscar Reed about that today, and because of his interest in preaching at the seminary, naturally he was very much interested in what I would say about that. It is true that we don't say much about preaching. A basic reason for this is that not much research has come in on the relationship of preaching to church growth. We need a lot more work on this. We need to find out how these two things relate. I have a few hunches that we'll find that, depending on the philosophy of ministry of the church, preaching will be significant in some cases and less significant for others.

I mentioned to Dr. Reed that the Sojourners community in Washington, D.C., for example, probably gives little weight to preaching. That's not their thing. But Garden Grove Community Church could not have grown the way it has without very strong preaching—the pulpit is central in that church. Some churches are side door churches and some churches are front door churches. Front door churches depend heavily on preaching, typically. Side door churches depend much more on the working of other evangelistic dynamics rather than preaching itself.

Recently, I had some evidence that preaching may well be the key to growth in Black churches. I think it is much more significant in Black churches across the board, than it is in White churches across the board as a key growth factor. I would like to see some people tackle this and give us the information we need to be able to answer this question.

Tracy: Is there any other message you feel Nazarene pastors ought to hear before we close our session?

Wagner: I am very optimistic about the future growth of the Church of the Nazarene. The Church of the Nazarene is far ahead of any other denomination in America in denomination-wide application of church growth principles.

Tracy: Thanks again, Dr. Wagner; it's our privilege to have you here.



MEASURING RECEPTIVITY AND RESISTANCE TO CHURCH GROWTH

by Lyle E. Schaller

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I really have only one additional question I would like to explore with you," declared Sam Wilson, chairman of the pulpit committee of the 67-year-old Westminster Church. "That is church growth. We're down to 80 or 90 at worship on Sunday morning. We used to average well over 150 and our sanctuary will seat 235 including the choir. I believe God is calling our church to grow, and I want to be sure our next minister is interested in church growth."

The seven members of this committee had been interviewing the Rev. David Morrison for nearly an hour when Sam asked his question. It was increasingly obvious that the other members of the committee were favorably impressed with David. Unless something unexpected developed, it appeared they were prepared to recommend the congregation extend a call to Rev. Morrison to become their next pastor.

"I'm very committed to the concept of church growth," replied David. "The congregation I am now serving had 142 members when I arrived six years ago. We now have 236. During those six years we received an average of nearly 30 members a year. I keep up on church growth literature. I think my record demonstrates that I have an active interest in church growth."

"Your record is one of the reasons I voted to invite you to come for an interview," affirmed Joan Clayton. "I'm with Sam. Our church has to reverse this decline of recent years and begin to grow. When I read your dossier, I decided maybe you're the minister we've been looking for."

"One of the reasons I feel God may be leading me to come to Westminster is that I am very much interested in church growth," continued David. "I believe the Lord has given me some special talents in that area and I think Westminster has the potential for significant growth in the years just ahead. That's why I accepted your invitation to come for an interview."

"Well, I guess that just about clinches it," concluded Sam Wilson. "Does anyone else have any questions?"

"Yes, I have one," said David to the surprise of Sam, who had not even thought about the candidate's right to ask questions during the interview. "What's the degree of receptivity among the folks here at Westminster to the idea of church growth? Some congregations this size show a lot of resistance to church growth. What's the picture here?"

"I don't know how in the world you could measure that," replied Sam, "but I think we can assure you of our sincerity. We all want this church to grow!"

David raised an extremely significant question, but he did not receive a satisfactory response. Do the members of Westminster truly want to see that congregation reverse the numerical decline of recent years and become a larger congregation? What questions could David Morrison have raised that might have produced a more accurate assessment of the receptivity, or the resistance, to church growth?

While they are far from infallible, there are some questions David might have asked to shed light on the degree of receptivity or resistance to numerical growth at Westminster. If he had raised these questions, David might have risked offending Sam Wilson, who "knew" that every member wanted Westminster Church to grow, but David would have had a better basis on which to assess what he had heard during that interview.

1. WHAT IS THE MEDIAN TENURE? If limited to only one question, the one that might be the most revealing would be, "What is the median tenure of today's members? One-half of today's members joined before a certain date and one-half joined since that date. *What is the date?*"

In the long-established congregation, that date is often a predictor of the church's receptivity to new members. If the date is less than 7 years ago, it is probably a congregation with a high degree of receptivity to new people. If the date is 7 to 12 years ago, the level of receptivity and of resistance to new people probably is near average. If, however,

“If more than one-half of the members joined the church less than seven years ago, the congregation is probably highly receptive to new people.”

more than one-half of today's members have been members of a congregation for more than a dozen years, it often suggests a deterioration of the ability to reach, attract, and assimilate new members. At Westminster the median tenure date was 16 years ago. That might have warned David not to take Sam Wilson's assurances too literally.

2. WHAT IS THE AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP? The second best predictor of an openness to church growth often is the worship attendance figure. First, what is the number? In general, the larger the average attendance at Sunday worship, the greater the receptivity of that congregation to new members. The smaller the number, the greater the resistance. A 700-member congregation must receive 50 to 80 new members annually to remain on a plateau. Such a large number usually means the congregation has at least an average level of competence in reaching, attracting, and assimilating new members. The regular “practice” of reaching and including new people tends to increase, or at least maintain, that level of competence. By contrast, the congregation receiving only 2, 3, or 4 “outsiders” annually has little chance to practice and improve its skills in effective evangelism.

Many smaller churches tend to be closed fellowships that do not make room for newcomers. This natural, institutional resistance to growth in the small church is one reason a third of all Protestant congregations on this continent average fewer than 45 people in attendance at the Sunday morning worship service.

Perhaps of even greater significance is the tendency for many congregations to find and then remain on a very comfortable plateau in size. There are three different size congregations that tend to display considerable resistance to growth. The most numerous are the thousands of small churches that average less than 35 at worship. The second largest group is composed of congregations that average 70 to 85 at worship and remain on that plateau for decade after decade. Many once were larger, but gradually have declined and eventually leveled off on this plateau. Westminster Church fits into such a category. The third plateau is the congregation averaging 175 to 200 at worship and served by a full-time pastor, but no other program staff. This size church usually requires additional program staff assistance if it is to grow and sustain that growth, but too often the members believe they cannot afford additional staff. Sometimes the attendance climbs up to 220 or so, but a few years later it usually is back to the 175 to 200 plateau.

3. WHAT HAS BEEN THE TREND? A third and closely related predictor of the receptivity or resistance to church growth is the trend of average attendance at Sunday morning worship *for the past dozen years*. If the curve is up, that often means receptivity. If it is down, or the same year after year, that often suggests a significant degree of resistance.

4. HOW MANY NEWCOMERS? How many new members have been received annually for each of the past several years? That total includes all members received by baptism, confirmation, profession of faith, restoration, and transfer. If that figure is less than 12 percent of the membership in urban (or 10 percent in rural) churches, it usually suggests some resistance to church growth. If the figure drops below 5 percent or 6 percent, it probably indicates considerable resistance. Remember, this is the *gross* not the *net* figure for new members being received. For our purposes, this often is a more revealing figure than the annual net increase.

5. WHO ARE THE POLICYMAKERS? The fifth yardstick for measuring receptivity or resistance to church growth is a bit more complex. First, it is necessary to discover the median tenure of the membership as described earlier. At Westminster Church this was 16 years. Second, it is necessary to discover the median tenure of the leaders who function as policymakers. This is only a fraction of the total number of workers and leaders and is restricted to those who influence, either officially or unofficially, church policies and directions. At Westminster Church one-half of the 18 members who fit into this category had been members at Westminster for more than 21 years.

The basic generalization is that when the median tenure of the policymakers is longer than that of the membership, that usually indicates resistance to the assimilation of new people and resistance to accepting newer members into influential leadership roles. When the median tenure of the policymakers is less than that of the entire membership, that often suggests a receptivity to new members.

6. HOW OLD IS THE INSTITUTION? New churches are more likely to be growing than are long-established ones. Beneath that broad generalization are two other points. First, as congregations pass their seventh or eighth birthday, they often begin to develop a resistance to new members. Second, the longer the congregation has been in existence, and especially the longer it has been meeting in its present building, the greater the resistance to church growth. That is one reason David Morrison

should have noted that Westminster Church is 67 years old.

7. STAFFING. While it is more obvious in the larger congregations, one of the key variables in measuring the potential for growth is the quantity of program staff. This is especially significant in congregations that have passed their 25th birthday. Most of these long-established churches are staffed either for decline or for remaining on a plateau in size. They simply do not have the number of staff members necessary for growth. A simple rule of thumb, for example, is the long-established congregation averaging 300 at worship needs two full-time professional staff members (or the equivalent in part-time staff) to remain on a plateau in size and three to grow, *in addition* to part-time music, clerical, secretarial, and custodial staff. It should also be noted that most of the thousands and thousands of congregations that share a pastor with one, two, three, or four other congregations are staffed only to serve the current members, not for growth.

In a smaller congregation, such as Westminster Church, the staffing question first will focus on the addition of secretarial help. Would Sam Wilson be willing to add a half-time church secretary if and when the average attendance climbs back up to 135? Would the church be willing to take on a second full-time minister, perhaps in the area of evangelism/church growth, when attendance first reached 300? Those are two questions David Morrison could have asked to test the receptivity or resistance to church growth.

8. HOW IS THE GROUP LIFE? One of the most complex, but also one of the most revealing questions for David to raise concerns the “group life” of the congregation. This question has four facets.

First, how many organized face-to-face adult groups exist where members find participation in the group uniquely meaningful? The growing church usually will have six or seven adult groups (choirs, circles, classes, and other organizations) per 100 members.

Second, has the number of these organized face-to-face groups been increasing in recent years? Declining churches usually reveal a decrease in the number of these adult groups.

Third, when were the last two, three, or four such groups organized? Growing churches around 200 usually create at least two new face-to-face adult groups every year. In larger churches that may mean seven, eight, or more new groups are organized annually.

Fourth, and most subjective of all, what is the health of these groups? Are they vital and vigorous groups that members look forward to attending? Or are they tired and dull groups that members attend largely out of a sense of duty?

9. CUT BACK OR EXPAND? Closely related to the last question is another organizational issue that closely reflects receptivity to church growth . . . the “cut back/expansion syndrome.”

Which has been the basic pattern in recent years . . . to cut back on the number and variety of face-to-face groups or to expand them? To cut back on the budget or to increase it? To cut back on paid staff or to gradually increase it as the congregation grows? To cut back from two Sunday services to one, or to add an alternative service Thursday night or Saturday evening? To reduce the number of choirs or expand the number? To merge two adult classes or to create a new one? To reduce the number of circles in the women’s organization or to organize a new one for younger women? To cut back on events and activities directed at non-members, or to increase them?

10. WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES? Another revealing question David might have asked the committee in determining their receptivity—and the church’s—to growth could have been, “What do you folks believe should be the top priority of your new minister’s time and energy in the first year?”

He might have heard responses such as, “Visit in every member’s home at least once,” or “Call on all the shut-ins as soon as possible,” or “Help us get our budget balanced,” or “Work with the youth,” or “Rebuild the Sunday School,” or “Try to heal the split in the church over the last minister’s departure,” or “The first priority should be on sermon preparation and getting ready to lead worship—that is the primary reason we exist,” or “See what can be done to revitalize the Men’s Fellowship.” These are all normal, predictable, and common demands on the time and energy of a newly arrived minister. They also reflect a resistance to church growth.

Or, David might have heard responses such as “Getting our evangelism committee organized and functioning,” or “Call on the inactive members and find out why they are inactive,” or “Call on as many prospective new members every week as possible,” or “Organize a new adult class in the Sunday School,” or “Help the women’s organization grow,” or “Introduce more new members into policy-making positions,” or “Cultivate the people in the community who are not active in a church.” These responses suggest a much greater receptivity toward church growth.

11. WHAT IS THE LEVEL OF SELF-ESTEEM? Last, but not necessarily the least useful of these 11 questions for assessing the receptivity or resistance to church growth, is the level of congregational self-esteem. It is not uncommon for one of two self-perpetuating patterns to exist. The first, and more widespread, is for the congregation to see itself as small, weak, diminishing, unattractive, frustrated, powerless, and with a limited future. This low self-image often produces a series of policies and decisions that inhibit church growth.

By contrast, some congregations view the future with hope, they are conscious of their strengths, resources, and gifts. They see themselves as vehicles for God’s work in the world; they exude enthusiasm and optimism; they feel a strong urge to share the Good News with everyone around them;

and they are convinced God is at work in His Church and, therefore, all things are possible. This strong self-image usually produces a favorable climate for growth.

While it is not always easy to determine the level of self-esteem, frequently this is a very significant indicator of the receptivity or resistance to church growth.

"WHAT IF . . . ?" What if David Morrison concludes there is a low degree of receptivity to church growth at Westminster—or even worse, a high level of resistance—but that God is urging him to accept the call to become the next pastor of this 67-year-old congregation? What should he do? How should he arrange the priorities on his time and energy in that first year or two? Can he change the situation?

If David does find himself in this congregation where there is considerable institutional resistance to church growth, he might consider a three-part strategy designed to change the organizational context and increase the receptivity to church growth.

The first step would be to organize a serious study of the New Testament that would include 8 to 15 leaders from Westminster. These members would covenant together to engage in a 30- to 40-hour study of the New Testament definition of the nature of the worshipping congregation and of its evangelistic role. It probably would be wise for David to serve as the leader of that study group and

it should be organized within the first several months after his arrival.

The second step would be to encourage the participation of at least 20 leaders at Westminster in a series of seminars on church growth. In these events church leaders would be exposed to some of the basic principles of church growth. It usually is more effective if this learning experience is led by an outside authority and includes persons from other congregations. Members get a chance to hear "growth" from an outside source, and the experience shared by other churches helps members see they're not the only church concerned with growth.

The third step would be to plan a congregation-wide event that would enable all of the members at Westminster to be introduced to church growth principles. This might be planning a weekend seminar on church growth at Westminster or it might be in the form of two or three evening programs in which a series of church growth films were shown and discussed.

This three-part strategy is an effective response when the assessment of the congregational response to church growth reveals a high degree of resistance. The beginning point is to reduce that resistance and begin building a new consciousness for growth.



From Church Growth-America, May-June, 1981. Used by permission.

THE RIGHT TIME FOR TIME OFF

by Larry Haffey

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Two days before Christmas. I was exhausted, discouraged with my church, taking my frustrations out on the members, and causing friction in my family.

December had begun on a positive note, when our church experienced an inspiring revival. But, after that first week—one member arrested for child abuse, a death, a couple of fractured marriages, illness, and the special demands of the Christmas season had pushed me to my limit.

The outlook for the immediate time after Christmas didn't look any easier. I could see endless lists of labor and more frustration looming. Earlier in the month, I had considered a few days off after Christmas, maybe the possibility of going on a short trip. Now that seemed impossible.

One morning during my time of meditation, my outlook concerning the time off changed. I knew what I must do in order to follow the Lord's guidance. The day after Christmas our family packed and the next morning left for a five-day vacation.

During that five days away, I began to visualize my church in a whole new perspective. Problems looked more solvable, people more lovable, and I had a newfound enthusiasm for the year ahead.

During the revival which I mentioned earlier, the evangelist said that he found no sympathy in his heart for ministers who wearily complain about weeks of effort without time off. I agreed, for in a previous career as an engineer, I learned that costly mistakes were often made by men who had

worked too long at a task. Very few businesses involved in critical work will permit an employee to work long weeks with no day off.

In this enlightened age, we have come to understand more about the limits of the human body, hence there has been encouragement for us to take periods of rest. But we ministers somehow have the notion that we must continue on in our tasks, laboring long hours with no time off, to prove our commitment to the Lord. I believe that there are definite times when we must stop and change scenery, or we risk destroying everything we have accomplished.

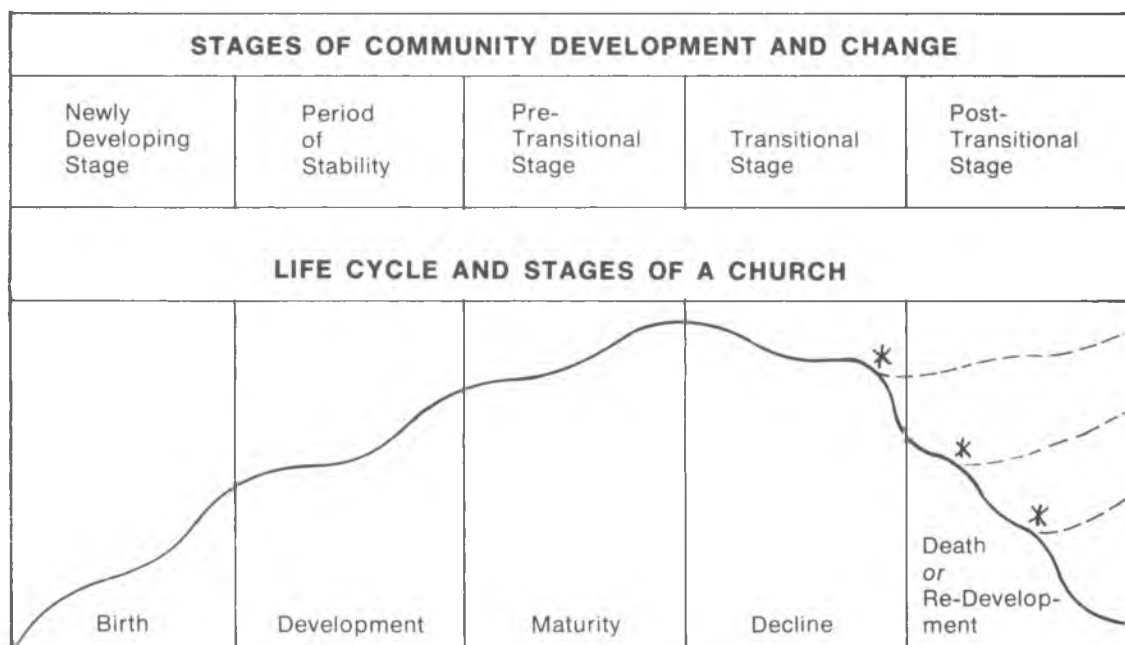
As we pray, let us ask God to show us the right time for time off.



WHERE IS YOUR CHURCH IN THE LIFE CYCLE?

by Jere Allen and George Bullard

Every church that has ever existed has had a life cycle and various stages of development and change. For many churches, this life cycle and its stages tend to follow the stages of community development and change.



Birth

Churches begin with a birth which represents the initial living out of a dream of what could be in terms of a particular church or mission in a given setting. The people gathered to form the church have a goal-inspired impression of why the new church is being established and what ideals, in terms of spiritual and institutional development, it will seek to reach.

The birth of a new church theoretically conforms to the newly developing stage of a community. Chronologically, the birth of the church may come as the community develops or it may come later. Particularly when a church is a neighborhood church, as opposed to a special purpose church, it will be reflective of what is occurring in the community around it.

Many new churches will experience some initial numerical growth and then plateau for a while. This early pattern of stairstep growth will be the pattern of growth and decline for the church throughout its history.

The birth period of a church continues for several years and its end is generally accomplished when it has: (1) constituted as a church, (2) moved into a permanent building, and (3) called its first full-time pastor. There will be many variations of this theme, with the above three as guidelines to follow.

Development

As a church enters the development stage, it wrestles with its spiritual norms and beliefs and seeks to discover that which is important to it as a congregation. A spiritual and programmatic theme will begin to emerge for the church. A set of objectives will be commonly agreed upon by the charter members and others of similar thinking who have been attracted to the church.

When the church discusses its mission, questions are asked like, "Now that we are obtaining a certain size and stability, what will be our motivating spiritual objectives as a congregation?" This question will be made possible by the numerical growth which marks the development stage. It leads the church to think not only about spiritual objectives but also about building a second and maybe a third building unit, plus the hiring of staff members. The motivation is to fulfill the dream sparked at the beginning of the church.

Toward the end of the development stage, the exact details of the founding will take shape in an environment without unusually rapid changing community dynamics; this period may last as long as a generation. It will probably conform to the period of stability in the life of the community around the church facility.

Maturity

The pinnacle for the church, in the traditional sense, is its period of maturity where it is living out the work of which the original dream of the congregation was conceived. At this point the church may be at or near its numerical height, have completed or be within one building project of completing its master plan for its facilities and property, and have a multiple staff to carry out its spiritual and programmatic goals.

The charter members of the church are now in retirement or have died, and the community around the church is either continuing its period of stability, or is showing signs of transition in pretransitional form. This pre-transition in the community may not have obvious ramifications in the church, as the life cycle stages of the church will tend to occur several years behind the same cycle in the community. Simply because the community experiences transition does not mean that a church will immediately see internal transition occurring. A church is

more of a controlled environment than the community around it.

Decline

The second half of the life cycle of a church is a time of decreasing opportunities in regard to the old community. It will begin with a period of decline, brought about by internal and/or external transition within the church. Why a church begins to decline is a complicated issue. Some of the partial issues related to this decline are as follows:

- As a result of community transition, the church no longer has a sufficient number of prospects from the target group it has successfully reached in the past.
- The original dream of the church has been substantially accomplished, and there is not a dream present which is sufficient to carry the church into the next generation.
- The general church membership and perhaps the ministerial staff decided at some point that the church was large enough and ceased the promotion of outreach and evangelism. This did not affect the church for several years until attrition by death and household mobility began to affect the active membership.
- Internal conflict resulted in the loss of some members, and a negative tone and/or a negative image for the church.
- The church has become a "stalled church" which resists change, holds on to organizational paralysis, fears the future, and lacks direction.¹

One or more of the above issues can be present in a declining church along with other unnamed issues of which a particular church will be aware.

As a church begins to decline, it reaches the first of several points of evaluation, at which time the church may choose to dream a new dream for its future. This point of evaluation many times occurs during a numerical plateau following a period of decline. If the church seizes this opportunity for major, positive reflection upon its future, it can recycle itself numerically and institutionally.

Sometime after a church allows several opportunities of redreaming its dream to pass, it will experience operational doubt as it tries to discover why the current programs are not working well. This can bring about a major period of scapegoating which seeks to declare the pastor, the ministerial staff, and/or a certain set of laypersons as the "villains" of the church's decline. Usually this is unjust and leads primarily to negative results.

Further decline and missed opportunities may bring ideological doubt and such questions as, "Is this a good idea to continue this way?" By this time, even Sunday morning only attenders have noticed a significant decline in attendance; building maintenance tasks of a minor and major nature have been delayed indefinitely; and, the reduction of the size of the ministerial staff has been considered and/or carried out.

Redevelopment or Death

A church that takes advantage of a point of evaluation will be like a transitional community which is in reality a newly developing community in disguise. It will dream a new dream, set out on a new period of development, and recycle as a church.

This redevelopment is more difficult and requires more resources the farther a church declines, before attempting to turn around. The church may reach a place where it has existence without real life and thus death would be an act of mercy.

Prior to the death of a church it will experience ethical

doubt, and decide that it is a bad idea to continue as an institutional church. The closer a church comes to the point of ethical doubt, the more limited are its options and opportunities.

It must be emphasized that a church does not have to die, but can dream a new dream. Hopefully, many churches will find themselves living in new forms and with a new sense of direction.

Emotions of the Second Half of a Church Life Cycle

A few words need to be said concerning the emotions a church will experience during the second half of its life cycle, because this is the situation of many churches in changing communities.

The emotions with which a church in a changing community must deal are similar to those experienced by individuals who feel they are dying, as explained by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross in her book, *On Death and Dying*.²

Let's briefly examine the stages of death reality along the phases of a transitional church.

The first phase or stage is that of denial, independence, and isolation. A church will deny the existence of possible terminal conditions such as ethnicitis and affirm a will to live. Laypersons will exclaim a need for a revival similar to the ones that used to characterize the church. Pastors will proclaim that people are not as receptive to the gospel as they used to be. Everyone will declare the need for more of "our kind of people" to be present in the community so that the pews of the church may be filled on Sundays.

Deep emotional anger, rage, envy, and resentment characterize the second stage. This conforms to the period of scapegoating. This will be a crucial emotional point for the church. If the church can come through this period with a healthy direction for its anger, then the church may gather sufficient resources to master the challenge of change. An unhealthy response may point to continued decline and eventual death for the church, without a major institutional change.

Stage three is one of bargaining. "Every trade-off for space, program, pastor's time, and budget support is essentially a bargain for time."³

The final stage of depression represents the low energy subsistence level of survival for a church. This point may be briefly followed either by death or revolutionary redevelopment. However, death may not be immediate as many congregations hang on for as long as a generation at this level.

Survival has now become a crucial issue, and the church may consider the options of merging, relocating, and disbanding. Other options might be considered by the church if presented to them in an effective way by an outside resource person.

The options facing the church in a transitional community include:

1. *Remain—Without Change*

In this option the church in the changing community strives to regain past statistical successes by redoubling its efforts with the same methods and structures used in past years, before the community began to change. The problems are ignored in the hope that they will go away; the new opportunities are not seen because there is an orientation toward the past. This is an untenable option, but is included in this list for the sake of comprehensiveness and because it is so often tried.

2. *Remain—But Adopt a "Two-Community" Concept*

One community is those who are attracted to the regular worship services and program organizations of the church, regardless of where they live. The other commu-

nity is those unchurched persons of a different racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, or life-style grouping who live in the neighborhood where the church facility is located but who are not attracted to the worship services and program organizations. The church is open to this second group and genuinely tries to bring them into the programs and fellowship but without success.

In the two-community concept, the church takes a two-pronged approach. It continues to maintain a quality program for the present members and those who can be attracted to the church programs. At the same time, target group evangelistic ministries, extension Sunday School departments, and other methods are used to reach out and meet other groupings of people where they are and with the type program that will attract them, even though it is separate from the regular program of the church.

3. *Remain—But Change as the Community Changes*

This is sometimes referred to as the incremental continuous transition model. As the community changes, the church changes accordingly. Ideally, the percentage of persons in the emerging groups in the community is reflected in the church membership. However, more than percentages is needed. There needs to be a merger in the style of worship, in decision making, in the staff, etc. If the community stabilizes, as in integrated neighborhoods, then the church does the same. If the community changes entirely to the new group, then the church will probably do the same.

4. *Remain—But Become One Church in Two Locations*

A church in a transitional community may choose to begin a new work in a suburban area, but instead of the new work becoming a mission (with the intent of becoming separate and self-sustaining) it remains a part of the initiating church, with one staff, budget, etc. Or, a church may choose to merge with a church in a suburban area, but remain as one church in two locations. Later, the church in the transitional community may move to the suburban facility or the two-location arrangement may continue indefinitely. Another possibility is merger with another church in a transitional community, but remaining as one church in two locations.


5. *Remain—But Have Shared Use of a Facility*

One facility is shared by the existing church with a different ethnic, racial, or socioeconomic group—however, this option is mainly used in the beginning of new language units.

6. *Remain—But Change Types*

For the ex-neighborhood church this could mean to change to the metropolitan-regional church or special purpose church. For the ex-metropolitan-regional church, this could mean to change to a neighborhood church for the purpose of reaching the new residents of the community.

7. *Relocate*

The relocating church needs to ask the question, "How can the old facility be transferred, if the need is there, to a ministry that will meet the needs of the new community—how can this be done in an ethical/missionary way?" 

From *Shaping a Future for the Church in the Changing Community* (Home Mission Board, SBC, 1981). Used by permission.

NOTES

1. Davis and White, *Racial Transition in the Church*, (Nashville: Abingdom Press, 1980), p. 73.

2. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1969), p. 33, cited by Carl S. Dudley, "Neighborhood Churches in Changing Communities," *New Conversations*, III, No. 1 (1978), pp. 9-10.

3. Ibid., p. 10.

BLACKS, WHITES, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT



An interview with Rev. Charles Johnson, Pastor, Fitkin Memorial Church of the Nazarene, Meridian, Mississippi.

Jerry Appleby: Charles, would you tell us a little about your early connection with the Gorman Memorial Church in Orlando and the influence that brought you to salvation and the church.

Charles Johnson: First of all, it wasn't Gorman Memorial Church of the Nazarene; Gorman came after me. The man that was most influential in my life was C. R. Smith. He was a member of the Central Church of the Nazarene in Orlando. I was 12 years old and C. R. Smith sold appliances in the Black community. I began to work with him at 12 years old, and I watched his life. I watched his life for several years. I watched and saw people of the Black race accept his goods and then when it came time to pay, some of them turned around and cursed him. They called him everything. I watched him do what Christ did. He was White, and during those years he could have done anything and probably got away with it. But he turned and said, "I love you anyway," and walked off. I watched him and I, a little boy sitting in the car, was very wroth with those customers. I wanted to go up there and drag them out by the ears. But C. R. would always say to me, "No, that's not the way. God's way is the best way."

Appleby: Were you filled with prejudice and bad feelings toward Whites during those years?

Johnson: In those early years I saw the Ku Klux Klan drag people down the street behind cars. I saw them beat them. I saw people maimed by the Whites. As a result, Mother taught me fear. She taught me hatred. I had built a hatred in my heart for the White race because of all the things I had seen happen. But C. R. Smith was one that began to start the change in my life as a boy.

Appleby: Did you come to the Lord under his ministry?

Johnson: No. C. R. Smith saw the needs in the Black community. He was a loving man. He contacted the Church of the Nazarene Home Missions Department, and they in turn sent in Warren Rogers for revival at an old school building there. The sponsors were C. R. Smith and Earl Gorman. They sponsored this revival, and because C. R. invited me to that revival, and because of his life, I went out to that revival. I never wanted to know what the white man said, as I was prejudiced. That's where, under Warren Rogers' message, I found Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. I was 18 years old.

Appleby: Then you went on to study for the ministry, didn't you?

Johnson: Right. We had a Bible college in Institute, W.Va. I was married at an early age. I married when I was around 18 and bought some goods from different stores. I had a lot of bills to pay. C. R. said, "Give me your bills. I want you to go to Bible college. I'll pay them. You don't worry about them." He took those bills and paid my bills for me. I went and studied at the Bible college.

Appleby: You went to Meridian, Miss., some years ago. How long have you been in that church?

Johnson: It was 21 years last July.

Appleby: Did you face a lot of racial prejudice at that time?

Johnson: Words cannot express the kind of racial prejudice that I faced in Meridian.

Appleby: You felt the needs of the Black community; is that what led you into becoming a champion of the Black cause during those days?

Johnson: As I lived in Meridian, I saw the things that were happening to the Blacks in that area. They had no jobs. They were paid only \$2.50 or \$3.00 a week. Families were living on \$15.00 a week and prices were very high even then. People had four or five children. They would go down to Woolworth's to buy, but they couldn't eat there. They couldn't work there. They could work only as janitors or cooks in the White lunch counters. I saw this all over from the banks to the telephone companies. They could put their money in the banks, but they couldn't work there. They could have a phone, but couldn't work at the phone company. So, I organized the Meridian Action Committee and from that I went to the different stores and asked for jobs. When they turned us down, we had to picket them. We didn't ask for anything unreasonable. I felt some of the Black leaders *were* unreasonable. But I believed if a person could buy at a place, he ought to be able to eat at the place. He ought to be able to have a job there. As a result we got jobs for our people all over.

Appleby: This was a time in America's history when there was violence and a lot of confrontation in Mississippi. You obviously were involved in some of this, weren't you?

Johnson: Correct.

Appleby: Do you feel that maybe the civil rights movement wrongly used you in your position and influence, or were things mostly positive between

you and other elements of the civil rights movement?

Johnson: It wasn't the fact that they used me. It was the fact that the wrong was there. I still don't understand how a fellow like me who went to Mississippi afraid to look out the door could become a leader in the face of all the prejudice and the threats of death. I had threats of death every night. In one case the chief of police kept me from being killed. A Black person had called me to come out to a certain place where there were beatings and some Black people in slavery. But the Black person had been paid by the Klan. The chief of police had an infiltrator in the Klan who warned him to keep me at home. As a result, my life was spared. I used to have to have police protection around my house every night.

Appleby: Are you not sorry for your involvement in these activities?

Johnson: Oh no, no, no.

Appleby: You don't feel you were doing wrong by leading civil rights activities?

Johnson: No, no. I feel that somehow God ushered me into that situation.

Appleby: So it was the same Holy Spirit that empowers you now that was empowering you then to lead the people in the work you were leading them.

Johnson: We did not do any violence. We did not participate in any wrongdoing, because I kept above that. They could not put a finger on anybody of my

Sometimes being a change agent is tough.

group because I did not have the radical element that was hiring Black power for gain. I did not have them as a part of my group. We were positive in our approaches and we went for what we felt was right. I felt the Holy Spirit led me. I don't know how I changed from being scared to that position. I don't understand it today, but when the Holy Spirit finished with me, He called me out of it just as vividly as when I first got saved.

Appleby: You were called out of the activist movement into another line of ministry?

Johnson: Yes, I was then pastoring on the Mississippi District. That was in 1975. We had attended that district assembly and were on our way back from Jackson, Shirley and I, and the Spirit of God was so close in that car. He began to move in our hearts saying, "It is time to come out of this leadership role." This role had gotten me honors in the mayor's office. I knew that losing this status, I would lose that kind of connection. But I had to make the commitment to God. We pulled onto the side of the street. My wife could tell you how I made that commitment. I said, "Yes, Lord. I will come out." I drove right to town with the same fervency and power of the Spirit. I called a news conference and stepped out. I haven't been able to go back.

Appleby: But you haven't stopped working to further the civil rights and economic development of your people.

Johnson: Oh no, but I am doing it in another vein.

Appleby: Tell us about that vein.

Johnson: Well, it focuses on job training. Many of our people are not trained to take jobs that are open. We have a program to prepare the people for the jobs that open up. For example, a businessman says, "We need some secretaries. Give us some." We didn't have any. "All right," says a banker, "we'll take some Blacks, give us some tellers. Give us some people that have the knowledge, and we'll take them in." They said, "We want a person that can be trained, a person with a good attitude, a person that is motivated, a person that has good work habits." We did not have this. So I wrote a proposal to the government and it got funded for \$500,000. Now I'm training people to work as secretaries, sales persons, bank tellers, etc. I get them motivated and then train them. And now I say, "There is no need for a picket line. I've got you a finished product. Here it is."

Appleby: You decided to work within the system.

Johnson: I work within the system now.

Appleby: It's working?

Johnson: It is working.

Appleby: Are your people fairly happy with this situation?

Johnson: They are working within the system and they are happy. I brought industry and the people

together. I brought industry in for advisory counsel on what is needed. Then I brought the people. The recipients. I brought them in and said to them, "Now this is what industry wants. This is the kind of persons who will get jobs. Now we want to help you become what industry wants." It is working.

Appleby: Do you feel that the Holy Spirit is guiding you as much in this as He was in the civil rights movement?

Johnson: I'm glad you asked that. My whole life is ordained by the Holy Spirit. Everything I do is the Holy Spirit. Because this is how it happens. It's miraculous how it happens. How I got more than half a million dollars from the government. It's miraculous.

Appleby: Is the Mississippi District of the Church of the Nazarene a predominantly White district?

Johnson: Yes, it is.

Appleby: Some would not think that a Black church or a Black leader, especially one that had been involved so heavily in the civil rights movement, could come into prominence on a predominantly White district. What are some of the steps that made this possible?

Johnson: Well, it didn't just happen. The district had to have the kind of leadership that would promote reaching out to people such as me. It was through the leadership of Talmadge Johnson who is presently district superintendent of the Tennessee District. Talmadge reached out to me when I was ostracized. I was set aside; I was aborted in a way, but Talmadge Johnson, when he became district superintendent, made a personal appeal to win me back to the Church of the Nazarene. I was *in* the Church of the Nazarene but not *of* the Church of the Nazarene because I was ostracized. I was put aside because of my stand; I was just left out there to die. Talmadge reached out his hand to pull me back into the fold. So I don't think it was so much the district and the people changing as their leadership making the change. The leadership had to do it. The leadership had to show that I wasn't a dreadful threat. The leadership had to show that love would win me—Talmadge did that. I will never forget him as long as I live.

Appleby: Were the people wise enough in the Spirit to follow his leadership?

Johnson: They were skeptical in the beginning, but he didn't let that impair his ideals. He kept moving toward the goal and that was to win me. As a result, the people began to understand me. Many were prejudiced only because they didn't know me. As a result, I attended most of the district meetings; I attended anything that happened. They finally began to warm up to me because of the leadership of Talmadge Johnson.

Appleby: Has this brought you into acceptance throughout the Church of the Nazarene?

Johnson: Once Talmadge got me back into the district, and accepted on the district, he then took my choir and began to show us. My people loved Talmadge because of the fact they saw what he was doing for me. Our choir was introduced in 1974 when they had the Conference on Evangelism in Oklahoma City. They had no other Blacks doing anything. Talmadge arranged for my choir and my wife and me to sing on that program of the Conference on Evangelism and from that time on people began to warm up to us. He was responsible for the choir going to Dallas and singing at the General Assembly there, and for the choir going to Kansas City to sing in 1980. That's how it began. We sense more acceptance now than earlier.

Appleby: Does your experience on a predominantly White district now, make you feel that Black churches can exist on a White district, or do we need to go back to a Black district that would be separate from the Whites?

Johnson: Now that is a question I have to answer in two ways. First, when I am at that district assembly now I am treated so greatly. When I don't get there, they begin to inquire and call me to say, "Come on. We want you here." I am welcomed on the Mississippi District. I am welcomed and I don't realize that I am Black until I pass a mirror.

Appleby: Maybe you don't realize we are White.

Johnson: That's right, I don't realize it. I see a person as a person, thanks to God the Holy Spirit. I don't see race or status. I see that we are all equal.

Appleby: So are you saying if the leadership will lead our people to foster this feeling, then Blacks and Whites can exist on the same district in love and respect for one another?

Johnson: I believe that wholeheartedly. There is a problem. This is the second part of the answer to that question you asked me. First part, I believe that Blacks and Whites can exist on the same district, I believe that. I believe that if the leadership is right, *if the leadership is right*, that's where it all has to be done, in the leadership. I have seen on many districts that the Black church, which is a minority on the district, has been left to survive or die on its own without nurture or encouragement of the district superintendent. Because he has 99 percent White Anglo churches that is where he has to give most of his services. As a result the little Black church is left out, not intentionally, but it happens. It is really not served or nurtured. So I see the need of a district where the Black church will get the same kind of nourishment as the White church. Now what does that entail? Does that mean to make it a Black district? Okay. But, it can happen on a White district also. Talmadge did it! He did it! I got just as much nurture as anyone, and I felt a part of the district. He made me feel a part. I am a part of that district, I am active, I pay all my budgets. I raise my money. I increased my attendance. I increased my

membership. All because he made me feel a part of it. We were motivated because we belonged. If every district superintendent and if every leader can make the ethnic or minority feel that way, then I don't see a need for anything else.

Appleby: Now as you understand the Bible, do you think we have a choice?

Johnson: No, we don't have a choice.

Appleby: So the fact of making Blacks feel a part in working toward racial reconciliation and understanding is our task?

Johnson: Correct.

Appleby: So what can we do? What are some of the basics?

Johnson: I think the church is trying one of the greatest things it can ever do and that is the use of ethnic consultants. This is where the Black consultants and other ethnic consultants go to nurture, strengthen, help the district superintendent to be of assistance to the minority people on his district.

Appleby: So you are sold on this?

Johnson: I'm sold. Oh, I'm sold. This is the greatest thing that ever happened to the church. God called me to do this. God has taken me out of a flourishing church with a good salary, a good relationship on my district, to go around and do such things as this, strengthening churches.

Appleby: The Holy Spirit has helped you all along, but it still was an experience there in West Virginia that started it all. Your experience of entire sanctification has made all the difference, hasn't it?

Johnson: Without the experience in West Virginia, all this wouldn't have taken place because the Holy Spirit couldn't have used me. I had my pride. I was proud, very proud, and I wouldn't have stooped to some of the things that I did. I would not have stooped, I would not have humbled myself to do some of the things that I had to do there. I had hatred which made me hotheaded. You can't do anything hotheaded because it would only make more trouble. I couldn't have had the wisdom that the Holy Spirit gives in guiding and leading me into situations and out of situations. My being filled with the Holy Spirit is the only way God could have used me in Meridian, Miss. Otherwise, I would have been dead a long time ago.

Appleby: So to be a change agent for individuals and to be a change agent for church government and church acceptance, do you think that the filling of the Holy Spirit is essential?

Johnson: It is very much an essential. It is essential because that way the Holy Spirit is the controlling factor. He is the one who gives you the wisdom to meet whatever obstacles you will meet and be able to get over the hurdles.

Appleby: This opens us to unity in the Spirit.



Helping New Converts Change Life-styles

by Wilbur W. Brannon

*Director of Pastoral Ministries,
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Conversion is something like a train moving out of a tunnel. The locomotive has come out of the darkness. But the long line of cars behind us, representing our past experiences, thought patterns, and personal habits, has not yet reached the light.

That's why new converts are often disappointed in their performance as parents, or as youth among friends. Old ways of thinking, speaking, and behaving still persist in spite of a newfound life in Christ.

The temptation is to accept old habits as normal and stop the train in the tunnel. Progress is stymied. Spiritual growth is stunted. When this happens our shepherd's heart tells us that one of our flock is in danger. We have three courses of action: (1) we can rationalize the action and accommodate the gospel to a compromised standard; (2) we can exploit the ideal of perfection to the despair of the new convert; or (3) we can uphold the holiness ethic embracing our Christian friend and demonstrate a "still more excellent way."

We fail in one of our primary functions as pastor if we remain silent and permit the mouthing of a profession of faith without expecting a life-style that reveals Him in whom we have placed our faith.

St. Paul was speaking as a change-agent himself, as well as for Apollos, when he said, "We are simply God's agents in bringing you to the faith . . ." (1 Cor. 3:5, NEB). It wasn't enough for those early converts to have "believed!" They needed further changing if they were to give witness to "the faith."

We only exaggerate the problem of an unchanged life-style when we delay action, thinking it will go away. There are social implications in the gospel which we can see better now than we could 35 years ago. But we have our blind spots.

What kind of a Christ are we projecting to our congregations? Too often we perpetuate the very thing we say we are dedicated to prevent. When we see Jesus, we see God. But when we see each other do we see Jesus? Our people have a right to expect an encounter with Christ when they meet us as their shepherd. Then the impression of Christ they take from us must be passed along to those in the world.

What are we saying to our congregation about marriage and the family when our churches host

weddings indiscriminately? Does divorce matter? Have we endorsed it with or without participating in a ceremony? Is there at least a twinge of guilt you share with me? How is such casuistry to be interpreted in light of God's holiness distinctives? Again, what does that do to the image of Christ as seen by our people and those beyond the church? That is the critical issue. Would Jesus Christ recognize himself?

What do children have a right to expect from their parents who have become Christian? What happens when the child's image of Christ is distorted in an environment of abusive and vulgar language? Do we invite Jesus to enjoy our diversionary entertainments? Would we have Him approving what is scripturally unacceptable?

For the new Christian the issues are not always clear. That isn't his fault. But as pastors we are to be blamed if we do not give protective guidance through the developmental changes that are prerequisite to spiritual growth. The rod and staff are not for the shepherd's benefit. They are for the protection and comfort of the sheep.

Conversion makes the conscience sensitive to things that are wrong, but it does not automatically abolish ingrained thought patterns and personal habits. I heard a mature Christian testify recently. He admitted to being a compulsive liar before his conversion. Afterward, he once again found himself "out-bragging" his fellow sales persons by false statements. The Holy Spirit was quick to correct him. Immediately, he stopped and said, "I'm sorry. What I've told you isn't the truth. I've had such a habit of talking this way, but now that I'm a Christian I am changing. The truth is . . ." and he gave them the real story.

Many are received into the membership of the church in ways that permit an alarming relaxation of Christlike living. The disciplines of the new life in Christ should conflict with the looseness of our former life in sin.

To compromise those disciplines is to lose our freedom. But to use our freedom to accept Christ's life is to be released from the old ways.

The person who is trying to find his way as a new Christian naturally looks to the pastor as a point of reference for ethical decisions. He or she is

expected to be a model as well as an instructor on the Christian life-style. To emulate and proclaim the ethical implications of being Christian is an integral part of the pastoral function. We must transfer the underlying principles of holy living to the new Christian.

The practical question is "How can I, as a pastor, help the Christian change from a pagan life-style to a holy living life-style?"

I. Delegation

One of the best ways to help a person change is through another person. St. Paul was a good example of this. He sought to change people in Ephesus by delegating spiritual assignments to Timothy. We should work with those whose positive influence and nonthreatening approach will be received without resentment.

There are several areas in which change needs to take place. In matters of faith, you don't just believe everything. And what you believe does affect the way you act. It's not acceptable to believe you can get mad and slap your wife! That is eliminated when love is our aim (1 Cor. 14:1, RSV). A new Christian, however, is confused when his mean reaction was not what he meant it to be. It is easy for him to wonder about the meaning of his newfound faith. Or maybe give it up and wonder if he ever had it.

It's the task of the pastor to help the convert understand that the Holy Spirit is faithful to teach him how to react under pressure and allow His love to govern his reactions.

To disregard what we know God wants is to set ourselves up as a law unto ourselves. This is idolatry—a contradiction to faith.

Follow the example of St. Paul. He became vulnerable by admitting his personal failures and past sins. But he didn't leave the matter there. He exalted God's grace which changed him from a profane, self-righteous enemy of Christians into an example to the believers (1 Tim. 1:12-16).

II. Strong Teaching

Another way to initiate change in the moral conduct of people is to declare war as defenders of the faith. Faith and a good conscience are the ultimate weapons in this kind of conflict.

It is a war against the enemies of:

- (1) Devotion
- (2) Amiable relationships
- (3) Modesty
- (4) Humility
- (5) Faith
- (6) Love
- (7) Holiness (cf. 1 Tim. 2:8-15)

At the heart of the issue is a sound faith. As Wesleyans, we have been too timid in resisting the influence of Reformed Theology. The evangelical movement is being dominated by it. As a result, our people unwittingly are adopting Calvinistic presuppositions. They become excited about the devotional writings, tapes, and manuals on witnessing and Bible study which contradict holiness theology. We are dangerously close to "abandoning the faith" (1 Tim. 4:1) at the same time we are professing it—and

doing so in traditional terminology that sounds so acceptable!

If we are to facilitate change into a holy living life-style, it is going to take strong teaching. We must be instructors, faithful in pointing out errors and pointing to the truth. Paul says if you do, "you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 4:6).

III. Self-discipline

Another way to facilitate these kinds of changes in our people is to "train ourselves to be godly" (1 Tim. 4:7). We pastors are to "labor and struggle, because we have set our hope on the living God . . ."

Through self-discipline—perhaps only in this way—we can be examples in speech and conduct through love, faith, and holiness. What are our family priorities saying to the families trying to survive? The discipline necessary to building character is the same discipline required to safely exercise our gifts. Above all we must not neglect them (1 Tim. 4:14). Then, the final step in personal discipline is taken when we examine ourselves and our teaching (1 Tim. 4:16).

IV. Due Regard for Persons

Perhaps the most important way to facilitate change is to regard with ultimate value the people who need to change. (And aren't we all in the process of changing? Especially pastors! We can't afford to become paralyzed or frozen in meaningless religious forms and categories of thought.) More than anything, our people must know we love them.

We don't need to wonder how to treat the elderly, the young, those of the opposite sex, and those who are leaders in our churches (1 Tim. 5:1-2, 17). It is a relationship of love that is pure and honorable. The community of believers is built up.

We won't be quick to believe just anything we hear (1 Tim. 5:19). Rather, we will put the best construction on the other person's motives. Whether he be a common laborer or corporation executive, we will treat him with respect.

V. Right Sense of Values

How can we facilitate change from a worldly life-style to a holy living life-style? We must maintain a right attitude toward financial and material things. Our people need to see that "godliness with contentment is great gain." It is the greatest net profit we can ever make (1 Tim. 6:6).

Our love for God will put the use of money in the right perspective (1 Tim. 6:9-10) and keep us from wandering from the faith, our most priceless treasure. If we keep our integrity at this point, we can help bring the rich to understand their true wealth is discovered, distributed, and eternally enjoyed in their good deeds—what they do with what they have. And we can help the economically poor see that they can be spiritually rich.

We are urged to "take hold of the eternal life to which we are called" and keep that commandment unstained, free from reproach, until the appearing of the Lord!

In so doing, we can fulfill our role as agents of change.



HELPING THE POOR:

A BAROMETER OF OUR FAITHFULNESS

by H. Mark Abbott

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He had a good father, but he turned out to be a bad king. His name—Jehoiakim, son of Josiah. Josiah, a good king, ruled late in the period before the Babylonian captivity. In his reign there was something of a religious revival in Judah. But he died prematurely doing battle with the Egyptians.

Jehoahaz, one of his sons, first succeeded him as king. But it was only three months till the Egyptian Pharaoh, who had defeated Josiah, meddled in Judean politics, deposed Jehoahaz, and set on the throne Jehoiakim, another son of Josiah.

This new king, in contrast with his father, was a wicked man. Not only that, but he had a taste for luxury. While imposing heavy taxes to pay tribute to his Egyptian bosses, he was also building himself a sumptuous palace. It was decorated with cedar and red coloring—just the height of fashion in those days. In addition, it was built largely with unpaid slave labor.

It was this Jehoiakim to whom God spoke through Jeremiah about his disregard for the poor and needy. "Woe to him who builds his house without righteousness and his upper rooms without justice, who uses his neighbor's services without pay and does not give him his wages"

(Jer. 22:13, NASB). Jehoiakim was rebuked by God for his idolatry, it is true, but he would also experience tremendous judgment because of his oppression of the poor (vv. 18-19).

But what does this history lesson have to do with us who live almost 2,600 years later?

According to the World Bank, there are almost 800 million "absolute poor" in the world, two-thirds of them in the four countries of India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, where they have a per capita income of \$250 or less. According to the World Food Council, one-third of the world's children die of malnutrition and disease before they are five years old.

Even in our land of plenty, there is a great deal of "relative poverty." Approximately 25 million Americans live below what government regards as the poverty line.

Dr. George Sweeting, president of Moody Bible Institute, in an article entitled "Our Response to the Poor: A Barometer of Belief," laid down this principle: "Godliness is inseparable from service to the poor" (*Christianity Today*, September 5, 1980, pp. 22-24).

In God's Word to Jehoiakim (Jer. 22:13-18), there are at least two factors that should influence our attitudes and actions regard-

ing the poor. Notice first the implied *relationship between poverty and justice*.

The king was condemned because he built a house unjustly. Since he did not pay for the service of those who built his palace, he was oppressing the poor. An earlier word from the Lord exhorted him: "Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of his oppressor. Also do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place" (Jer. 22:3, NASB).

Justice for the poor is clearly advocated all through Scripture, but it is a particular emphasis of the prophets. Listen to Isaiah's rebuke, directed to religious people who nonetheless oppressed the poor: "The Lord enters into judgment with the elders and princes of His people, 'It is you who have devoured the vineyard; the plunder of the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing My people, and grinding the face of the poor?' declares the Lord God of hosts" (Isa. 3: 14-15, NASB). Amos, farmer and herdsman turned blunt preacher of justice, complained bitterly on God's behalf against those who "impose heavy rent on the poor and exact a tribute of grain from them" (Amos 5:11, NASB).

Nazarene

UPDATE

UPDATE EDITOR, NINA BEEGLE, PASTORAL MINISTRIES

NEITHER TO THE
RIGHT NOR TO
THE LEFT

The words *conservative* and *liberal* have been used to mean so many different points of view that one questions their continued valid use.

In politics there may be a country where the label "conservative" is used in reference to persons who are considered "liberal" in another country. In other places the reverse is true.

These same terms are used in religious circles, with theological overtones. Within this context the Church of the Nazarene accepts the conservative identification. But within theologically conservative circles a further distinction is frequently made, and this is where we need to take a careful look.

A legalistic member of a conservative group may be prone to suggest someone is a liberal if that person does not identify totally with the legalist's position on every point. More often than not the issues are not essential to the main tenets of a conservative theological position.



By General Superintendent
Jerald D. Johnson

Another person, convinced that some minor points of difference are not essential, will label the person who insists upon adherence to them, an extreme conservative. And this in turn leaves the first person open to a counter-charge of being liberal.

All of this points up the rather useless and even tedious nature of such a discussion. Could we not view the entire subject from a different perspective?

In our instance we could well begin with the simple use of our Nazarene name. Sometimes a person may carelessly suggest that this or that person is a real Nazarene; implying that someone else is not a Nazarene, when in fact he or she may be one. What is probably being implied is that although the latter person is on the membership roll somewhere, the speaker thinks he or she does not adhere to the standards of conduct of the church as set forth in our *Manual*.

In between the two extreme views is the great core of those who love the church, abide by its standards, have experienced God's grace in two definite spiritual works, and who pray the prayers, pay the bills, and attend the services. Among the ministers is the solid core of devoted men who preach the full counsel of God, support the church's program, and are loyal to church leadership.

Extreme groups do not deserve the recognition accorded by either a conservative or liberal label. In many instances they are out of step and could be out of grace. Their usefulness to the Kingdom is limited. By being controversial they fail to be a blessing or to make the gospel attractive to sinners. They need our prayers. The church must, of course, endeavor to embrace them and bring them into the mainstream of blessing and service. Their potential will be acknowledged while their spiritual need causes us concern. In love and by God's grace we must not allow either extreme view to sidetrack the church from its main mission.

Our founder's emphasis was "neither to the right nor to the left, but Jesus only." This continues to be our guiding principle to this day, and shall continue to be in the future.

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

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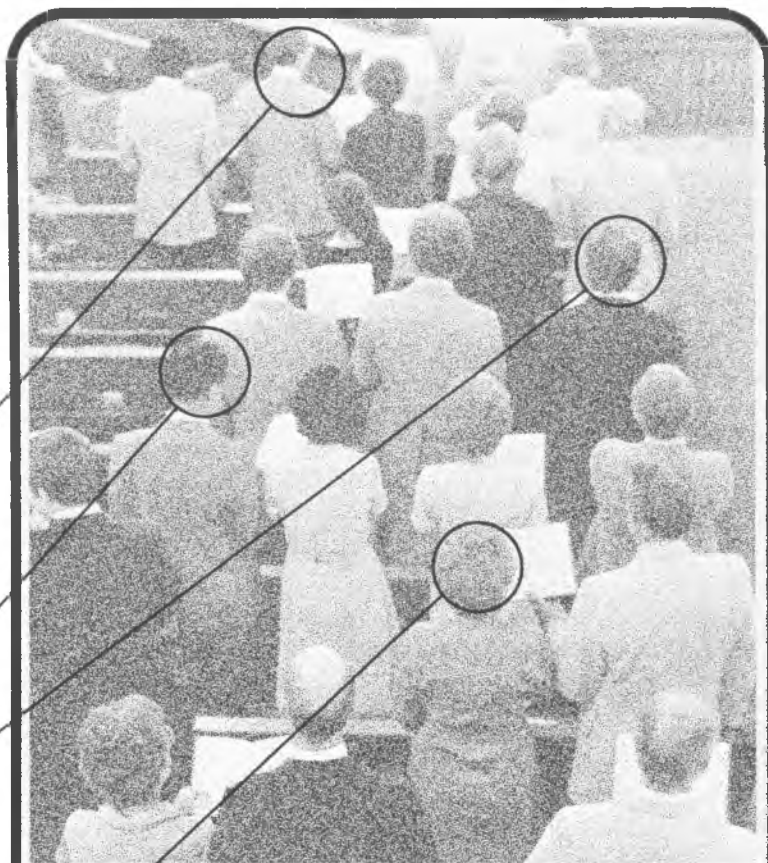
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Kansas City, MO 64131
Attn: Robert W. Crew

IN CANADA:
Church of the Nazarene
Executive Board
P.O. Box 30080, Station "B"
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T2M 4N7



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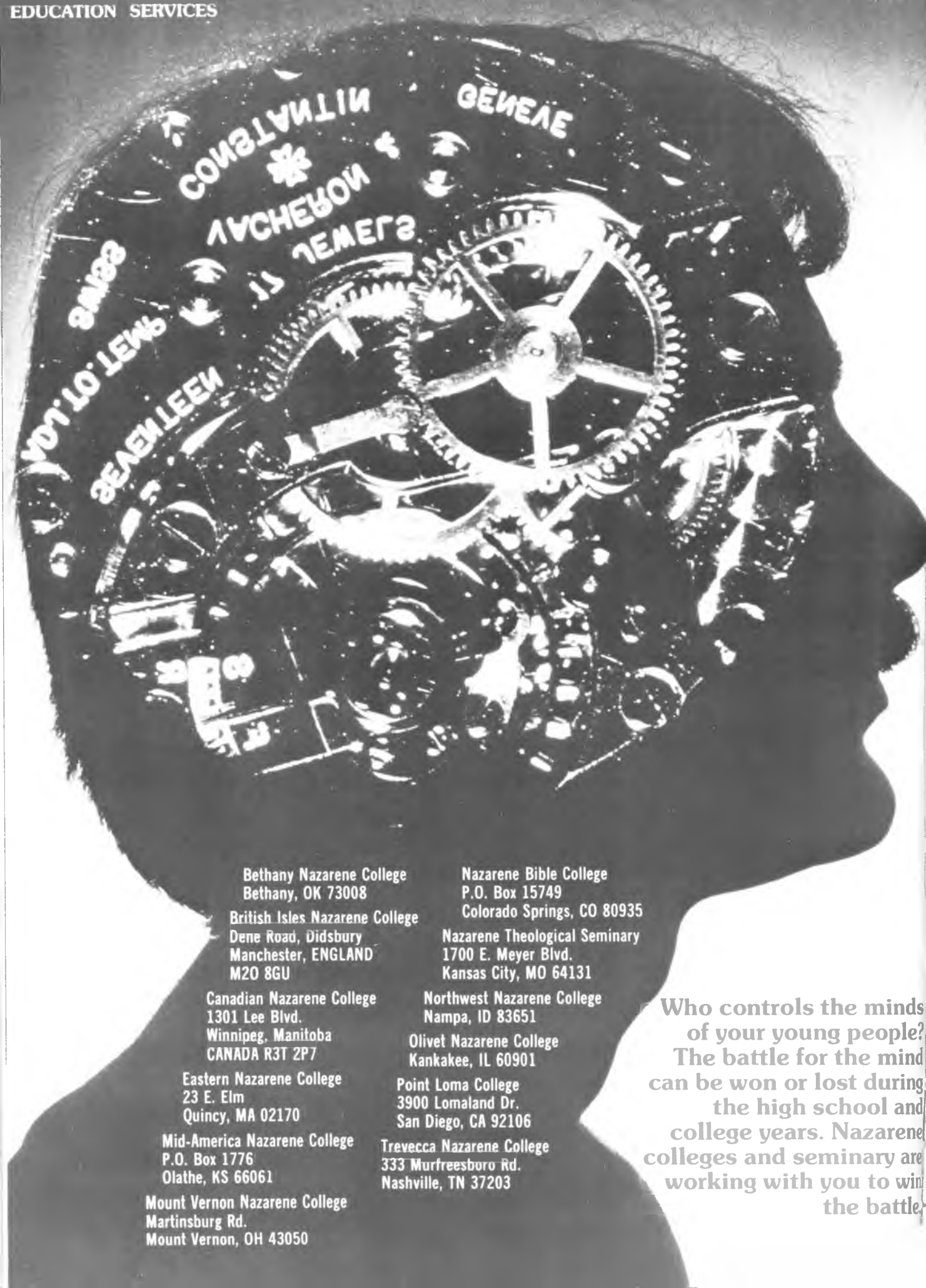
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VIDEO

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WHY USE VIDEOTAPE?

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The "real-life" effect of the medium of television provides the potential for interest, involvement, and learning retention by the audience.

CONTEMPORARY CONTENT

Ease of production and duplication allows the media to keep pace with the fast-moving issues, events, and persons. Whatever is recorded can be shown immediately!

LIMITLESS USABILITY

Play, fast-forwarding, rewind, and other features provide the user with tremendous flexibility of use. The videotape can be stopped for discussion, rewound or fast-forwarded for reviewing/previewing materials, etc.

EXTENSIVE VARIETY

Videotape resources are designed and produced for a great variety of purposes: entertainment, instruction, information, etc. This variety assures the possibility of finding a videotape resource for your specific need.

GROWING AVAILABILITY

The growing popularity of the videotape medium makes equipment and resources readily available in most every community.

TYPES OF VIDEOTAPE?

INSTRUCTIONAL

Provides instruction in specific areas. Effective for use in Christian Education, Teacher Training, Continuing Education, and much more.

INFORMATIONAL

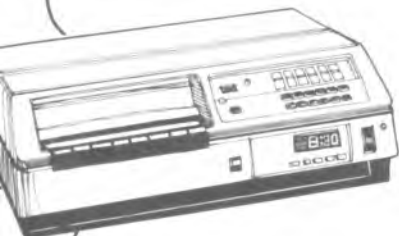
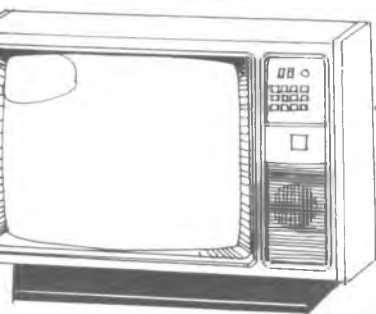
Disseminates valuable information directly to the viewer; for example, statements by general/district church leadership.

ENTERTAINMENT

Special programs for the family, children, teens, or other groups can be rented/recorded for use during special events.

YOUR OWN

A videotape camera with your recorder/player will allow you to produce your own videotape resources. Services and other church events can be recorded for evaluation, ministry to shut-ins, or local church records.



FORMATS FOR VIDEOTAPE?

There are primarily three videotape formats in use today. Each of these are incompatible with each other, requiring their own specific machine and size of cassette!

$\frac{3}{4}$ " U-MATIC

The largest of the three formats, used primarily in education and industrial settings. The larger equipment and tapes make this format much more expensive than the others.

$\frac{1}{2}$ " BETAMAX

This small $\frac{1}{2}$ " format provides three record speeds: Beta I, Beta II, & Beta III. This format is much less expensive than the $\frac{3}{4}$ " U-Matic. Brand names that carry the Betamax equipment include: Sony, Zenith, Sanyo, Toshiba, and Sears.

$\frac{1}{2}$ " VHS

By far the most popular videotape format. VHS also offers three record speeds and is comparable in cost to the Betamax system. Panasonic, RCA, Sharp, JVC, Hitachi, Magnavox, and General Electric are among the brand names that utilize the VHS format.

PREPARATION & PRESENTATION?

EQUIPMENT

The necessary equipment can be purchased or rented from many appliance, department, or electronic stores in your community. There may be people in your congregation who would be willing to loan the church their personal video equipment. Investigate to find the most reasonable source for your equipment needs.

VIDEOTAPE RESOURCES

There are many Christian and secular sources for videotape resources. For information on the NAZARENE VIDEOTAPE LIBRARY and other videotape sources write to: VIDEOTAPE PRODUCTIONS, NAZARENE COMMUNICATIONS, 6401 THE PASEO, KANSAS CITY, MO 64131.

PRESENTATION

Preview your material and be prepared well ahead of time. Be sure to have enough TV sets and to have them situated for easy viewing. "Rule of Thumb" is to add five to the diagonal inch of the TV screen to determine how many people can comfortably watch the one set. If necessary, be prepared to introduce the videotape, answer questions, and facilitate discussion.

(For further information on videotape equipment and resources see your Nazarene Publishing House AUDIO-VISUAL CATALOG or contact VIDEO PRODUCTIONS at Media Services.)



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816-444-0588

For a hotline to prayer requests and answers fresh from the mission field, call this number.

In less than three minutes, you'll be briefed on some of the most urgent needs, and share in the victory of answered prayer.

You can print these requests and answers in your church bulletin, newsletter, or make them part of your pastoral prayer.

Prayer line really does make a differ-

ence. One thousand call in each month, because they believe that.

One big answer to prayer came this year when Venezuela registered the Church of the Nazarene—opening the door for missionaries William and Juanita Porter to begin a mission work there.

The Prayer Mobilization Line is updated each Wednesday and Friday afternoon. When urgent needs arise, special updates are recorded.

Possess the promise with us.

PASTOR, What are your goals for your church during the SIMULTANEOUS REVIVAL campaign of 1983? The first step toward achieving them is to set them and then use them as motivation for you and your people.

Your main goal will be the goal of the One who came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). All other goals will flow out of this—a burning desire to see the lost saved by the mercy and power of Christ. Such a desire must be coupled to definite planned action to seek the lost in the community. This is why it is essential that you set attendance, conversion, and membership goals for your Simultaneous Revival.

**Evangelism Ministries
Church of the Nazarene**



THE SHEPHERD'S LIFE

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

LEADERSHIP • INSPIRATION • FULFILLMENT • ENRICHMENT

PASTORAL MINISTRIES PLANS CONET

CONET means: a COounseling, COnsulting, COntinuing Education, and COmmunication NETwork for pastors. The concept originated with a group of Nazarene Helping Professionals. Their stated purpose was to "provide a ministry to professional ministers and their families."

High on the agenda is to have a "Heart-Line" (or Hot Line) for crisis intervention, counseling, referral, and professional consultations. The pastors would be able to call with the assurance of absolute confidentiality. A referral system is envisioned, which would make available supportive counseling nearby.

One organizational model includes a Central Advisory Council with representatives from each educational region. Regional committees would be responsible to select a coordinator and develop a referral network.

Specific proposals to the Board of General Superintendents and the General Board are being developed. The steering committee welcomes feedback from all levels during this development process.

Suggestions may be sent to Pastoral Ministries, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.



PASTORS' SUPPORT GROUPS

One of the difficulties experienced by many pastors is the feeling that for them there is no one to turn to for support or advice in times of personal struggle or conflict. Problems that arise within the church, the family, or the individual's own being can be devastating when they have to be faced alone. Even though our church structure has provided for a district superintendent to function as a "pastor to pastors," there are factors that may make it difficult, if not impossible, for a pastor to share openly with his leader.

As a result of the sense of need expressed by so many pastors, there are developing today across the denomination pastoral support groups whose primary purpose it is to provide an atmosphere of openness and concern where a pastor may share his struggles with his peers in whom he can trust and from whom he can expect sound counsel. Those who have been fortunate enough to become a part of groups such as this have discovered an entirely new dimension to their pastoral experience—God's loving concern being expressed directly to them through fellow pastors.

On pages 46-47 you will find material in case-study form that may help you and your fellow pastors to develop dialog that can lead to even deeper discussions of your own personal needs and struggles. Your decision to help establish a support group in your area could lead to changed lives and more effective ministry!

Call a fellow pastor today and begin the dialog that could change your ministry!

WE ASKED FOR IT!

Remember last May when you received the Pastoral Ministries Survey that requested your response to 22 areas of need ranging from professional skills to personal family relationships? You probably wondered if anyone would really be interested in your responses, or if this was just one of those "information for information's sake" tidbits that Kansas City thought up. Whatever your reaction, we asked for your response and you gave it to us!

As of August 1 there have been 1,955 survey sheets returned to the Pastoral Ministries office, which is approximately a 40 percent return. Listed below in order are the top 10 areas of most felt need of Nazarene pastors according to their responses:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Equipping Laymen (Discipleship) | 6. Maintaining Personal Motivation |
| 2. Finding Enough Time for Real Ministry | 7. Church Renewal |
| 3. Financing the Local Church | 8. Reducing Pressures on My Marriage |
| 4. Making Visitation Productive | 9. Altar Calls |
| 5. Church Administration | 10. Sermon Preparation |

With this information it is now possible for Pastoral Ministries to begin developing programs and materials which can be geared specifically to these areas of need. Of great significance will be the new VIDEONET program, which will provide videotapes on a monthly subscription basis containing material pertinent to these and a host of other areas of interest. The prime objective of VIDEONET is to provide a communication/education tool that will effectively help pastors to fulfill their task of ministry.

But we're still going to need your help. You will need to continue the dialogue process and let us know your interests and where you feel the need for continued help. So keep talking to us. We're asking for it!

COURSE OF STUDY NOTES

CHANGES IN HANDBOOK

The following book and course changes have been made since the printing of the 1982 edition of the HANDBOOK ON THE MINISTRY:

- | | | |
|--------|---|--|
| 114.2a | <i>An Introduction to Homiletics</i> , Donald E. Demaray | replaces
<i>The Sunday School Superintendent</i> , Bennett Dudney |
| | replaces
<i>Preparing for Platform & Pulpit</i> , John E. Baird | 235.1 <i>Teaching Youth: A Sunday School Teacher's Guide to Discovery Learning</i> , Lawrence O. Richards |
| 125c | <i>Making the Small Church Effective</i> , Carl S. Dudley | replaces
<i>Teaching Today's Junior Highs</i> , Donald G. Whitlock; and <i>Helping Senior Highs Learn</i> , Roy Lynn |
| | replaces
<i>Advancing the Smaller Church</i> , W. Curry Mavis | |
| 234b | "Handbook on the Division of Christian Life and Sunday School" | |

NEW COURSE FOR MUSIC MINISTRIES

A new course* has been added to the MUSIC MINISTRIES PROGRAM:

- 437 MANUAL, Church of the Nazarene
- 437a *Discipleship—Your New Life in Christ*, Neil B. Wiseman
- 437b HANDBOOK ON THE MINISTRY, 1981 edition
- 437c *Power Through Prayer*, E. M. Bounds
- 437d *Dry Bones Can Live Again*, Robert E. Coleman

*This requirement must be met by anyone graduating after the 1982 Assembly Year.

A note to all District Boards of Ministerial Studies:

Pastoral Ministries records must be complete before a Certificate of Graduation can be issued to a student enrolled in the Course of Study.

- a. Home Course of Study—The records of Pastoral Ministries should show completion dates and grades;
- b. College/Seminary—A copy of the transcript evaluation form (COS 9, 10, 11, or 12) must be provided to Pastoral Ministries along with the transcript (if available) for student's permanent file.

The following materials were mailed July 1982 to districts that ordered the complete examination set in 1980:

Course Nos. 115, 222, 437, and 514 MANUAL, Church of the Nazarene—Updated exams from the 1976 MANUAL;

Course No. 437 MANUAL, Church of the Nazarene—Study Guide;*

Course No. 235.1: YOUTH MINISTRY, and TEACHING YOUTH by Lawrence O. Richards—Exams and Study Guide.**

If your district does not have this exam set, or if an additional set is needed it can be purchased from Pastoral Ministries for \$150.

A note to all College/Seminary Students:

Be sure all necessary classes are taken that enable you to meet the requirements outlined in the HANDBOOK ON THE MINISTRY, 1981 edition.

A note to CHRISTIAN EDUCATION and MUSIC MINISTRIES Home Course of Study students:

If you need the new study guides for course Nos. 437* or 235.1**, please contact your District Board of Ministerial Studies or Pastoral Ministries.

STUDY GUIDES		
S-1	Licensed Minister, Years 1, 2	8.95
S-2	Licensed Minister, Years 3, 4	11.95
S-3	Christian Education, Years 1, 2, 3	15.95
S-4	Music Ministries, Years 1, 2	16.95
S-5	Deaconess, Years 1, 2	12.95
MISCELLANEOUS		
	Manual, Church of the Nazarene	4.00
	Handbook on the Ministry	2.50
S-6	Notebook, District Board of Ministerial Studies	19.95



VIDEONET

VIDEONET is a dynamic new concept in video communication being produced as a cooperative effort of

Pastoral Ministries and Media Services.

We are now developing specially designed videotapes, available on a monthly subscription basis to all pastors and district leaders in the Church of the Nazarene. The cost for receiving the monthly tapes will be \$10.00 per month for rental or \$20.00 per month for purchase (VHS format). Every month pastors will receive sermon suggestions, previews of new books and audiovisuals, ideas on topics ranging from worship suggestions and counseling techniques to building usage and communication resources. Included as well will be monthly emphases in such areas as finance, church administration, mission education, and Christian edu-

cation training. Of special interest will be segments dealing with the church's perspective on current events and issues like: The Chemical Revolution (Drugs and Alcohol); Abortion: A Christian Perspective; The Economy—Present and Future Effects; The Church and Politics; Disarmament—Prelude to Peace or Conflict; and The Church and Justice. These tapes will be usable for individual study and enrichment as well as in group situations like Sunday School classes, small-group Bible studies, counseling sessions, or board and committee sessions. Plan to include this tremendous communication and training tool in your budgetary considerations. You'll be hearing more about—VIDEONET.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

1982-83—The Year of the Young

January 3-5, 1983	Evangelists' Gathering
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 13-16, 1983	Faith and Learning Conference—ONC
June 20-26, 1983	World Youth Congress, Oaxtepec, Mexico

1983-84—The Year of the Diamond Jubilee

August 29—September 4, 1983	Youth Week
September 12-17, 1983	NIROGA, Glorieta, New Mexico
September 19-23, 1983	NIROGA, Ridgecrest, North Carolina
September 26-30, 1983	NIROGA, Adirondacks
October 4-6, 1983	Conference on Evangelism—Canada
October 9-16, 1983	Diamond Jubilee Week
October 10-14, 1983	NIROGA, Canadian Rockies
October 1983 (Tentative)	Chaplain's Retreat
October 1983	European Military Personnel Retreat
December, January, February	"How to Live a Holy Life," Enduring Word Series Sunday School Lessons
January 3-5, 1984	Conference on Evangelism—Phoenix, Arizona
January 17-19, 1984	Conference on Evangelism—Fort Worth, Texas
January 24-26, 1984	Conference on Evangelism—Tampa, Florida
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
February 18-22, 1985	NIROGA, Florida
June 20-22, 1985	General Conventions, Anaheim, California
June 23-28, 1985	General Assembly, Anaheim, California
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



PENSIONS AND BENEFITS SERVICES
International Headquarters • Church of the Nazarene
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, Missouri 64131
Phone: (816) 333-7000

DEAN WESSELS, director

Dear Pastor:

It is a pleasure to take this opportunity to make available to you FREE information on the services offered to you and your church through Pensions and Benefits Services. Your faithful support of the Pensions and Benefits Fund makes these services possible.

Please feel free to request any of the information that you feel may be helpful to you or your church.

Your co-worker in Christ,

Dean Wessels
Dean Wessels

1. MEMO: Housing for your pastor: Parsonage or Housing Allowance
2. MEMO: Lay Staff and Social Security
3. MEMO: The Local Church as Employer—What are the tax implications?
4. MEMO: "Basic" Pension Plan for District-Credentialed Laymen
5. MEMO: Minimizing Income Taxes for Church Employees
6. MEMO: Annual Wage Statements for Church Employees
7. MEMO: Payroll Tax Procedures for Congregations
8. P & B Policy Summary
9. 1981-82 District Record Brochure
10. Nazarene Tax-Sheltered Annuity (403b) Plan
11. Nazarene KEOGH (HR-10) Plan
12. Nazarene Individual Retirement Annuity Plan (IRA)
13. Basic Group Term Life Insurance
14. Supplemental Group Term Life Insurance
15. Long-Term Disability Income Protection Plan
16. Daily Hospital Indemnity Plan
17. Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance
18. Minister's Tax Guide for 1982 Income Tax—Teitell
19. Minister's Parsonage Allowance and Social Security—Teitell
20. Both Halves of the Apple

PENSIONS AND BENEFITS SERVICES

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Kansas City, MO 64131
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Serving those who serve throughout their ministry

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Please send the information to:

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EVANGELIST'S DIRECTORY

VISUAL ART DEPARTMENT, NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

(Monthly slates published in the first issue of the "Herald of Holiness" each month)

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ALLEN, JIMMIE. (R) 205 N Murray, Sp. 244 Colorado Springs, CO 80916
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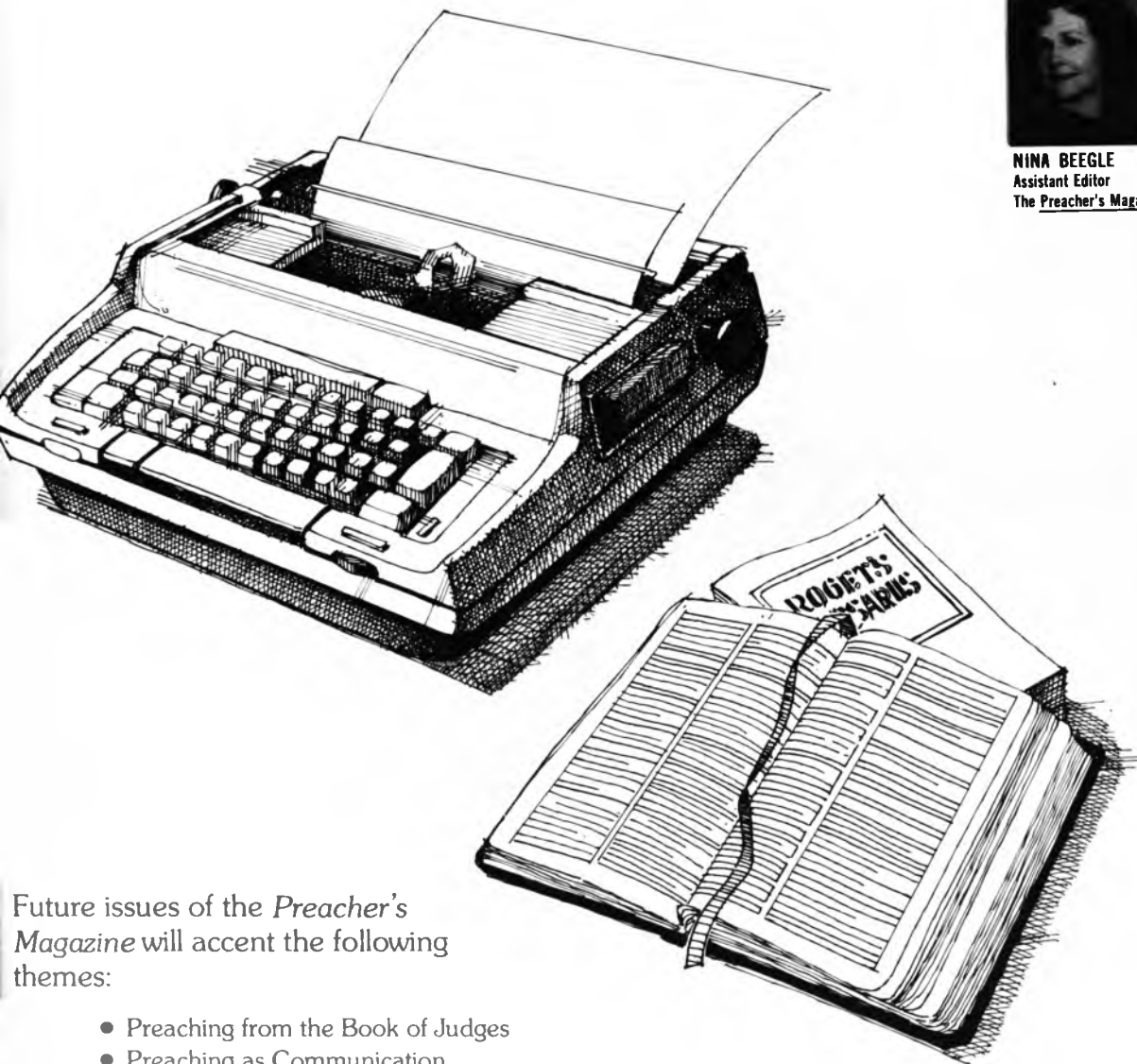
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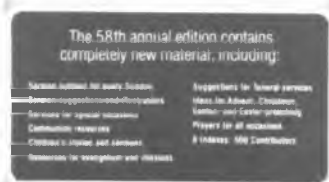
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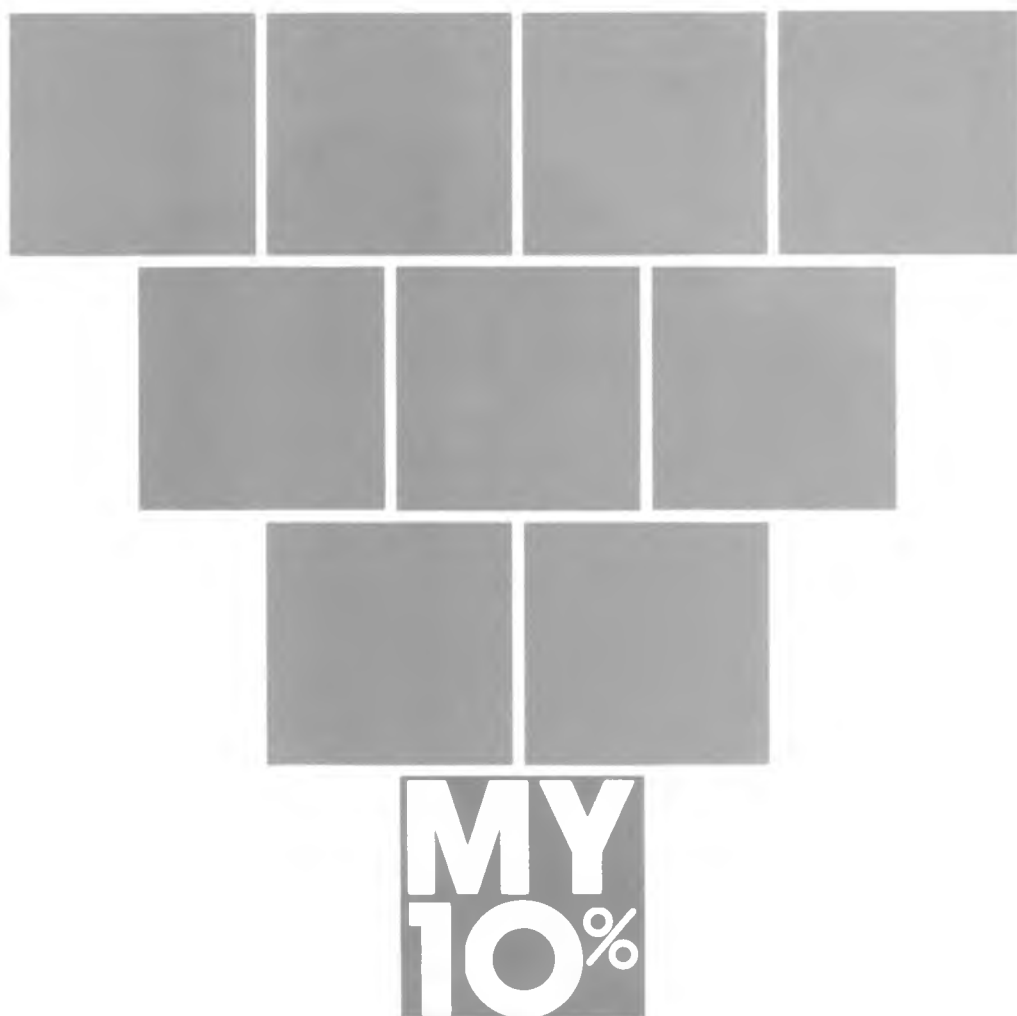
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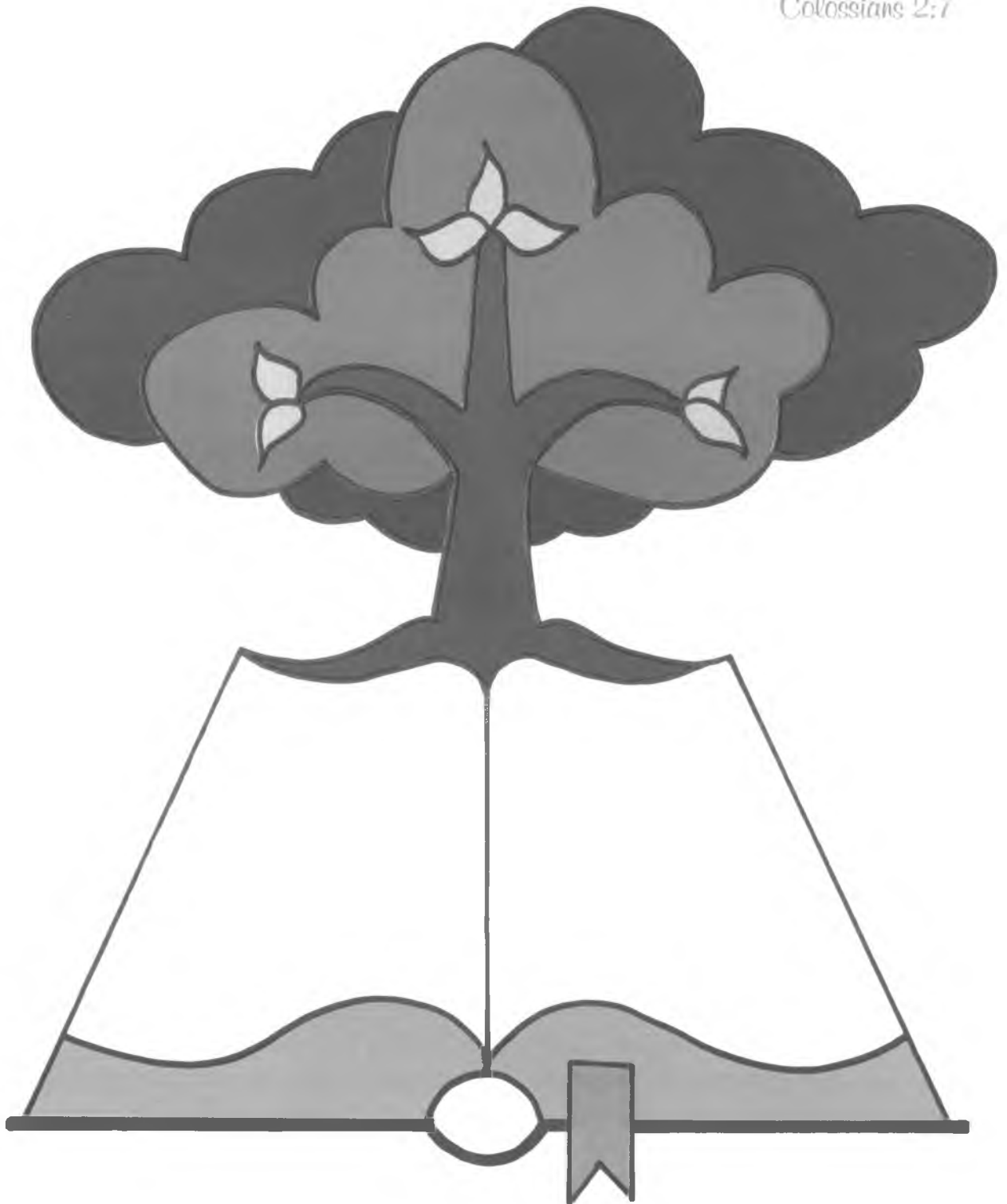
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Jim West

Laziness, poor harvest, and enemy invasions were causes for poverty in Old Testament times. But, according to the prophets, injustice was often the cause of poverty and especially of its continuation. The wealthy used their power to misuse others, leading to poverty. Then, because they were poor, these people became the helpless victims of ongoing oppression. The most likely objects of injustice were the orphans, widows, and aliens in the land. These helpless poor were often victimized by the better-off members of society and kept in their misery, rather than being helped out of it.

In relating justice and poverty, we must also notice that God declares himself to be the just Helper of the poor. God takes the part of those who humanly speaking are helpless. He is "a

father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows" (Ps. 68:5, NASB). "The Lord performs righteous deeds, and judgments for all who are oppressed" (Ps. 103:6, NASB). God helped the poor through His law, which had special provisions for the poor and oppressed in the land (see Exod. 22:21-24). When the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ, announced His mission, He quoted from Isaiah 61: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor" (Luke 4:18, NASB).

Because He was a God of justice, He expected His people to do justly and that meant being concerned for the well-being of the poor.

But leaving Old Testament times, the Church has been on the side of justice for the poor—

that is, when it has not been blinded to this aspect of biblical truth. The New Testament Church cared for the poor in her midst. Paul took up offerings among the Gentiles for the poor in Jerusalem. A Christian church in Rome was broken into with the demand that the Christians produce their treasures. Laurentius, the overseer, pointed to the widows who were being cared for, the sick who were being nursed to health, and the poor whose needs were being met. "These," he said, "are the treasures of the church."

One of the decisive turning points in the ministry of John Wesley was his willingness to preach to the poor, even though that meant preaching outside the sacred walls of churches, where the poor were not welcomed. This "field preaching" was a radical adjustment for Wesley, the high

church Anglican. He was willing to do something naturally repulsive to him in order to reach the poor. For the poor miners of Bristol and elsewhere he set up free dispensaries, a kind of credit union, schools, and orphanages.

Many 19th-century Evangelicals were deeply concerned about social injustice and its impact on the poor. The Wesleyan Methodist Church was founded by abolitionists concerned about injustice and slavery. The Free Methodist movement began, among other things, over the principle of "free pews." Large sections of many churches were reserved for those who could pay the pew rental, thus discriminating against the poor. A. B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, was originally a Presbyterian pastor, who struggled to turn his respectable, wealthy parish toward a concern for the poor, but without success. He finally resigned and eventually founded the Gospel Tabernacle in the Times Square area of New York City. The denomination which grew out of his work understood itself to have a special calling to serve "the neglected classes both at home and abroad." It was the same with the Church of the Nazarene, originally largely a series of rescue missions. It was the same with the Salvation Army, whose founders were Spirit-fired opponents of injustice, particularly as it involved the poor.

And what about us? Justice for the poor is an essential concern for today's serious Christian. Biblical justice today demands that we, as individuals, as churches, and as a nation place a high priority on the needs of the poor. Should not the feeding of the hungry be an essential priority in a nation which has at least been strongly influenced by the Bible and in which two thirds of its citizens are members of some church? According to George Sweeting, "The question is not whether the church should help the poor, but how." This is because God's justice and human poverty are closely related.

From God's Word through Jeremiah, I notice not only the re-

lationship between poverty and justice, but also the *relationship between poverty and knowing God*.

Speaking of Josiah, we read: "He pled the cause of the afflicted and needy; then it was well. Is not that what it means to know Me?" declares the Lord" (Jer. 22:16, NASB). What does it mean to know Me? To plead the cause of the afflicted and needy—that is what it means to know Me. According to that prophetic sounding Epistle, James, "This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and keep oneself unstained by the world" (Jas. 1:27, NASB).

To know God is to share His compassion over human hearts. When Jesus, the Divine Son, looked on the hungry multitudes, He experienced compassion and did not merely preach them a sermon, but He arranged for them to be fed. In His Matthew 25 parable of the sheep and goats, the goats are judged because they did not respond to the needs of the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, and the imprisoned. The King says: "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me" (Matt. 25:45, NASB). According to the apostle John, "Whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:17, NASB).

To know God is also to share His distaste of worldly materialism, which threatens us all in America. Materialism emphasizes the self-centered acquisition of things, not the unselfish sharing of them with others.

We have often been told that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of sexual immorality. While that was part of their problem, there was more to it than that, according to Ezekiel. "Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food, and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy" (Ezek. 16:49, NASB).

To know God is also to share His values. It is thus to be more

concerned with people than with things, with giving than with getting, with wholeness and peace than with material or military might, with what is right than with the merely expedient and convenient.

General Omar Bradley once said we have become "a nation of nuclear giants, but ethical infants. We have learned more about killing than about living, more about war than about peace." If this is so, could it be because we do not know God and thus do not really share His values?

But if God's Word implies that those who know God (and what Christian doesn't want that) should be concerned about the poor, what should we do? Nobody who is really credible has any simple answers. A response to poverty today is an extremely complex matter.

But can we not all be open to God about what He wants us to do in our own situation? He may not ask all of us to respond in the same way, but there are some things for *us* to do.

Can we not become better informed about poverty, as uncomfortable as that kind of investigation is?

Can we not work to better the conditions of the poor in our own area?

Can we not be involved in attempts to influence public policy and church policy in line with a priority for the poor?

Can we not extend ourselves to further the cause of preaching the gospel to the poor?

It is Senator Mark Hatfield, who reports asking Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the question: "Do you not grow weary of trying to do the job God has called you to do in the midst of this impossible poverty?" She smiled and said, "No, for you see, God has not called me to be successful; He has only called me to be faithful to the truth of being part of the Vine of Jesus Christ."

We cannot expect to defeat poverty completely. It will be with us till Jesus returns. But we can do what is possible. And we must be faithful to this clear biblical teaching regarding the cause of the poor.



Changing Strategies for Leaders

by John Gardner

The 1980s have developed attitudes that require a different leadership style. Good leaders for today will be those who know they are not "perfect." They will acknowledge their faults and will struggle with them instead of ignoring them or becoming defensive about them. This requires objective introspection. It requires the ability to look at personal strengths and weaknesses as a leader.

Michael Maccoby in his book, *The Gamesman*, identifies four leadership styles:

1. *The Craftman* who holds the traditional values of the early 1900s. The primary concerns of this leader is for quality, thrift, and his craft.
2. *The Jungle Fighter* who sees life and work as a struggle for power. He divides people into two classes.
—Those for me.
—Those against me.
3. *The Company Man* who came into being during the tranquil "50s." He sees loyalty, modesty, security, family atmosphere as the great values.
4. *The Gamesman* identifies with the "60s." His career is a game that involved competition, innovation, flexibility, and aggressive teamwork.

It could be that you, the leader, will need to find somebody you trust and say, "Look, I really mean this: You'd be doing me a favor if you'd talk to me about my

strengths and weaknesses as you see them."

It will also require the ability to study other leaders and how they operate and identify the differences between their leadership style and yours.

It is entirely possible that the leadership traits that got you where you are will get you no further because they no longer motivate those whom you are supposed to lead.

It is not enough to make affirmative statements about people being our business and our most valuable resource. You cannot evaluate people just as institutional statistics or personal tools to enhance your organizational image. People tend to get cynical when they hear us talk one value standard and then operate by another.

The contemporary successful leader is one who understands that what motivates him may not motivate anyone else. He perceives that people who are very different from himself still can contribute a great deal. Some who have decided that "the job isn't everything" still may contribute.

Within the structure of your group you may very well discover several different work ethics. The effective leader for the "80s" will be as flexible as possible and permit different roles as much as possible. The resources that you put into improving morale and motivation will pay off.

The successful leadership style

for today tries to develop good communications with co-workers. This requires the ability to be honest and recognize that talking *at* people is not the same as talking *with* them. This involves a willingness to listen as well as talk. Listening means that you have to really want to hear.

The human motive we have to work with today is very different from what it was when society was built on the work ethic, or the craft ethic. The better you understand the human material, the more effective leader you will be.

Today what is important for success as a leader must include flexibility and cooperation.

Brain work has been replacing physical work. That has called for more education, more education means a larger variety of ways people think, and that has brought into being a value system that says, "No leadership has a right to tell me what to do without a reason." Unless you understand this and account for it, you are not going to be a leader, especially of younger people.

Younger generations are much more oriented to self than to institutions, or to winning. They want a sense of identity and belonging. That frustration is a good reason why we need good leaders who can make these people feel challenged and fulfilled instead of "losers."

Never before has leadership been so crucial, for never before has our society been so flexible and volatile.



How Your Church Can Change Its Image in the Community

by John C. Oster

Why change a baby's diaper? One good guess is that you change a baby's diaper because certain conditions have changed relative to the baby and to the diaper. Unless changes are made, the soft, sweet relationship that once existed is likely to turn sour and be a source of irritation with results that are detrimental both to the baby and to his community environment.

Why change the image of your church in its community? Because conditions have changed. The effective ministry of your church demands that the church and community interact in the NOW and not in the THEN.

The image of any church is determined to a large extent by what it was like five or more years ago. Since then there have been literally thousands of changes in the life-style and environment—everybody who was alive five years ago is now five years older. The people are bigger, the cars smaller. The speed limit is more limited, the pace of life more hectic, people are indulging themselves more and enjoying it less, more money buys less value, we know more and more about less and less, our computer-assisted potential for absolute frustration grows greater, and for more and more of us that gnawing hunger from within is not so much for the

things of the mind and spirit as for junk food placebos.

Admittedly, the foregoing includes a bit of tongue in cheek, but the fact of social change is undeniable. In the midst of this change, your church is likely to be thought of in the same way that it was thought of the last time anybody thought about your church. If most people haven't heard from you in five years, that's the way they remember you—that's the way they think you are now.

On the other hand, the image of your church may be accurate, but unflattering.

Whatever the reason for changing the image of your church in the community, it is a task that demands constant attention.

Let's start with the building itself. If the only knowledge of your church were its physical appearance, would you attend a church like that?

Admittedly, location and architecture are important, but the pastor is unlikely to have any immediate control over these elements unless he is just entering into a building program. In this case, a copy of *Church Building Sourcebook 2* will help him understand how to find the best locations, how to take advantage of an existing location, and how to use building design as a theo-

logical statement. If, however, your problem is not how to build a building, but how to make the best of what you have, then read on.

The physical building should be neat, in good repair, freshly painted, and proudly identified. If the pastor is unwilling or unable to achieve this, he'd better pack his Bible and catch the next train out. His image will give the lie to everything he says.

If the present location is overrun with weeds and in need of paint and a good sign, then rejoice and be happy—the contrast will be even greater when you get it all fixed up and your new image will be the talk of the neighborhood.

Keeping that image alive and up-to-date also requires adequate lighting. The name of the church should be lighted all night, every night. When the church is in use for an evening service, there should be an abundance of light in the parking areas and around the church. Light has very significant symbolism for the Christian church and it also helps you see better.

The building is important, but do not confuse the building with the church. What we are really talking about in this article is the Church without walls; it, too, has

an image and it is absolutely necessary that the image and the reality be one and the same. Don't try to let on like you're something you're not, but do make every effort to be what you say you are—Christ's Body incarnate in your community. How's that for a beautiful image to live up to?

Assuming your church is an authentic body of Christian believers, how do you let your community know the real you?

Legitimate use of the local media is one way.

There are three "Hi-C" reasons for every pastor to consistently cultivate his relationship with the local newspaper, radio, and television outlets.

1. *Coverage*: Newspaper and broadcast media generally blanket specified advertising markets, which will normally conform to your church's territorial responsibility. Your own mailing list does not touch everybody; the media are designed to reach everybody. If your purpose for existence is not limited to the few people you already have, then you must find a way to put your image before the entire community.

2. *Credibility*: In these days of super sales pitches, everybody is suspect. People at large have a healthy suspicion of religious hucksters who promote their own religiosity in return for riches. You can't say enough good things about yourself to overcome this healthy cynicism. But newspapers and broadcast journalists do have high credibility. When people learn of your genuine activities through their reports, they come to you with confidence. It may seem strange to you that a religious organization which stands for truth with a capital "T" should have to cloak itself in the credibility of a materialistic, secular medium, but that's the way it is, folks.

3. *Cost*: Unless you have an unlimited budget, which you don't, you can't afford to create your own communications media to saturate your community. It only makes sense to use an engine that's already there. Legitimate news doesn't cost you a thing. Paid advertising costs less

per potential contact than any other method you could devise. Newspapers appreciate paid ads (after all, they must pay their bills, too). An occasional paid ad will help you maintain good relations with the newspaper and will produce results. If it does not produce results, work with your local advertising professionals to produce an ad that will produce results. That's what they are for. Businesses don't advertise for charity, you know; they advertise because it produces results. Approached in this way, advertising will produce results for you also.

In presenting your church before the community through the news media, remember that there are certain things that editors are looking for and these things by and large are what readers look for. This list has been helpful to me:

a. *Timeliness*. News is news only in the immediate time period after it happens. Don't attempt to report or live on stale experience. If God is blessing you now, now is the time to tell about it.

b. *Community impact*. People in your neighborhood are not much interested in what your church is doing around the world. They are interested in what your church is doing right around home.

c. *Personalities*. Get the mayor, the governor, or some other well-known person involved in some activity of the church. People everywhere are interested in what such people are doing. If that interest leads them to see your church as a relevant part of community life, so much the better.

d. *Consequence*. If your church is not in the business of making a difference, you had better reexamine your reason for being there at all. Christ came to make a difference. His church exists to make a difference. That difference is expressed in changed individual lives and it is expressed in changed communities which are made up of these changed individuals. Do not be content with anything less than impacting your community with the consequence of Christ.

e. *Visual appeal*. If you can supply your local media with attractive pictures of church activities, especially as they relate to making a difference in the community, by all means do so. God created people with eyes for a reason. In this video age, we are more graphically oriented than ever; that's the way we form our impressions of almost everything. Why do you think they serve Big Macs in a plastic box to be thrown away before you ever leave the restaurant—because the graphic image is consistent and appealing. Real sandwiches can get messy.

f. *Human interest*. Churches are alive with human interest. Everything from babies to puppets to parades with love and marriage thrown in happens in the context of the church. Probably in no other context are so many good things happening. Times are changing; in many ways things are getting worse; this makes the wholesome goodness of Christian life-style even more newsworthy if presented in a non-self-serving way.

g. *Conflict*. Most pastors really don't like conflict and certainly don't like to talk about it in public, but there is conflict nonetheless and it can be a very positive thing for your church. You should be in conflict with certain influences in your neighborhood and everybody should know about it. One image you don't want for your church is that of a nice bunch of folks praising God while the world goes to hell. You need to be out there engaging evil in battle and where the world can see you do it.

Letting your community know what you are really like demands some careful and consistent attention, but it will pay off. You can change your image in the community and while this is going on, God may just be changing you as well.

Which is the more appealing baby—one all dry and powdered and drawing the admiring attention of family and friends, or one wet and cranky and loud, calling attention only to its own pain while frustrated completely by its unchanged condition?

You decide.



Advice for the Not Yet Perfect

By Clarence Bence

John Wesley was both evangelist and pastor. In his journals and sermons, we see a person of almost unlimited energy, who repeatedly calls his listeners to press forward to new levels of spiritual experience. He is not interested in a Christianity that only speaks of striving for impossible dreams and unattainable goals. Rather, he is confident that God does not command that which He does not expect to be achieved, or promise that which divine grace is unable to accomplish in the one who lives by faith. The final words of the *Plain Account* define the high limits of the Wesleyan doctrine of full salvation, "Now let me gain perfection's height."¹

The present availability of perfecting grace through faith has been a recurrent theme in holiness preaching. In his sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Wesley summarizes the logic behind this immediacy of sanctification by telling his audience to "expect it by faith, expect it as you

are, and expect it now."² Since Christian perfection is not by works, there is no need to delay until some level of ethical purity is reached; one can be cleansed from the bent to sinning instantaneously in the present moment.

But what about the believer who hears the message of full salvation and yet cannot (for whatever reason) testify to the experience of entire sanctification? Followers of Wesley take his logic and go several steps further, suggesting that failure to enter the "promised rest" is willful defiance of God's will—a sin; and such a "sinner" is not only lacking in perfection, but might also be jeopardizing his or her very justification, since no sinner can expect to see God. Thus, the term "holiness or hell" arises, suggesting to the unsanctified believer, no matter what point of spiritual maturity he or she has attained, that there are really only two options available to the not yet perfect—an immediate step of faith into the experience of heart cleansing or the

gnawing fear that all salvation might be lost.

Wesley's pastoral concern for his converts does not allow him to make such bold hints. Instead he preaches, "Satan's Devices,"³ a sermon that should be required reading for every holiness minister who would see his people come into a deeper relationship with Christ. One might expect that Wesley would counsel the unsanctified by pointing out all the temptations to carnality and sensual sin that the devil uses to assault us. Instead he suggests that the "grand device" of Satan is to draw attention to the spiritual *perfection* that has not yet been attained by the Christian and then to destroy what saving work has been done by the "expectation of that greater work" that seems so far from our grasp. "The more vehement desire we feel in our heart of the entire holiness he hath promised, the more we are tempted to think lightly of the

present gifts of God, and to undervalue what we have already received, because of what we have not received."⁴

Wesley then proceeds to give detailed descriptions of how Satan attacks our peace, our joy, our faith, and finally our hope of ever being restored to the image of Christ. In despair of not attaining the goal, the Christian becomes fretful toward God for "thus delaying his coming," and envious of those whom he judges to have already attained the prize.⁵ Hence the strange irony—the very pursuit of holiness can become a detriment to those who are on the way.

Surprisingly, Wesley's response is not to push for immediate results. He exhorts the believer to hold fast to what he or she has already attained. The

awareness of the sin that remains in one's life leads one to rely on the grace of God, "who hath done so great things for you already, and will do so much greater things than these."⁶ As to the delay in God's sanctifying work, Wesley offers this thought-provoking comment: "He cannot be straightened for time, wherein to work whatever remains to be done in your soul. And God's time is always the best time. Therefore be thou [fretful] for nothing."⁷

While Wesley never directly addresses the concept of "holiness or hell" he comes close in his concluding words.

Thus, being filled with all peace and joy in believing, press on, in the peace and joy of faith, to the renewal of thy whole soul in the image of Him that created thee! Meanwhile,

cry continually to God, that thou mayest see that prize of thy high calling, not as Satan represents it, in a horrid dreadful shape, but in its genuine native beauty; not as something that must be, or thou wilt go to hell, but as what may be, to lead thee to heaven. . . . In steadfast faith, in calm tranquility of spirit, in full assurance of hope, rejoicing evermore in what God hath done, press ye on unto perfection!⁸

Thanks, Mr. Wesley! We needed that!



NOTES

1. *The Works of John Wesley* (Zondervan Edition), 11:446.
2. *Works*, 6:53.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-43.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 41 ff.

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John Wesley's *Sermons*, 1 vol. Preface dated 1788 (this was my father's); *Fox's Book of Martyrs*,

printed 1846; a Bible printed 1818; *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, Colonel Brengle, prefaced 1909; Methodist hymnal (words only), 1849; *Abraham Lincoln*, by John Carroll Power, 1889; Set of 6 volumes, *Works of Abe Lincoln* (Speeches & Debates), printed by the University Society, Inc., New York, copyrighted 1908; side-opening Methodist hymnal, published in 1827; *Living Hymns*, 1890; *Gospel Hymns*, Beglow & Main, 1883. Ruth Teasdale, 58333 Ironwood Dr., Elkhart, IN 46516.

Biblical Illustrator, new, \$229.50; *Matthew Henry's Commentary* (5 vols., Vol. 6 is missing), \$12.50; *The Speaker's Bible*, original edition, (printed in Scotland), \$135; the *Minister's Manual* (Doran's), 1947; 1951, \$5.00 ea.; *Minister's Annual* (London), 1969, \$5.00. S. Ellsworth Nothstine, Rte. 4, Box 242-3, Riverdale Road, Mocksville, NC 27028.

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Holiness Illustrations, by Leewin B. Williams, Beacon Hill Press, 1940; *Temperance Bible Commentary*, by F. R. Lees and D. Burns, London, 1868; *Fletcher's Checks to Antinomianism*, abridged by Rev. Peter Wiseman, Beacon Hill Press, 1948. Lindsay Enderby, 6 Kenton Rd., Geilston Bay 7015, Tasmania, Australia.

Preacher's Magazine 1960-1982; *Emphasis*, Vols. 1-15.; *Beacon Bible Commentary*, 10 volumes. William Thompson, 9 York Dr., Shore Rd., Belfast, BT 15, Northern Ireland.

Finding Men for Christ; Touched By a Loving Hand and Lovest Thou Me, by G. F. Demster. Also, Oswald Chambers' *So Send I You*. Rev. D. Taft, 125 Kerrs Rd., Christchurch, 6. New Zealand.

Manuals, Church of the Nazarene for the years 1908, 1912, 1916, 1920, 1924, 1932, 1940, 1944. Rev. John R. Andrus, First Church of the Nazarene, E. Main at Will Sts., Chattanooga, TN 37404.

OUR HOPE IS IN THE COMING OF THE LORD

Choral Readings for Advent

by Donna Fletcher Crow

Service 1

Four Sundays before Christmas

The People Plead for a Savior

Leader 1: The people who walk in darkness will see a great light.
Leader 2: Those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.
Chorus 1: Our God, we cry to Thee.
3 Voices: We are in darkness.
2 Voices: We are in anguish.
1 Voice: The world waits in sin and guilt.
Leader 1: The dayspring on high shall visit us,
Leader 2: To give light to them that sit in darkness;
Leader 1: Light to those that walk in the shadow of death,
Leader 2: Light to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Chorus 2: O God, why has thou turned Thy face from us?
Voice 1: We sit in darkness.
Voice 2: We are without hope.
Voice 3: We are without help.
Chorus 1: The custodians of the law abuse their powers;
Voice 4: Nobles oppress the poor,
Voice 5: Judges accept bribes,
Voice 6: Prophets flatter the rich,
Voice 7: Priests teach for hire.
Chorus 1 and 2: Lust of wealth rules on all sides.
Leader 1: Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God.
Leader 2: The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;
Leaders 1 and 2: For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.
Chorus 1: O God, we wait.
Chorus 2: How long must we wait.
Voices 1 and 2: Send us Thy Light.
Voice 3: Come.
Voice 4: O come, Thou long-awaited Savior.

Voices 4 and 5: O come, and set Thy people free.
Voices 6 and 7: O come, and from our fears release us.
Voices 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7: O come, and let us find our peace in Thee.
Leader 1: Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.
Leader 2: He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him.
Leader 1: He also will hear their cry.
Leader 2: He will save them.
Leaders 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Chorus 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Chorus 1: The people which sat in darkness saw a great Light.
Chorus 2: And to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, Light is sprung up.
Voice 1: For God said, "Light shall shine out of darkness."
Chorus 2: He gives the light of the glory of God.
Chorus 1 and 2: He gives the glory of God in the light of Jesus Christ.

Candle Ceremony

The first Advent candle is lighted while the congregation sings verse 1, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." Use trumpets and tambourines on chorus.

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 And ransom captive Israel,
 That mourns in lonely exile here
 Until the Son of God appear.
 Rejoice! Rejoice!
 Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!*
 (If 4 x 10-inch pillar candles are used, they may remain lighted throughout the service.)

Prayer

(Printed in bulletin every Sunday)
Pastor: Our Father, as the early Christians

prayed, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly," we pray You will come to the hearts of all worshippers here.
Congregation: O Jesus, come.
Pastor: Increase our longing for Christ our Savior. Give us strength to grow in our faith. Quicken us for the miracle of Your coming. Open our eyes to what our lives would be if You had not come. Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Congregation: The Lord is our Hope and our Salvation.
Unison: Amen.

Service 2

Three Sundays before Christmas

The People Desire a Leader

Leader 1: And, you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah;
Leader 2: For out of you shall come forth a governor, who will rule My people Israel.
Voices 1 and 2: O God, we are without a leader.
Voices 3 and 4: Our lands are oppressed.
Voices 5 and 6: Our people are comfortless.
Voices 7 and 8: Our hearts do quake with fear.
Leader 1: Say to them that are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not:
Leader 2: Behold, your God will come,
Leaders 1 and 2: He will come and save you."
Chorus 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Leader 1: Thus saith the Lord of Hosts:
Leader 2: Yet wait a little while and I will shake the heavens,
Leader 1: And the earth,
Leader 2: The sea,
Leader 1: And the dry land;



Flight into Egypt by Ricci, Sebastiano (Italian, 1659-1734). Three Lions.

Leader 2: And I will shake all nations,
Leaders 1 and 2: And the desire of all nations shall come.
Chorus 1 and 2: Yes, Lord, we desire Thee.
Chorus 1: We desire Thee, Thy people to deliver.
Chorus 2: We desire Thee, born a child and yet a King.
Chorus 1 and 2: We desire Thee to reign in us forever—now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
Leader 1: The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.
Leader 2: Behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.
Chorus 1: O God, hear from heaven, deliver Thy people who have sinned against Thee.
Chorus 2: By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
Chorus 1 and 2: By Thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.
Leader 1: There will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish.
Leader 2: He shall make thy land glorious.
Leader 1: He shall multiply the nation.
Leader 2: He shall increase their gladness.
Leader 1: They will be glad in His presence as with the gladness of harvest.
Leader 2: For He shalt break the yoke of

their burden and the staff on their shoulder.
Leader 1: He shall deliver thee from the rod of the oppressor.
Chorus 1: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Chorus 1 and 2: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Candle Ceremony

The first and second Advent candles are lighted while the congregation sings verse 2, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."
*O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
 And order all things far and nigh;
 To us the path of knowledge show,
 And cause us in her ways to go.
 Rejoice! Rejoice!
 Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

Prayer

Pastor: Father in Heaven, the day draws near when the birth of Your Son will make radiant the night of the waiting world. May His quiet coming fill us with true inner peace.
Congregation: Yes, Lord, we pray it.
Pastor: Lord, our minds and hearts are filled with hope. We long to hear the voice which tells us of the coming of the Christ child. Lead us in Your wisdom and cause us in Your ways to go.
Congregation: Come to us and heal our land.
Unison: Amen.

Service 3 Two Sundays before Christmas

The People Cry for Peace

Leader 1: The Lord cometh!
Leaders 1 and 2: Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth, peace, good will to men.
Voice 1: But there is no peace.
Voices 1 and 2: Men cry peace, peace,
Voice 1: But there is no peace.
Chorus 1: The nations furiously rage together.
Chorus 2: The kings of the earth rise up,
Chorus 1 and 2: And the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed.
Leader 1: The Lord says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."
Leader 2: Not as the world giveth, give I unto you."
Voice 1: Our enemies seek not peace.
Chorus 1: But they devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land.
Voice 1: There is no peace.
Leaders 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Leader 1: He is despised and rejected of men;
Leader 2: A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.
Leader 1: And we hid as it were our faces from Him.
Leader 2: He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.

Voice 1: There is no peace.
Voice 2: There is none righteous, no, not one.
Voice 3: There is none that understandeth.
Voice 4: There is none that seeketh after God.
Leaders 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Leader 1: Surely, He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows:
Leader 2: Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
Leader 1: But He was wounded for our transgressions,
Leader 2: He was bruised for our iniquities.
Leader 1: The chastisement of our peace is upon Him,
Leader 2: And with His stripes we are healed.
Chorus 1: There is no peace.
Voice 5: The throat of our enemies is an open sepulchre;
Voice 6: With their tongue they have used deceit.
Voice 7: The poison of asps is under their lips.
Voice 8: Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.
Leaders 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Leader 1: Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem.
Leader 2: Praise thy God, O Zion;
Leaders 1 and 2: He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat.
Chorus 1 and 2: There is no peace.
Chorus 1: The feet of our enemies are swift to shed blood.
Chorus 2: Destruction and misery are in their ways.
Chorus 1 and 2: The way of peace they have not known.
Leaders 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Leader 1: He hath delivered my soul in peace and from the battle.
Leader 2: God shall hear and afflict mine enemies.
Leader 1: He shall deliver my soul in peace from the battle.
Chorus 1: Truly, our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Chorus 2: Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.
Leader 1: Peace on earth,
Leader 2: Good will to men.
Choruses 1 and 2: Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord;
Choruses and Leaders: Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!

Candle Ceremony

The first, second, and third Advent candles are lighted while congregation sings verse 3, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

*O come, Desire of Nations; bind
 All peoples in one heart and mind.
 Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
 Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
 Rejoice! Rejoice!
 Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

Prayer

Pastor: O Lord, may Your peace be with us all.
Congregation: Lord, You are our faith and our life.
Pastor: Yes, Lord, being justified by faith, we have peace with You through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. We rejoice in hope and in the glory of God. You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You.
Congregation: There shall be peace and truth in all our days.
Unison: Amen.

Service 4

One Sunday before Christmas

The People Seek for Grace

Leader 1: In the beginning was the Word,
Leader 2: And the Word was with God,
Leader 1: And the Word was God.
Leader 2: In Him was life and the life was the Light of men.
Leader 1: And the Light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not.
Chorus 1: There is none that understandeth;
Chorus 2: There is none that seeketh after God.
Leader 1: And the Word was made flesh,
Leader 2: And dwelt among us,
Leader 1: And we beheld His glory,
Leader 2: The glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father.
Leaders 1 and 2: Full of grace and truth.
Leader 1: And of His fullness we have all received,
Leaders 1 and 2: And grace for grace.
Leader 2: For the law was given by Moses,
Leaders 1 and 2: But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
Chorus 2: But all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.
Leader 1: Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.
Leader 2: Sin hath reigned unto death;
Leaders 1 and 2: Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.
Chorus 1: But it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one.
Leader 1: By one man sin entered into the world,
Leader 2: And death by sin;
Leader 1: And so death passed upon all men.
Leader 2: For as in Adam all men die,
Leaders 1 and 2: Even so in Christ shall all be made alive.
Voice 1: But they are all gone out of the way.
Voice 2: They are together become unprofitable,
Voice 3: There is none that doeth good.
Voices 1, 2, and 3: No, not one.
Leader 1: If through the offense of one many be dead;
Leader 2: Much more the grace of God,
Leader 1: And the gift of that grace—
 Jesus Christ,

Leader 2: Hath abounded unto many.
Leader 1: As by the offense of one,
Leader 2: Judgment came upon all men to condemnation;
Leader 1: Even so by the righteousness of One,
Leader 2: The free gift came upon all men unto justification.
Chorus 1: For the wages of sin is death;
Chorus 1 and 2: But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Leader 1: Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace,
Leader 2: But of debt.
Leader 1: But to him that worketh not,
Leader 2: But believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly,
Leader 1 and 2: His faith is counted for righteousness.
Chorus 1: Not by works of righteousness which we have done,
Chorus 1 and 2: But according to His mercy He saved us!
Leader 1: And if by grace,
Leader 2: Then is it no more of works,
Leader 1: Otherwise grace is no more grace.
Leader 2: But if it be of works,
Leader 1: Then is it no more grace.
Chorus 1 and 2: Not of works, lest any man should boast.
Leader 1: Not by works of righteousness which we have done,
Leaders 1 and 2: But according to His mercy He saved us.
Leader 2: That being justified by His grace,
Leaders 1 and 2: We should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
Chorus 1: For by grace are we saved through faith,
Voice 1: And that not of ourselves.
Voice 2: It is the gift of God;
Voice 3: Not of works,
Voice 4: Lest any man should boast.
Leaders 1 and 2: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord,
Leader 1: For the law worketh wrath,
Leader 2: But salvation is of faith,
Leaders 1 and 2: That it might be by grace.
Chorus 1: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.
Chorus 1 and 2: For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.

Candle Ceremony

Four Advent candles are lighted while the congregation sings verse 4, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

*O Come, Thou Rod of Jesse,
 Free thine own from Satan's tyranny;
 From depths of Hell Thy people save,
 And give them victory o'er the grave.
 Rejoice! Rejoice!
 Emmanuel
 Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

Prayer

Pastor: O Lord, our God, You are the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Our joy is in God; through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Congregation: We rejoice that our hearts be established with grace.

Pastor: We praise the glory of Your grace—wherein we have redemption. But help us to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever.

Unison: Amen.

Service 5 Christmas!

The People Receive the Promise

Leader 1: Arise,

Leader 2: Shine.

Leader 1: For the Light is come,

Leaders 1 and 2: And the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!

Chorus 1: Our hope is in the coming of the Lord.

Leaders 1 and 2: He has come!

Leader 1: For unto us a child is born,

Leader 2: Unto us a son is given;

Leader 1: And the government shall be upon His shoulder;

Leader 2: And His name shall be called Wonderful,

Leader 1: Counselor,

Leader 2: The Mighty God,

Leader 1: The everlasting Father,

Leader 2: The Prince of Peace.

Chorus 2: Our hope has come!

Leaders 1 and 2: He has come!

Leader 1: I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

Leader 2: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,

Leaders 1 and 2: Which is Christ the Lord.

Chorus 1: Glory to God in the highest,

Chorus 1 and 2: And on earth peace, good will toward men.

Leader 1: Unto us a child is born,

Leader 2: Unto us a son is given.

Voice 1: Behold,

Voice 2: A virgin shall be with child,

Voice 3: And shall bring forth a son,

Voice 4: And they shall call His name Emmanuel,

Voice 5: Which being interpreted is,

Voices 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5: God with us.

Leaders 1 and 2: He has come—

Leader 1: A child,

Leader 2: A son.

Male Voice: And so it was . . .

Chorus 1: That while they were there,

Chorus 2: The days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

Female Voice 1: And she brought forth her first-born son,

Female Voice 2: And wrapped Him in swaddling clothes,

Female Voice 3: And laid Him in a manger;

Chorus 1: Because there was no room for them in the inn.

Leader 1: A son.

Voice 1: For God so loved the world,

Chorus 1: That He gave His only begotten Son

Chorus 2: That whosoever believeth on Him

Chorus 1: Shall not perish

Chorus 1 and 2: But have everlasting life.

Leader 2: And the government shall be upon His shoulder.

Voice 1: And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah,

Voice 2: For out of thee shall come a governor,

Voices 1 and 2: That shall rule My people Israel.

Leader 1: He has come—a Governor.

Voices 1, 2, and 3: He shall be great,

Voices 4, 5 and 6: And shall be called the Son of the Highest:

Chorus 1: And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.

Chorus 2: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever;

Chorus 1 and 2: And of His kingdom there shall be no end.

Leader 2: And His name shall be called Wonderful,

Leader 1: Counselor.

Voice 1: This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts,

Chorus 1: Which is wonderful in counsel,

Chorus 2: And excellent in working.

Leaders 1 and 2: He has come—

Leader 1: Wonderful,

Leader 2: Counselor.

Voice 1: O Lord, Thou art my God;

Voice 2: I will exalt Thee,

Voice 3: I will praise Thy name,

Voices 1, 2 and 3: For Thou hast done wonderful things;

Chorus 1: Thy counsels of old are faithful and true.

Leaders 1 and 2: He has come—

Leader 1: Counselor,

Leader 2: Mighty.

Voice 1: And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse,

Voices 1 and 2: And a Branch shall grow out of his roots;

Voices 1, 2, 3 and 4: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,

Voices 2, 3 and 4: The spirit of wisdom and understanding,

Voices 3 and 4: The spirit of counsel and might,

Voice 4: The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Leader 1: The Mighty God.

Chorus 1: We look for that blessed hope

Chorus 2: And the glorious appearing of the great God—

Chorus 1 and 2: Our Savior Jesus Christ

Leader 1: He has come—

Leader 2: The Mighty God.

Chorus 1: For the Lord your God is the God of gods

Chorus 2: And the Lord of lords:

Chorus 1: The great,

Chorus 2: The mighty,

Chorus 1 and 2: And the awesome God.

Leader 1: The Everlasting Father.

Voice 1: Thou, O Lord, art our Father,

Voice 2: Our Redeemer;

Voices 1, 2 and 3: Thy name is from everlasting.

Leader 1: Everlasting Father.

Chorus 1: The Lord shall be thine everlasting light,

Chorus 1 and 2: And the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

Leader 2: Everlasting.

Chorus 1: The Lord is the true God,

Chorus 2: He is the living God,

Chorus 1 and 2: And an everlasting King.

Leader 1: Father.

Chorus 1: Our Father, which art in heaven.

Leader 2: The Prince of Peace!

Voice 1: The Dayspring from on high hath visited us,

Voices 1 and 2: To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

Voices 1, 2 and 3: To guide our feet into the way of peace.

Leader 1: He has come—

Leader 2: The prince of Peace.

Chorus 1: Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee—

Chorus 2: Because he trusteth in Thee.

Leader 1: Prince of Peace.

Chorus 2: Lord, Thou wilt ordain peace for us.

Chorus 1: HALLELUJAH!

Leaders 1 and 2: For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

All: KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS, HALLELUJAH!

Candle Ceremony

All five Advent candles are lighted while congregation sings verse 5, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

He comes! Our king eternal,

Our Saviour which is Christ the Lord.

With wisdom, counsel, peace, and might;

Emmanuel, our God is with us now.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel

Has come to thee, O Israel!

Communion

Communion is served to the congregation while choir or recording sings "For unto Us a Child Is Born" from *Messiah*.

Prayer

Pastor: But now is Jesus Christ made manifest, by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.

Congregation: To the only wise God, be glory through Jesus Christ forever.

Unison: Amen.

End with "Hallelujah Chorus" by choir or recording.

Sources

Scripture Sources

Service 1: Isa. 9:2; Luke 1:7, 8, 79; Isa. 40:1, 5;

Ps. 145:3, 19; Matt. 4:16, 2 Cor. 4:6.

Service 2: Matt. 2:6; Isa. 35:4; Isa. 9:1, 3, 4, 7.

Service 3: Luke 2:14; John 14:37; Ps. 35:20; Isa. 53:3-6; Rom. 3:10-17; Ps. 55:18, 19; Isa. 9:7; Luke 19:38; Isa. 26:3; Isa. 39:8; Rom. 5:1.

Service 4: John 1; Rom. 3:11, 23; 5; 3:10, 12; 6:23; 4:4-5; Titus 3:5, 7; Rom. 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 4:15-16; Titus 2:11; Heb. 13:9; 2 Pet. 3:18.

Service 5: Isa. 9:6; Luke 2; Matt. 1:23; John 3:16; Matt. 2:6; Luke 1:32-33; Isa. 28:29; 25:1; 11:1-2; Titus 2:13; Deut. 10:17; Isa. 63:16; Ps. 41:13; Isa. 60:19; Luke 11:2; Jer. 10:10; Luke 1:78-79; Isa. 26:3, 12; Rom. 16:26.

Music Sources

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," 13th Century; "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," Charles Wesley; *Messiah*, George Friedrich Handel



Come Alive, Francis of Assisi

by J. Kenneth Grider

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You we need, Brother Francis. We need you in great part because we have such a shortage of saints. We have more evangelists than saints, more theologians than saints, more of perhaps all of Christ's workers than saints.

To be a saint, we realize, costs and costs and costs. It costs because there is no recognition in it. It costs because a person can't be one without discipline, and we find it easy to neglect our spiritual disciplines these days. It costs because a person can't be a saint without relinquishing that keen-edged yen for the things of this life which commandeers so many of us. It costs because, to be one, a person must enter into that self-naughting experience in which one really is a poor and needy creature.

We need you these days, Francis, to demonstrate to us what a saint is really like. We need you to live out, in your daily life, the kind of concrete and costly discipleship to Christ which is the credential of such a Christian.

You did so well at being a saint that the things you said and did are still in our thoughts after these 800 years. Because of what you said and did, some have called you the "second Christ." Some, the "first Christian." Some the "last Christian." Accolades like that would be too much for any of us Christians these days. I suppose Mother Teresa, who ministers to the little people, the un-

people, of Calcutta, is as much of a saint as we have.

We need you to model the life that is lived undividedly for Christ, without special regard for any of the wealth that is worldly. Born to material wealth, you renounced it and accepted real poverty. Indeed, you pursued poverty.

We excite to the way in which you sought to implement, literally, the teachings of Jesus—and to the way you sought to emulate the life that He himself lived.

We remember that, when you started the order, you called its members Friars *Minor*, because they were to be, themselves, a lot of little people who would emulate Christ's life, and not seek power or prestige.

We recall that you did not even want, at first, to draw up any rules for spiritual formation, for these minor, lowly friars, because you felt that Jesus had already given the rules, in His teachings, and in His life.

Right now, Francis, the poor are in our caring concern. In many nations, millions of the poor do not go any more to their workplaces. They are not needed in their work-places. And the gas bills and other bills continue to pile up. And the landlord becomes anxious about his rent money. Young fathers cannot earn what they are accustomed to earning, and tend to be discouraged. Young mothers are at times introducing a sound of wailing into the songs they are singing to

their children, for many of them are feeling acutely what it is like to be in want.

You could help us, I feel, right at this time. You could help us to bear up under the burdens that we are bearing. You are practiced in this, while we are not. You could show us how to wrest from these times of scarcity, lessons about dependence on God, about putting first things first, about being thankful for little benefits that come bouncing our way once in a while. Loving all of nature as you did, including its birds and its beasts, you could help us to be ministered to by its beauty and its simplicity, and by the unworried life of its animals.

In 1984, the Methodists are to celebrate the 200th anniversary of their official work as a denomination in America. In 1983, the Nazarenes are to celebrate the 75th anniversary of their official organization at Pilot Point, Tex., in 1908. The year 1982 is, to us, also an important anniversary. It is the 800th anniversary of your birthday—to a life of only 44 years (1182-1226).

We celebrate this 800th anniversary with a thankful appreciation of the kind of life that you lived. We also celebrate it with the hope that, if you cannot bless our so-needy world as a saint who walks among us again, God might gift our world with individuals who, like you, will stand in their "littleness" as truly Christed persons.



Miracle Sunday

by Judy Cummins

Domestic Engineer

My family and I were getting ready for church this morning. There was the usual hustle and bustle to get there on time. (Of course, my husband had left early so, as he says, "I can pull myself together before church begins.") I know that as a minister he does need that extra time with just he and the Lord. Like I say, I know that intellectually, but sometimes emotionally I feel like it is a "cop out" because he knows what is going to happen with three teenage daughters and a 10-year-old son to get to church.

Thirty minutes to take-off time. "Mom, Crystal has the door locked and won't let me in the bathroom."

"Crystal, let your sister in."

Fifteen minutes to take-off time. "Mom, Crystal still won't let me in the bathroom."

A wail from the bathroom. "Mom, my life is ruined, just absolutely ruined."

"Honey, open the door so we can talk about it."

As the door opens slowly, there stands 13-year-old Crystal, tears streaming down her face, "My hair won't curl right."

"Here, let me help you."

That crisis over with we start again, "Ten minutes to take-off time." "Oh, Mom," cries 15-year-old Debbie, "I will never make it."

"Debbie, you have been up for three hours. There is no excuse for you not being ready."

"But, Mom, you just don't understand."

"Five minutes to take-off time." This time 17-year-old Shelley, "Mom, surely you would *not* be so cruel to take off without my hair being dry." I smile and say, "Just watch me!"

Finally, we are leaving! So, in a scurry of Bibles, purses, make-up, brushes, rollers, and ribbons, we are in the car. All of a sudden I remember, "Where's Chip?"

From the backseat comes an exasperated sigh, "I've been in the car for 10 minutes, Mom."

"All right, good, now does everyone have his/her Bible, tithe, etc.? Good!" So, off we go, praying on the way that the Lord will somehow redeem this day.

This morning seemed to be the usual Sunday morning not too much different from all the rest. As I was sitting in church before the service began, I was thinking back over the morning, feeling a little guilty, wondering how I could have made it better. The Lord gently reminded me of the miracle that took place earlier that morning.

Our pastor had just preached two wonderful sermons the Sun-

day before on "quarreling." Not that our family needed it, with three teenage daughters we had not had a quarrel in at least 15 minutes and that was because they were sitting in church.

The children were all getting dressed and suddenly, spontaneously a quarrel between the two eldest began. I sighed and thought as I put the last dish in the dishwasher, I wonder if those sermons had as much effect on our members as it did on our family.

I started back to the bedroom to get dressed and a miracle took place right in front of my eyes. My eldest daughter had walked back into her sister's bedroom and said, "Debbie, I'm sorry I yelled at you." And then another miracle happened. It was almost more than my heart could stand. Debbie replied, "I'm sorry too, Shelley."

Thank You, Lord, for giving Your ordinary people extraordinary days. This has been one for me and I thank You for it. Just between You and me, Lord, now it is our secret. I feel sorry for my husband because he did not get to witness the miracle that took place today while he was off "pulling himself together" before church.



PASTORAL CLINIC

Case Studies for Analysis and Reflection

Case studies can often bridge the gap between the theories of pastoral theology and the actual practice of ministry. Cases can be compelling slices of “pastoral life” which we can enter into to test our ideas without the risk of real-life settings. Effective use of case studies can have the same value to pastors and ministerial students that a dress rehearsal can have for musicians and actors.

The case study method has a way of involving us at a deep level. Before we know it, we have personalized the roles and stepped into the soul of one or more of the characters. And that is good because a case study is more effective when you enter the case as fully as possible to test your insight, analysis, character, and ministry style.

Case studies should not be looked upon as interesting little detective stories to be figured out. Rather, really analyze the case, ask yourself what you *would* do, not merely what one *ought* to do, in the situation. In each case explore what you learned about yourself.

Analysis and reflection on cases can be profitable for individual study. But they work best in small groups. You may want to use one of the following cases in your next fellowship meeting with other ministers in your area.

CASE I: RICHARD AND BARBARA

Richard and Barbara were married in 1952. Richard is 51 years old, Barbara, 50. Richard is a lawyer and earns \$70,000 per year. Barbara has been a housewife all these years and has given her energies to raising their four children.

The oldest child is Kathy, 25. She has a degree in elementary education from a Christian college, but can't get a job. Her husband is in law school and has to give full time to his studies. Richard has “given” and “loaned” (he no longer knows whether the funds forwarded are gifts or loans) them money many times. They *had* to have a car. When the first baby came there was no hospitalization. Richard had to come up with the money for the hospital bill

as well as the cash for a washing machine and baby furniture.

John, 22, dropped out of college to take on the “no nukes” cause full time. He works for a leftist newspaper, never goes to church, and seldom communicates with his family. He married once, but was divorced six months later.

Steve, age 20, never got interested in high school or church. He spent his teen years tuning his guitar and playing for a not-quite-successful rock group. On three occasions Richard has had to bail Steve out of jail for drug possession. Two times he had to travel more than 1,000 miles to extricate the youth. Now he has moved into a commune. He often calls home for money and if Richard and Barbara don't kick in, he threatens to cut off communication forever or to take up drug dealing if their hard-hearted selfishness keeps them from sending money.

David, 17, is a bit unusual. He goes to church sometimes. He is also “into” poetry and yoga. He is very thin and seldom eats. He goes to a private Christian high school. But Richard is worried because David thinks Anita Bryant is “perfectly awful.” He plans to enter a Christian college in a few months. The tuition alone is \$1,500 per year. Work? David wouldn't know how. Richard will find the money some way.

Richard's father is dead. His mother, age 79, has moved in with him and Barbara. A great many tensions have resulted. Richard's mother feels quite free to criticize Barbara. After a clash she (the mother) locks herself in her room and won't talk to anyone but her son. Richard thinks that if Barbara were “truly Christian” about the whole thing, most of the trouble would be avoided.

Barbara's parents are both alive, but they are in very poor health. They can no longer care for themselves. They want to move into a retirement community, but it is so expensive that it is almost out of the question. Even the ordinary nursing homes in the area are outrageously high priced. So Richard and Barbara have hired a housekeeper to look

after them. Barbara feels guilty about asking Richard to support her parents since she doesn't work. But she bitterly reasons that he owes it in return for what she has to put up with from his mother.

Richard has become irritable, nervous, and is nursing an ulcer. The law firm's business has dipped with the economy and the boss has just hired his son starting him with the same rank as Richard.

Here is Richard at 51 earning \$70,000 per year. He should be on easy street. Everyone thinks he has money—especially the church finance committee. But if he lost his job, he would be unable to meet current expenses four months later.

One day Richard and Barbara stop by the pastor's study. "Do you have time to talk with us?" he asks.

Analysis and Reflection

1. If you were to role-play the counseling session which begins just as the case study ends, which character would you choose to play? Why?

2. What would Richard say was the "real" problem in his life? What would Barbara say? If the pastor asked them to list their three "biggest" problems, what would each list?

3. What do you, their counselor, think the central problem is? Is there a central problem?

4. If you were to advise Richard and Barbara about *one thing* they could do as a *first step* toward working out the problem, what would it be?

5. Which of the following do you think will happen first in Barbara's life? In Richard's?

- a. Initiate a divorce
- b. Be divorced by the spouse
- c. Suicide
- d. Nervous breakdown
- e. Serious physical illness
- f. Run away; that is, just disappear
- g. Begin drinking
- h. Other _____

6. Think of your Sunday morning service last week. Mentally review the music, prayers, announcements, and particularly the sermon. Suppose Richard and Barbara had attended. What would Richard's/Barbara's response have been to the various elements of the service? Would their response be

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| a. boredom | e. inspiration |
| b. disgust | f. relief |
| c. guilt feelings | g. encouragement |
| d. anger | h. depression |

i. _____

7. If you were to prepare a service for next Sunday with them in mind, what elements would you build into the service? What would your sermon title be?

8. How could you bring the resources of the Christian faith to Richard's and Barbara's predicament? What scriptures could help? What books? What Christian truths (theology) could you apply? What devotional acts would help? How could you bring the church as a "community of faith" to their rescue? What ministries in your own church are set up to deal with the kinds of problems Richard and Barbara have? Would you seek to involve Richard or Barbara in any type of *service* through your church? Why?

9. Who, that is, what persons in your own congregation, did you think of while meditating on this case? If you called them today, what would you try to do for them?

CASE II: FITNESS FOR MINISTRY*

In calling one evening on an attractive divorcee, you respond to what you interpret as her amorous advances and you embrace her for a moment. Soon this act is reported by her to your church board. A meeting is called and you are confronted with the report of this incident. Some board members say that your touching her in this way—the phrase used is "making erotic overtures"—casts doubt on your moral fitness for the ministry. At the very least, they say, it casts doubt on the adequacy of your judgment.

A. What would you say to the board?

- _____ 1. Confess the wrongdoing to the board, ask for understanding and forgiveness from the board and the woman.
- _____ 2. Acknowledge the indiscretion; assure the board it will never happen again.
- _____ 3. Suggest that she misinterpreted my intentions, which were simply to show warmth and concern.
- _____ 4. Indicate my strong feeling that she in creating a tempest in a teapot over a totally insignificant action.
- _____ 5. Deny the action, suggesting she seems to be projecting her own problems upon me.
- _____ Other. (Please describe.)

B. What was your objective or purpose in answering "A" as you did?

C. What was your rationale or underlying theory in answering "A" and "B" as you did?

CASE III: YOU AREN'T LIKE THAT—ARE YOU?*

In your "get acquainted" calls on the parishioners of your first church, you are visiting with an elderly man who has been an active member and leader in the church for many years. He says, "Pastor, I have

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The Ministry of the Spirit in the Life of Prayer

By Alex R. G. Deasley

Scripture: "And in the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with unuttered groanings; and God who searches our hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will" (Romans 8:26-27).¹

I. BACKGROUND

The verses quoted stand out with a certain distinctness from their context as constituting the sole reference to prayer in the sustained argument contained in Rom. 1:18—8:39.² It is hardly surprising, therefore, that some English versions³ set them off from their surroundings as an independent paragraph. The question as to what prompted Paul to speak of prayer specifically at this point will occupy us later; our immediate concern is to determine the *general* background in which the specific examples might be placed. Without attempting a thorough treatment of the eighth chapter, it will suffice to draw attention to two features which provide the general guidelines for interpretation.

1. Romans 8 is frequently (and not unfairly) described as Paul's classic treatment of life in the Spirit. In particular, the eighth chapter stands in marked contrast to the sixth, for while both deal with similar themes—deliverance from the law of sin and death (6:12-19; 8:2-4), and the new life of righteousness and holiness (6:4, 8-11, 22-23; 8:10, 12-13)—the Spirit is unmentioned in chapter six while He is mentioned repeatedly in chapter eight. It is this preoccupation with the Spirit in chapter eight that constitutes the frame of reference within which Paul speaks of the Spirit's ministry in various areas of the Christian life.

2. While Paul here emphasizes the freedom and life which the Spirit brings (8:2-4, 6), he is evidently concerned that he not overstate his case. Even life in the Spirit has a shadow cast over it: the shadow of decay and death. "But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness" (8:10). Even if the prevailing emphasis is upon spiritual life, the fact that our bodies are doomed to death (which is probably what verse 10b means) is in the background, like the deep bass of a symphony. Again, in verse 17, the rising tide of privilege depicted by Paul: "If children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ," falls away for a moment as Paul inserts the qualification: "provided we suffer with

him in order that we may also be glorified with him." It is against this mingled setting of suffering and glory that verses 18-39 are developed. Life in the Spirit is not painted only in gilded colors; darker shades are present too. Even the age of the Spirit is a mixed age, and if His ministry is to have reality it must take account of the somber as well as the brighter patches. It is against such a background that Paul sees the Spirit's ministry in prayer.

II. FROM BACKGROUND TO EXEGESIS

We may turn now to the exegesis of verses 26-27. This is possible only against the backdrop of their immediate context, which begins at verse 18. This section appears to have three active subjects: the creation (verses 18-22), the believer (verses 23-25), and the Spirit (verses 26-27); and all are involved in the same activity: groaning. The creation groans (verse 22); the believer groans (verse 23); and the Spirit groans (verse 26). Since the Spirit's ministry in prayer is to intercede for us by groaning, we shall best understand this if we approach it in the light of the groaning of the creation and the groaning of the believer.

A. *The Groaning of the Creation* (verses 18-22)

The passage begins by placing alongside each other a somber statement of fact and a sober affirmation of faith. On the one side are "the sufferings of this present time"; on the other "the glory which shall be revealed in [not merely to] us" (KJV); and these are connected by the confident assertion that the former are not fit to be compared with the latter. The key word here is *revealed*, a term that is picked up in verse 19 and becomes the springboard for Paul's description of the groaning of the creation in verses 19-22. In these verses—to echo Dodd's phrase—Paul "speaks with the vision of a poet."⁴ As in the Old Testament, where so often the natural order of creation is personified—the earth being said to mourn (Isa. 24:4-7) or the trees to rejoice (Isa. 55:12)—so here Paul in a vivid image sees nature⁵ as craning its neck (to translate literally) as it waits expectantly for the revealing of the sons of God, whose destiny is yet to be fully revealed. There is no doubt in Paul's mind that we are already God's children (verse 16), but we have not yet received our full inheritance: we are "heirs" (verse 17); but our full sonship is yet to be revealed, and only when this happens will creation find fulfillment.

The exact nature of this fulfillment Paul now spells out. The problem of the created order is that God

subjected it to “futility” (“vanity,” KJV). Matthew Black writes: “what is ‘futile’ in the Biblical sense is what is ‘without result,’ ‘ineffective,’ ‘something that does not reach the end for which it was created.’ The word is here used of the disappointing and frustrating character of present existence.”⁶ Paul probably has in mind here the cursing of the earth by God in Gen. 3:17-18 as part of the penalty of man’s sin, in consequence of which the earth, instead of sustaining man (Gen. 1:28-30), would frustrate and finally devour him: “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Gen. 3:19). This is further elaborated in Rom. 8:21 as “bondage to decay.” Creation is enslaved by decadence so that everything she produces contains the seeds of its own destruction; her kiss upon her suffering is the kiss of death. The Hebrew word underlying the Greek “futility” denotes “breath” or “vapour” in the sense of that which is frail and fleeting.

It is all of these ideas that Paul gathers together in verse 22: “We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now.” All of the aspects expressive of nature’s frustration and futility he concentrates within the single image of a woman in the pangs of childbirth—straining, laboring, groaning to bring forth. As Sanday and Headlam vividly express it: “[Paul] seems to lay his ear to the earth and the confused murmur which he hears has a meaning for him; it is creation’s yearning for that happier state intended for it and of which it has been defrauded.”⁷

But there is another side to nature’s anguish. If, against her will (indeed as the direct result of man’s willed choice of evil) she has been subjected to futility, then her union with man in his ruin brings with it the possibility, nay, the certainty, of union with him in his redemption. Her destiny is bound up with his, one way or another. Thus, she awaits with desperation the revealing of the sons of God, for she knows that the moment of their transmutation into the divine likeness will be the moment of her own transformation (verse 19). If she has been subordinated to the law of decay and corruption, she has been subordinated in hope, and hope is the next-of-kin to faith, by which we are saved (verse 24). The substance of that hope is that “the bondage of decay” will be replaced by the emancipation that consists in “the liberty of the glory of the children of God” (my translation). The key word is *glory*. It is this perfection of the image of God of which all men fall short (3:23); it is in the hope of the full restoration of this that we rejoice (5:2); and it is in the liberation of the sons of God into this full-orbed freedom that the creation sees her own moment of emancipation (8:21).

While Paul writes much in these verses of the groaning of creation, it is not a groaning untouched by hope, a night followed by no day, a doom without promise of release; rather the fingers of dawn are the significant feature even if one has to crane the neck and screw the eyes in order to detect their first glimmer.

B. *The Groaning of the Believer* (verses 23-25)

From the groaning of the creation Paul turns next

to the groaning of the believer. The wording evinces a degree of surprise that groaning should be part of the believer’s lot. The tone of verse 23 is brought out by some such rendering as the following: “And not only the creation but even we ourselves, although we have the first fruits, that is, the gift of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves.” If it is possible to expect too little of the redemptive work of the Spirit, it is also possible to expect too much. Some such exaggerated expectation may underlie this verse: the expectation, for example, that resurrection perfection was presently available and all the believer’s problems are resolved at a stroke. Paul firmly scouts any such suggestion, pointing to three relevant facts.

1. Possession of the Spirit does not mean that redemption has been realized in its fullness. In the Old Testament and in Judaism contemporary with Paul, the Spirit was regarded as the mark *par excellence* of the New Age (Ezek. 36:26-27; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:16-18). It was therefore to be inferred from the presence of the Spirit in the hearts of the believers that the New Age had come (Rom. 8:9-16). It did *not* follow, however, that because the New Age had been inaugurated it had also been consummated. The Spirit was but the firstfruits that, like His counterpart in the Temple offerings, was but the pledge of the full gift that was yet to be given (Exod. 23:19; Deut. 18:4). For this reason even those who possessed the Spirit still groaned within themselves. As Barrett puts it: “Possession of the Spirit is a great privilege, but it is not God’s final gift, for which Christians still look eagerly forward.”⁸

2. That for which Christians look forward is adoption as God’s sons. There is evident tension in Paul’s thought at this point. In verse 14 he has just affirmed that those who are led by the Spirit are God’s sons; in verse 15 he has assured his Roman readers that they have received the Spirit of adoption; while in verse 16 he has asserted that the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. Clearly, while present adoption is real, it is partial and incomplete.

3. The essence of adoption is final acceptance into God’s family of which the redemption of the body is the copingstone. We are not full-fledged members of God’s family until we bear the family likeness, and this we do not do so long as we are in bondage to decay. However much we are possessed by the Spirit, then, we are neither fully nor finally saved until the last day. God’s redemption is coextensive with the destruction wrought by sin, and since this has marred God’s material creation, including man’s body, redemption remains incomplete until the created order including man is wholly renewed. In the absence of this renewal, we groan, just as the creation groans. Paul gives no immediate illustration of this here, but in 2 Cor. 5:1-10 he uses parallel language to speak of the fear of dying. “In this present body we do indeed groan; we yearn to have our heavenly habitation put on over this one—in the hope that, being thus clothed, we shall not find ourselves naked. We groan indeed, we who are enclosed within this earthly frame; we are oppressed because we do not want to have the old

body stripped off. Rather our desire is to have the new body put on over it, so that our mortal part may be absorbed into life immortal" (2 Cor. 5:2-4, NEB). In the absence of this, however, the believer groans, but finds assurance in the indwelling Spirit whom God has given as a guarantee (verse 5).

To return now to Romans 8: Paul concludes this sequence by asserting that the hope of such a final transformation is the hope in which we were saved (verse 24). The statement is remarkable as containing an element of paradox: Paul speaks of salvation as a past event ("we were saved") and yet with a future reference ("in hope"). As Barrett expresses it: "we have not been saved absolutely, but only in hope."⁹ Yet to say we are saved in hope is not to say we hope we are saved; it is to say that we were saved with the confident expectation that the salvation God had begun in us He is able to bring to completion (Rom. 5:2-5). Hope is thus linked not only to faith but also to continuance: "If we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience" (verse 25). To quote Barrett again: "To live as a Christian is to walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. V. 7), to find the meaning of life in God's future, rather than in the present."¹⁰

C. *The Groaning of the Spirit* (verses 26-27)

The pinnacle of Paul's progression of thought is reached in the verses that are our particular concern. The creation groans for emancipation; believers groan for redemption; and the Spirit catches up the groaning of God's children and makes it His own. Although the word *groanings* does not occur until the end of verse 26 it is a fair inference that the idea was in Paul's mind from the start; the first clause of the sentence: "the Spirit helps us" is balanced and elaborated by the third: "the Spirit intercedes for us." Taking verses 26 and 27 as a whole we have a generalized introductory statement (verse 26a) followed by three explanatory statements: a definition of the need (verse 26b), a description of the answer (verse 26c), and an explanation of the result (verse 27). We may consider the passage along these lines.

The introductory statement constitutes the bridge between what precedes and what follows: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness" (verse 26a). The term *weakness* seems to refer both backward to those occasions of groaning in the believer which arise from his only partially redeemed body; and forward to the specific instance of weakness that Paul is about to discuss, namely, weakness in prayer. Paul's general affirmation is that, amid such infirmities, the Spirit helps us. According to Sanday and Headlam¹¹ the Greek word translated "helps" is an emphatic form of a term that means "to take hold of at the side so as to support"; the same term is used in Luke 10:40. In our frailty the Spirit moves alongside us to help us. Paul now spells out more precisely what he has in mind, and we turn next to his three explanatory statements.

1. A definition of the need (verse 26b). "We do not know how to pray as we ought." The Greek is somewhat more ambiguous than RSV and other English translations, leaving it unclear whether the problem is ignorance of how to pray, that is, how to put the words together; or ignorance of what to pray

for, that is, the content of the prayer. The phrase in verse 27 regarding praying according to God's will would seem to favor the latter. The recurrent problem in praying is knowing what it is best to ask for. Herein may lie the answer to the question frequently raised as to why the example of weakness that Paul chooses to speak of is prayer. "Possibly," suggests Barrett, "because prayer is the most elementary of religious duties: we are so weak that we do not even know how to pray."¹² In a general sense this may be the explanation. However, a more particular form of that explanation may underlie Paul's choice of example, namely, his own experience of praying for the removal of his thorn in the flesh whereas it was God's will to give him strength to bear it (2 Cor. 12:8-9). That is a perfect instance of ignorance in prayer: should we pray for the removal of our burdens or should we pray for strength to bear them? Luther wrote: "It is not a bad but a good sign if the opposite of what we pray for appears to happen. Because God's counsel and will far excel ours."¹³

2. A description of the answer (verse 26c). "The Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (NASB). Paul does not say that the Spirit groans; it is we who groan in the frustration of our ignorance in knowing what to pray for. But the Spirit catches up our inarticulate groanings into His own unuttered groanings. He has no need to speak, for God "knows what is the mind of the Spirit" (verse 27) without having to be told. The suggestion made from time to time and championed vigorously of late by Ernst Käsemann¹⁴ that Paul is referring to speaking in tongues as a prayer language consequently does not fit either the context or the words. "The point is," says Barrett, "that communion between Spirit [-filled worshipper] and God is immediate and needs no spoken word."¹⁵ Or to quote John A. T. Robinson: "The Spirit takes them [i.e., our groanings] up and turns them into prayers. Previous English versions attribute the groans or sighs to the Spirit, which is not easily intelligible. Rather, it is our groanings which the Spirit makes his own. He actually uses our groans as prayers."¹⁶ In substance, then, Paul's answer is that in the moments of our deepest frustration in prayer: when we are frustrated into incoherence and even silence, we are not alone. The Spirit is interceding through our very incoherence.

3. An explanation of the result (verse 27). "And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." The desired result is achieved: prayer in keeping with the will of God. And verse 27 explains how this comes about: God who searches men's hearts (Jer. 17:10) knows without words what the Spirit means; that is, knows that (which is preferable translation to "because") any prayer the Spirit offers will accord with the divine will. To quote Dr. Robinson again: "There is an identity between God and the Spirit and an affinity or rapport between the Spirit and our spirits (cf. verse 16), and this is the secret of Christian prayer. *Christian prayer has God on both sides of the relationship.*"¹⁷ Or to put it otherwise: the Spirit is the interpreter of Christian prayer, the one who

bridges the language-barrier, or perhaps still more aptly, the one who converts into sound the message of the mute. The Spirit at work within our spirits interprets our unspoken desires to God who is Spirit, thereby closing the circuit of communication.

III. FROM EXEGESIS TO EXPOSITION

It is a truism that there is no one way in which a passage must be treated homiletically to the exclusion of all others. Romans 8:26-27, our primary focus of interest, could very appropriately be preached upon on the lines of the exegesis offered in Section II, C above, that is, by taking the four statements in the order in which they come. However, what to Paul is a passing illustration may be a burning question in the spiritual life of some Christian, and could therefore be approached profitably from that angle. Such an approach might yield the following.

How Prayer Achieves Its Goal

I. When Our Weakness Is Admitted (verse 26b)

Not everything that cramps or inhibits our spiritual life is sin; some of it is weakness. This arises not from the will, but from the unredeemed body: imperfect understanding, imperfect recollection, the fluctuation of feeling, imperfect performance. *It affects even prayer.* The work of the Spirit in such matters is not to *cleanse* but to *help*, and He is given especially to help us in our prayer-life. It is interesting that the term *spirit* is used four times in verses 26-27 and not at all elsewhere in verses 18-39. This underscores the special role of the Spirit in prayer: a role we do not always allow for. The first step in prayer is to admit that "we do not know how to pray as we ought," and to open our hearts to the Spirit's assistance.

II. When His Assistance Is Accepted (verse 26c)

"The Spirit intercedes for us." The fundamental thing in prayer is not eloquence, nor understanding, nor length, nor decibel level, but oneness with the Spirit. Hence we are not to fear our feebleness, or incoherence, or even our silence. Luther sees these very things as our invitation to God to do for and through us what we cannot do for ourselves, in the same way that marble or clay are an invitation to the artist to create a work of art. "The fitness of the material is, as it were, an unfelt prayer for the form which the artist understands and fulfills as he gets ready to make what in its suitableness it longs for. So also God comes upon our feeling and thinking and sees what we pray for, what we are fit for, and what we long for. And then he grants the prayer and he proceeds to shape us into the form his act has planned."¹⁸ Hence, say Sanday and Headlam, "the verse contains a statement which the unready of speech may well lay to heart, that all prayer need not be formulated, but that the most inarticulate desires (springing from a right motive) may have a shape and a value given to them beyond anything that is present and definable to the consciousness."¹⁹

III. When His Intention Is Accomplished (verse 27)

God's intention and purpose in our praying is that we pray in keeping with His will. This is possible, not on the basis of our understanding that is

too weak always to know what God's will is, but only if when God searches our hearts *He finds himself there*. And this He has made possible by giving us His Spirit who (among other things) helps us with our prayers. Dodd comments acutely: "This profound conception of prayer as the divine in us appealing to the God above us is of a piece with Paul's whole conception of the Christian life as one in which the divine initiative is displayed at every point."²⁰ Our very instinct to pray is the gift of the prevenient grace of God. And He who inspires us to pray by His Spirit, instructs and assists us to pray by that same Spirit.

*Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.*

*Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.*

*Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The majesty on high.*

*Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death;
He enters heaven with prayer.*

*O Thou by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod:
Lord! teach us how to pray.*²¹



NOTES

1. Author's translation. All other Scripture quotations are from RSV unless noted otherwise.

2. The other references to prayer in the epistle are 1:9; 10:1; 12:12; 15:30. Only the third enters into the teaching of the epistle; the others are autobiographical.

3. E.g., Moffatt, RSV, NIV.

4. C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans (The Moffatt New Testament Commentary)*; London: Harper & Bros., 1932), p. 133.

5. KJV is mistaken in rendering Greek *ktisis* as "creature" in verse 19. It is beyond doubt that Paul is referring to the created order *apart from man* in this verse. For a discussion of the details see C. E. B. Cranfield: *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (The International Critical Commentary)*; Edinburgh: Clark, 1975), 1:411f.

6. *Romans (New Century Bible)*; London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1973), pp. 121-22.

7. W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (The International Critical Commentary)*; Edinburgh: Clark, 5th Edition, 1908), p. 212.

8. C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (Harper's New Testament Commentaries)*; New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 167.

9. Barrett, *Romans*, p. 167.

10. Barrett, *Romans*, p. 168.

11. Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 213.

12. Barrett, *Romans*, p. 168.

13. Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans*. Translated and edited by Eilhelm Pauck (*Library of Christian Classics*; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 240.

14. *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), pp. 239-43. For a vigorous critique of Käsemann see Cranfield, *Commentary on Romans*, pp. 421-24.

15. Barrett, *Romans*, p. 168.

16. John A. T. Robinson, *Wrestling with Romans* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), p. 104.

17. Robinson, *Romans*, p. 104 (my italics).

18. Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, p. 243.

19. Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, pp. 213-14.

20. Dodd, *Romans*, p. 136.

21. James Montgomery, 1771-1854.

CAR EXPENSE DEDUCTIONS

by Paul Fitzgerald

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Church of the Nazarene

Regardless of how your church reimburses you for business mileage, how you handle your car expense deduction on your tax return can make a significant impact on your tax liability. In past years, you were able to alternate between using the actual expense method or the standard mileage rate in figuring your auto expense deductions. However, when you filed your 1981 tax return you discovered that much of the flexibility of the past is now gone. If you purchased a car in 1981, you have an entirely new way to figure the depreciation under the actual expense method called Accelerated Cost Recovery System (ACRS).

You may wish to continue to use *the standard mileage rate method* to compute your deduction on Form 2106. While this is the least complicated since you are only required to keep a record of the business miles traveled, it may cost you additional taxes you could avoid by using the actual expense method or the new expensing method in lieu of an ACRS.

The ACRS method of figuring depreciation will allow you to deduct the following percentages of your cost basis for a car placed in service after 1980 (regardless of the month placed in service): 1st year, 25 percent; 2nd year, 38 percent; 3rd year, 37 percent. For example, if you purchased a car without a trade-in that cost \$8,000, placed it in service as late as December, and used it 80 percent for business mileage, your first year's depreciation deduction under ACRS would be \$1,600 ($\$8,000 \times 80\% \times 25\%$). If the percentage of use (80 percent) remained the same for all three years, the deductions for the following year would be \$2,432, and for the third year, \$2,368, or a total of \$6,400. If the percentage of business use changes in subsequent years, you must refigure the basis for depreciation. There is also an alternate ACRS method under which you may use a straight-line method over a recovery period of 3, 5, or 12 years.

The IRS has also changed some of the rules with respect to how the *standard mileage deduction* can be used. The maximum mileage rate is only available on the first 15,000 miles per year with a reduced amount thereafter. After the taxpayer's car

has 60,000 miles of business use at the maximum standard mileage rate, the automobile is considered fully depreciated, and only the lower standard mileage rate applies for miles thereafter. This 60,000 mile rule is effective for all tax years after 1979 and is without reference to the age of the vehicle.

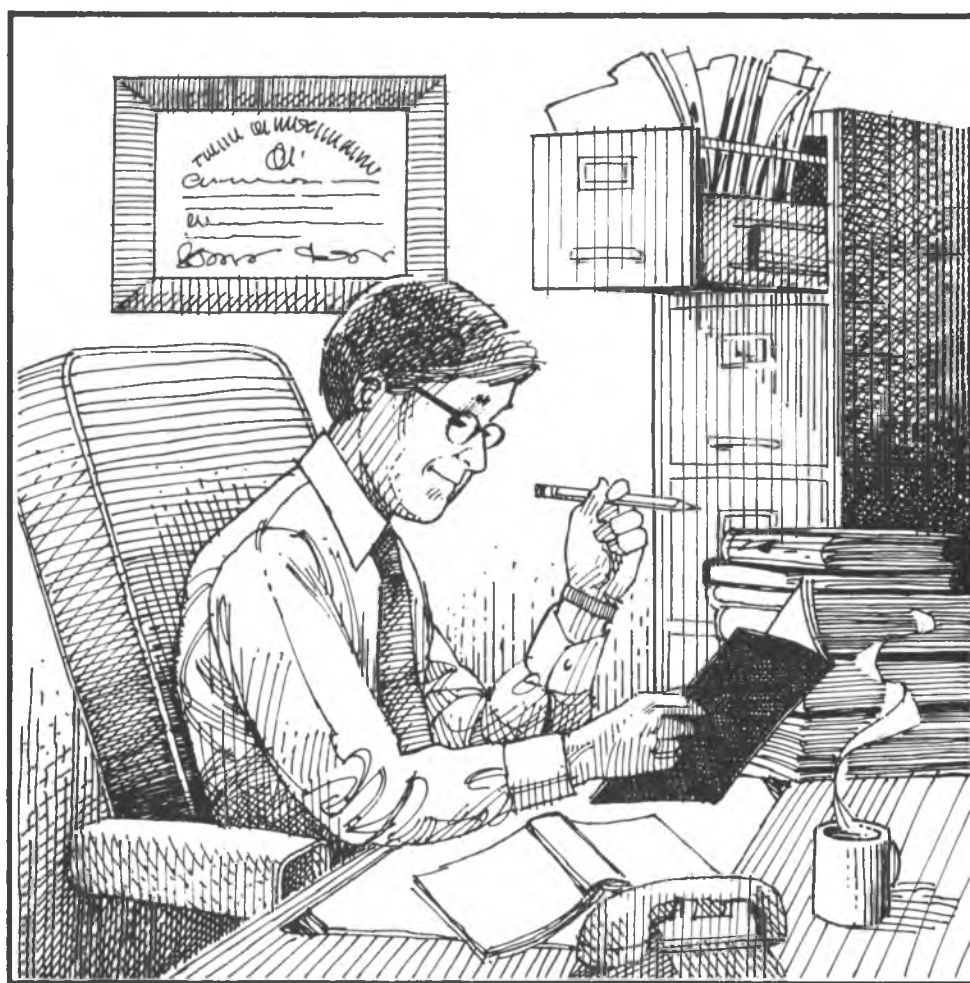
Using special rules allowing "*expensing in lieu of ACRS*" may provide an even larger tax benefit for vehicles placed in service after 1981. Under these rules, a taxpayer can treat a limited amount of the cost of the vehicle as a currently deductible expense. Beginning in 1982 and 1983, the deduction is \$5,000 of the cost of the vehicle; for 1984 and 1985, the limit is \$7,500; and for 1986 and thereafter, \$10,000. Assuming the facts in the previous illustration, you would be able to deduct in 1982 \$5,000 of the \$8,000 cost as a current deductible expense and \$600 under ACRS ($\$3,000 \times 80\% \times 25\%$) plus take an investment tax credit (a dollar for dollar reduction of income taxes) of \$180 ($\$3,000 \times 6\%$).

A new or used car purchased by a minister for church business during a tax year may qualify for *investment tax credit*. Using the ACRS rules for three year property, the tax credit is 6 percent of the cost basis of the car (reduced by any expensing in lieu of ACRS as above). This is a one-time tax credit (dollar for dollar reduction of income tax) for that vehicle, which may be better than a deduction. Should the vehicle be sold prior to the end of the three-year period, only part of the investment tax credit must be returned; the full amount is no longer lost as in the prior law.

The tax consequences of using an automobile for church business has become more complicated under the new tax laws. However, for ministers who who are willing to keep careful records and carefully analyze their expected automobile expenses, there is a very clear opportunity to reduce income taxes by making the appropriate choices. The right choice can only be the result of knowing the rules and how they apply.

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

THE SERMON WORKSHOP



6 SERMON OUTLINES

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1 SERMON MANUSCRIPT



CHILD ABUSE

Preaching Portion: 1 Pet. 2:2-3

Theme: A Message After Christmas

Introduction: Child abuse is not a very pleasant subject to mention, especially after Christmas when so much goodwill has filled the air. Yet incidents of parental neglect and physical abuse of children are on the rise. Billboards appear saying, "It shouldn't hurt to be a child." Hospital signs read: "Who would hurt a little child?" There's another kind of potential child abuse for us to think about too: Christ child abuse, spiritual child abuse. We are like new parents if Christ has been born into our hearts. The child is ours to take and rear. Surely no father or mother in his/her right mind would want to abuse this privilege. Here's the paradox—we are newborn in Christ too and need to crave pure spiritual milk to grow up in our salvation.

As fragile newborn infants we have several needs:

I. FOOD

1. Without proper food adults can die in weeks; infants within hours.
2. Babies in Christ need food too: spiritual food. "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Deut. 8:3).
3. Messages from God's Word, public worship, good Christian books.
4. Paul's metaphor of himself was, "We were gentle among you, like a nurse taking care of her children."
5. We need to make up our minds to eat well as Christians. Food is basic; without it we starve.

II. PROTECTION

1. Mary wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes for warmth. Joseph fled to Egypt with his family to protect them from hostility.
2. Protection is a basic requirement for infants.
3. The Church is something of a greenhouse, an incubator giv-

ing the atmosphere, warmth, light, and nourishment we need to grow up.

4. Churches need not be perfect in order to be effective—greenhouses may have a few broken windows yet still give the protection a plant needs.
5. Christians who neglect the church will suffer from exposure.

III. TRAINING

1. Mary and Joseph trained Jesus—in language, manners, the Scriptures.
2. Athletes, secretaries, armies, cooks, musicians train.
3. As Christians we need training in prayer, worship, love, and obedience, in areas where understanding and mastery do not just happen or come naturally.
4. There is a cost of discipleship to achieve a meaningful maturity.

Conclusion: Let's treat with care the new life God has given us. Let's not be guilty of spiritual child abuse. Let's look at our own basic growth needs: such as food, protection, and training so that we can have the best possible atmosphere to grow up healthy in our salvation.

PLAYING AT RELIGION

Preaching Portion: Matt. 11:16-17

Introduction: Jesus compared many people of His generation to children playing games on a village street. The two games they especially enjoyed playing were "wedding" and "funeral." The games varied according to the moods and everyone was expected to join in once the game had been chosen. But, it was just a game. Games represent childhood's state of imagination. Unfortunately, many adults are still playing games, many of which are quite sick and seem to be repeated almost unconsciously. There's the "Let's you and him fight" game where one person stirs up a fight between others to gratify his own position that "people are such fools." There's the "Uproar" game which is usually played to

avoid any kind of emotional closeness with family or friends. "Where in the world have you been? Can't you even tell what time it is?" These games are played in countless homes and offices. They keep things in an uproar.

Jesus was saying here that:

I. MANY PEOPLE DIDN'T WANT GOD IN ANY WAY, SHAPE, OR FORM

1. John the Baptist was strict, ascetic (funeral type), and people said he must be mad.
2. Jesus was joyous, bright (wedding type), and men called Him every name they could think of.
3. If it's stern, they say "fire and brimstone." If it's kind, they say "effeminate." To Jesus it was comparable to children playing games.

II. IT IS TIME FOR THOSE WHO REGARD RELIGION AS A GAME TO GROW UP

1. Religion is not something that uses many people, but something they use to get ahead, or get cheered up, or get a little relief from guilt.
2. When religion is a game it is erratic in our lives, amenable to every passing whim, lacking serious commitment.
3. An enterprise always depends on mature men and women who are not playing games.
4. The church is made great by faithful people whose religion is more than a game.

III. CHRISTIANITY IS A JUDGMENT IN TRIFLERS

1. Like the foolish man who built his house on sand, we find that life is serious and won't be trifled with forever.
2. Opportunities are not always seriously regarded by children, but they assume high value as we get older.

Conclusion: Regardless of what we are doing, God is not playing games with us. "God is waiting to be found and men have gone off in search of other things." This will redeem us from the arrogance and frustration of childish games. It is

when we seek Him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength that we find Him. Until then we are merely playing games.

NOT EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSES

Preaching Portion: Matt. 13:24-30

Introduction: This parable tells us that evil is not just here, but here to stay until "that day." Man's consciousness of evil is one of the wonders of his being. Jesus establishes the innocence of our Heavenly Father by saying "an enemy hath done this while men slept." Evil is something spawned while kindness and goodness napped. Part of sin's secret is found in sleeping men.

Finding weeds among the roses (or wheat) is an everyday experience. No field or endeavor is a field of roses only or grain only. So, what are we going to do when we discover the weeds? This parable cautions us to:

I. LEARN TO LIVE WITH IMPERFECTIONS

There are no perfect people, perfect institutions, or perfect situations.

1. There are no perfect churches.
2. There are no perfect pastors.
3. There are no perfect homes.
4. There are no perfect jobs.

II. APPEARANCES ARE DECEIVING

1. What looks like wheat often turns out to be weeds. It is easy to fall into the habit of assuming that all intelligent and attractive people are doing the things advertisers say they are doing. What the world calls glamor (roses) often turns out to be tares.
2. Isaiah said, "Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread?"
3. There is no substitute for the Bread of Life.

III. THE FRUITS ARE THE JUDGMENT

1. What comes forth from a vine is the definition of the vine. That's what requires patience. It takes time for the seeds to reveal what they are.
2. There is time for reserving judgment—"let them both grow together until harvest." Weeds are not to be pulled out immediately. Good and evil are so entangled in this world that to extract the bad plant

may take the neighbor's life too. The Inquisition, centuries ago, got rid of some bad wood, but it also ripped out walnut in the process.

Conclusion: This parable challenges us to look up for a moment from the battle, to check our ammunition, and to listen. "And at harvest time . . ." The issue of good and evil will not forever be left unsettled. The weeds are plentiful but they have not taken over. God has set a deadline. None can get away with murder forever. So, life is not forever unfair, nor forever unreconciled.

IN THE BEGINNING GOD

Preaching Portion: Gen. 1:1

Theme: A Message on the Nature of God

Introduction: These simple but profound words are among the greatest ever penned. The words not only astonish; they instruct both positively and negatively. Certain things about God are excluded and certain things are taught:

I. THE WORDS "IN THE BEGINNING GOD . . ." EXCLUDE:

1. The Religions of Atheism—If God was "in the beginning," then God exists.
2. The Philosophy of Materialism—which says that matter is all that is and identifies human beings in those terms; there is nothing really spiritual in the universe.
3. The Philosophy of Pantheism—these words tell us God exists apart from the material universe, before matter.

II. THE WORDS "IN THE BEGINNING GOD . . ." AFFIRM:

1. That God Is Self-existent.
 - (a) God is in himself unknowable. Not that He cannot reveal certain things about himself to us, but He is "unknowable" to us because we can only think in terms of "cause and effect." We can never know Him exhaustively.
 - (b) God is not answerable to us—we are answerable to other people; as children we are answerable to our parents, to those in authority. But God is answerable to no one. Let God be God; we are His creatures.

2. That God Is Self-sufficient

- (a) God depends on no one—He is able to take care of himself. That is quite untrue of us—we depend on oxygen, matter, light, heat, gravity, other people. God depends on no one.
- (b) God does not "need" worshippers, nor our glory, nor our love. There is love in the Godhead apart from us. He doesn't even need defenders. God gives us the privilege of helping, honoring, glorifying Him. But, if we don't, He is not deprived thereby. He is no less glorious than before, no less God. None of this threatens our value; the reason we have value is that He created us.

III. THAT GOD IS ETERNAL

1. Ps. 90:1—"Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations" (NIV). This means that:
 - (a) God can be trusted to be as He reveals himself—He does not forget, nor mature or change His mind. He is immutable.
 - (b) God is inescapable. If some people could just get rid of Him or escape Him, they would. But He is there—in the first phrase of the first book of Scripture and in the last phrase of the last book of Scripture, and will be there throughout all eternity.

Conclusion: One non-religious man sliding over a precipice reached up to grab a limb. Figuring this was as good a time as any to be religious, he called out, "Is there anybody up there who can help me?" He was surprised to hear a loud voice say, "Yes, I'm here, and I can help you. But, first of all, you're going to have to let go of that branch." After a pause, he said, "Is there anybody else up there who can help me?" There is nobody else—only the God who reveals himself here at the beginning, the One with whom we have to do. And it is good to know that this God has revealed himself to us in Christ and invited us to come to Him.

THE GOD WHO RESTORES

Preaching Portion: Joel 2:25-27

Introduction: Joel is a prophetic in-

terpretation of a natural disaster, the locust plague. He calls for the people to repent and even holds out incentives (2:14)—“Who knows but that he may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing” (NIV). That’s tentative, but in the next verses he speaks with the full certainty that only God can give. If they repent, God will bless as follows:

I. MATERIAL PROSPERITY (v. 19)

Here we need to be on guard against two errors:

1. Believers’ Error—to regard our material blessings as surely and inevitably from God, therefore, justifiable in the name of God no matter how we got them.
2. Unbelievers’ Error—to attribute material blessings to themselves, not to God at all.
3. Enough to Satisfy—God’s Promise. “I’m sending you grain, new wine and oil, enough to satisfy you fully” (NIV). Full satisfaction, but not necessarily stuffed. Does not say overabundance guaranteed. There would be a revolution of sorts in our country if we could somehow be “satisfied with being satisfied.”

II. NATIONAL SECURITY (v. 20)

1. May refer to the locusts; a literal army; or even the Invasion of God himself on the Day of Judgment. In a sense, all three may be involved.
2. God is the only security any nation ever has. Nothing we can do in a military sense “guarantees” the survival of a nation. Solomon—“Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”
3. The basis for that, says Joel, is repentance.

III. THE PROMISE OF RESTORATION (v. 25)

1. The locusts have come and stripped bare the vegetation but God promises to make up for the years that are lost.
2. Perhaps some of us are or have been at that place: have gone our own way, at first in small ways, then in increasingly larger ways. Perhaps we became self-centered and lost the friends we had and became lonely and embittered. If that has happened to you, this is a great promise.
3. No one else can make a promise like this. No human being

can restore the lost years. But God can as the Lord and Giver of Life. Sin has its consequences, some things cannot be made up, lost opportunities are lost, but God can give us new opportunities. He can certainly restore the life that is empty, and this is what He promises to do.

Conclusion: Are you wondering how you can find God? There is only one way. This God is not revealed in voices from heaven, but in the Scriptures. This God explains who He is and what He’s done, what He wants from you and what He offers you. And, He does it in this Book. Bring to Him the sins you have committed. He will lead you to a point of repentance, and then, as He says here, He will restore what is lost; He will make it up to you and bless you again.

PRESSING TOWARD THE GOAL

Preaching Portion: Phil. 3:13, 15

Introduction: Many verses in the Bible deal with sporting events: “We wrestle not against flesh and blood”; “. . . let us run with patience the race that is set before us”; “I have fought the good fight.” When Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians he was in prison and approximately 60 years old (not exactly a young man anymore).

The conclusion of this not-so-young apostle was:

I. HE HAD NOT YET ARRIVED

1. “Brothers, I do not consider myself to have arrived.” I’m not there yet; I have some distance to go.

(a) He had arrived in the sense of:

(1) *Being a Christian*—He had fellowship with God; salvation; forgiveness.

(2) *Having new life*—On the Damascus Road his life was turned around; instead of prosecuting the gospel he presented it. So, Paul had arrived in this sense.

(b) He had not arrived in the sense of:

(1) *Being fully like Jesus Christ*—in some way he was still being fully made like Christ. Perhaps some of the Philippians were acting as

if there were nothing more to be gained in their characters to make them like Jesus.

- (2) *God was not done with him yet*—He had some more will to work out in Paul’s life even at 60 years of age. God had something else—on to Spain, wherever. Unfortunately some people conclude at 15 or 25 or 55 that “God’s finished with me. I’ve done everything I can do for the Lord,” but not Paul.

II. THE RESOLUTION

1. But—“ONE THING I DO.”

(a) Progress comes from those who specialize, who do one thing well.

(b) Goal-oriented people sight a goal—“I am going to run straight for that goal.”

(c) A hymn writer states: “Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love; one holy passion filling all my frame.”

2. The elements of Paul’s one thing are:

(a) *The Retrospect*—“Forgetting the past”—all of it (pre-conversion and post-conversion past) because they are simply gone, cannot be reclaimed. Paul simply never focused his attention on what had been. Many people live in resentment or regret or overconfidence and overjoy in what the Lord has allowed them to accomplish. Like a good distance runner Paul counted the laps that remained instead of the laps completed. I forget the past.

(b) *The Prospect*—“Straining toward what is ahead.” This is sports-page language. Athletes strain, runners’ arms reach out as they near the finish line. The spiritual word is consecration; the sports-page word is concentration.

Conclusion: It strikes me that Paul’s life was anything but aimless. What race was Paul running? He was not yet like Jesus. So, he pours all his life into attaining that goal. I strain for that. There’s absolutely no value in leaving the starting line unless you aim for the finish line.



SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS



Right Thing; Wrong Reason

All institutions and practices tend to diminish their center and accent their periphery. The genuinely holy act of yesterday is only too easily hypostatized into the *act* minus the holiness, of today. One of Jonathan Blanchard's favorite phrases was *corruptio optima pessima*—The best thing, when not used in the right way, becomes the most loathsome.

—Clyde S. Kilby, *The Christian Imagination* (Baker, 1981)

Meaning in Life

In Chaim Potok's *The Chosen*, an old man is talking about his death to his son, Reuven. He says:

I learned a long time ago, Reuven, a span of life is nothing. But the person who lives that span, *he* is something. He can fill that tiny span with meaning so its quality is immeasurable though its quantity may be insignificant. Do you understand what I am saying? A man must fill his life with meaning; meaning is not automatically given to life. It is hard work to fill one's life with meaning. That I do not think you understand yet, Reuven. A life filled with meaning is worthy of rest. I want to be worthy of rest when I am no longer here.

Fake Snake

The *Kansas City Star* recently ran an article about what the successful gardener needs. One necessity was an inflatable fake snake which was recommended to keep rabbits out of the lettuce and birds out of the cherry tree. There was a warning, however, that, after a while, the birds might become so used to it they would peck holes in it. But since the fake snake only cost \$4.95 the loss would be small.

Too bad the serpent of sin isn't made of rubber and filled with hot

air. Too bad the loss from its non-fake fangs isn't a mere \$4.95. Too bad that, like the birds who get used to the phony snake, careless people get so comfortably cozy around the serpent of sin that, Cleopatra-like, they hug it to their hearts. Too bad that the viper of sin is so deceptive it sometimes looks as harmless as a fake snake in a cherry tree. Too bad so many people can't resist the cherries.

Steps for Forgiveness

Here is a summary checklist of the steps in the forgiving process.

- a. Decide that you are willing to want to forgive.
- b. Begin to want to forgive.
- c. Quit hurting the other person.
- d. Rehearse the act of forgiving.
- e. Arrange a time to talk with the other person.
- f. Be gracious in your conversation.
- g. Make an explicit statement of forgiveness.
- h. Listen, no matter what.
- i. Explain why you wanted to talk about this.
- j. Claim the closing of this incident.

For each person whom you need to forgive, mark what parts of the process have been fulfilled. Set goals for the remaining tasks.

—Richard P. Walters, *Anger: Yours and Mine and What to Do About It* (Zondervan, 1981)

A Sense of Direction

In *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice was talking with Cheshire-Puss, the cat. "Cheshire-Puss," she began rather timidly. "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat. "I don't much care where . . ." said Alice. "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the cat.

Sweet Reward

It is said that when a little Jewish boy was learning the alphabet, his teacher sometimes offered him a reward. The letters of the alphabet were written on a slate; and they were written, not with chalk or with slate-pencil, but in a mixture of flour and honey. The teacher would point at a letter and ask what it was and, if the boy could answer correctly, he was allowed to lick the letter off the slate! Learning for him was as sweet as honey. Learning the law was sweeter than honey and more precious than gold.

The Psalmist looked forward to his reward if he faithfully kept the law. Nowadays we are very suspicious of introducing the reward motive. But the Bible is never afraid of the reward motive. Jesus said:

Truly, I say unto you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ, will by no means lose his reward (Mark 9:41).

—William Barclay, *The Lord Is My Shepherd* (Westminster Press, 1980)

What Are You Afraid Of?

The American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League, two prominent Jewish agencies, used polls by George Gallup and Yankelovich, Skelly and White, to ask the American public, "Which, if any, of the groups listed below do you feel has too much political influence in the United States?"

The replies:

Oil companies—70.2 percent
Labor unions—46.2 percent
Blacks—14.4 percent
Arab interests—29.9 percent
The Catholic Church—9.3 percent
Born again/evangelical Protestants—9.9 percent
Jews—10.5 percent
Zionists—4.1 percent



—*Eternity*, April 1982

A SERMON MANUSCRIPT



HOPE IN A DAY OF DESPAIR

by George W. Privett

Ephesians 3:14-21

Good day to you! You've come this far by faith. But don't knock it. That's the best way to travel! The men and women of Hebrews 11 did the impossible because they believed in a God who knew no limitations. Doubt builds nothing. History is made by persons of faith. As Sam Shoemaker says, "You just cannot believe in the Christian God without the inevitable corollary of believing that one day, and under some unpredictable circumstances, our best hopes shall be our surest realities, and all that man has striven for shall somewhere be achieved."

Today, in marked contrast to the Christian hope, pessimism oozes through the pores of our national life. A recent Gallup International Poll indicated that, of the free countries of the world, Americans are the most morose about prospects of the future—55 percent believing things can only get worse. A not-so-quiet desperation has gripped our country. The question posed by David Melton as he wrote the biography of Judy Garland might well be asked again: "Where did your dreams end and the nightmares begin?"

This infection has spread to the Christian family. The church is filled with depressed, discouraged, disheartened people with persistent symptoms of tiredness or ecclesiastical neurasthenia. There is too little hope, too little faith, too little memory. Although a sign of the era of the Spirit would be seeing visions and dreaming dreams in addition to prophesying (Acts 2:17), there is little inspired "future-looking" in evidence. "Thus we live our crisis-filled lives locked into the present," writes John H. Westerhoff, "strangely trusting that tomorrow will take care of itself. We no longer live for a visionary future and we have lost our memory of a meaningful past. Indeed, it appears that we lack a sense of hope because our best memories are only a collection of unrealized dreams and defeated desires. One more depressing problem engulfs us. We no longer possess a sense of power, a sense that we can make any real difference in this world, and so we have lost our will to act boldly on behalf of tomorrow."

When young John H. Jowett asked his mother the reason for her inactivity in the "sewing room," she replied, "Son, the work dulls my sight and ever so often I must turn my eyes to the hills to sharpen my vision." Inscribed in the famous Bok Tower in Florida are the words: "I come here to find myself. It's so easy to get lost in the world." Of this we are sure: when we look within we see our weakness and get discouraged. When we look around us we see the confusion and get distracted; yet when we look above us, we see Him and get empowered.

The Predicting of Events

Edward Cornish says that if recent trends continue, the following descriptive phrases will apply to the world in the year 2000: more unified, more standardized, more af-

fluent, more leisured, less integrated by family and kinship, less oriented toward industry, longer lived, more mobile, less religious, and better educated.

A CBS television report focused on the site of the first testing area of our atom bomb in New Mexico. As four wild horses galloped through the prairie, symbolic of those in the Apocalypse, Walter Cronkite mentioned the crucial problems facing us such as war, the population explosion, pollution and depletion of natural resources.

It doesn't take a seer to recognize the dangerous portent of things to come when we consider certain present-day realities. We refer to the fact that today one thermonuclear bomb releases more destructive energy than that released by all the bombs dropped on Germany and Japan during World War II. A modern warplane can carry a thermonuclear bomb with the explosive power of a thousand Hiroshima-type bombs.¹

In the midst of our fearful capability for waging war, famine prevails in many parts of the world. It is estimated that in India alone 50 million children will die of malnutrition in the next 10 years. We dare not sleep through the revolutions that grip our society and world.

Not all is bleak in our world of diminishing natural resources and rising human expectations. Inspiring is the fact that due to improved communications utilized to fulfill the Great Commission, 55,000 new Christians are born into the Kingdom every day and 1,400 new churches are started every week. In Africa, only 3 percent of the population was Christian in 1900. If the present rate of growth continues, by the year 2000, 48 percent of the people will be Christians.

Certainly it is axiomatic that nations are not destroyed from without but because of what happens to them from within. It is as though our world were asking us, as trapped miners did deep below the earth's surface, when they carefully tapped in Morse code the message, "Is there any hope? Is there any hope?"

The Promise of Energy

"The supreme lesson of life," uttered Emerson, "is to hear what the centuries have to say to the hours." In the closing of one of Paul's prayers for the Ephesians, we find this great promise contained in his spontaneous outburst: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Eph. 3:20-21). Other translations indicate that God is able to do "immeasurably far beyond," "surpassingly more," "infinitely beyond" all our highest "prayers or thoughts," "hopes and dreams," or anything "we can ask or conceive." He does this through "His power which is at work within us" or "the power which doth energize itself within us." Paul seems to be saying,

"If you think I became carried away in my praying for you [vv. 14-19], just look at the unlimited horizons set before us by the great God we serve!"

Our thesis is that the promise of God can propel the obedient Christian into a remarkable future. What God promises, He performs; what He commands, He enables. In this "super-superlative" as F. F. Bruce calls the phrase "superabundantly," we see a mountain of promise based on the fact that God is able. His ability to carry out His purposes lies outside the greatest human powers of comprehension. In dealing with this theme, Basil Miller says: (1) God is able to weave a chain of divine providences out of tragedies; (2) God is able to transmute petitions into realities; and (3) God is able to bend insignificant lives into the broad channel of the divine will.⁶

As Oswald Chambers reminds us, we dare not calculate without God. He tells us through His Son to "go into all the world" but knowing we can't do it alone, He adds, "Lo, I am with you alway" (Matt. 28:20). The hand of faith clutches the promise, looks away from human inadequacy to God's power, and cries, "He is able!" Certainly, "Christianity is not a creed to be recited: it is a power to be tapped." It all begins when we discover Christ as a living reality. "All my life I searched for the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow," exults Dale Evans, "now I've found it at the foot of the cross."

The Planning of Effort

Why follow the herd in fear? Do a better thing—follow the Shepherd! Without a doubt, the Christian's future is as bright as the promises of God.

A plan for an effective future must begin with *dreaming God's dream and seeing His vision*. We do violence to the future when we cramp it, bankrupt it, or rob it, either through ignorance of God's intention for it, or through a deliberate despising of His purposes. We can see tomorrow on a scale too small. The future can be cancelled due to lack of interest. In failing to see His plan, our focus can be on a maintenance rather than a pioneer image of ministry.

Essential to our effort is to stay in the favor of God. Fruitfulness is the natural result of the attachment of the branch with the Vine (John 15).

To ask largely in prayer opens our lives to God's unlimited horizons. Samuel Morris had few of our advantages and yet through prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit, he changed his world. The poet wrote:

*Thou art come to a King;
Large petitions with thee bring;
For His grace and power are such,
None can ever ask too much.*

Hang tough when confronted with obstacles. Reuben Welch captures the thrust of the book of Hebrews when

he gives it the title, *When You Run out of Fantastic—Persevere*. We're in a marathon—not a hundred-yard dash.

Be fully committed to God's will in order to achieve His purposes. Christ died for us that we should live unselfishly (2 Cor. 5:15-17). E. Stanley Jones has reminded us that "the Holy Spirit is like electricity. He never goes in where He can't come out." It has been suggested, based on Matt. 25:31-46, that to know where the action of God is, search out those who hurt the most and serve them. After Adoniram Judson suffered horribly in prison for his faith, he pleaded with the Burmese king to permit him to go to a certain town and preach. The king answered, "A dozen preachers I would send to that town, but not you. For my people would not be so foolish as to listen to your words, but they would respond when they looked at your hands." His hands bore the scars which showed how much he really loved the people.

Lloyd C. Douglas wrote a novel entitled *The Mirror* in which Zacchaeus is the main character. An apostate Jew and tax-collector, Zacchaeus was hated, spat upon, and rejected. He had grown bitter and calloused when Jesus said to him in the tree that day, "Make haste and come down." In the novel, Douglas has someone ask, "Zacchaeus, what did the Master say to you that night at dinner that so changed your life?" He replied, "I simply looked into the deep eyes of the Master and I saw reflected there, as in a mirror, the man I could become."

When we fully commit our lives to Christ and follow Him, we will release those sources of energy which will lead us into a new way of life. As Zacchaeus, the truth will grip us which says, "He sees me, He knows me, He loves me and He needs me." He wants to send us into our age with new strength flooding our souls and with new currents of power surging through our daily acts, using them to build His kingdom.

A man came back from Nova Scotia, excited over the waters of the high tide. He said: "You could hear it coming. You could see it coming. You could smell it coming. The tides swept into the bays and lifted boats that had been careened on their sides and set them off on a new level." This is a picture of the power of Christ, according to Halford Luccock. He comes into life like a tide, and lifts life to a new level. May it happen to us in these good new days which are before us!



NOTES

1. Samuel Shoemaker, *Best Sermons, 1947-48* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948).
2. *Tomorrow's Church* (Waco: Word Books, 1976).
3. *The Study of the Future* quoted in "Home Missions Alert," December-February, 1978-79.
4. James Ray Smith, *God Still Speaks in the Space Age* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1967).
5. Quoted by C. Peter Wagner.
6. *American Pulpit Series—Book 1* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1945).

OLD TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Harvey E. Finley



YAHVEH ELOHE YISRAEL, "YAHVEH, GOD OF ISRAEL"

Yahveh is the name for God revealed to Moses at the time of the burning bush incident at Horeb. It was also designated by God himself at that time to be the name or title His people should use throughout succeeding generations.¹ The frequent occurrence of *Yahveh Elohe Yisrael* throughout the Old Testament Scriptures provides more than sufficient evidence to substantiate the fact that this title was most significant during Old Testament times.² Further, *Yahveh* is one of the two most frequently used divine names of the Old Testament, used perhaps even more times than the other name *Elohim*, "God."³

The name *Yahveh* (Hebrew consonants, YHVH)⁴ is spelled or transliterated *Jehovah* in earlier English translations, for example, ASV. It is rendered *LORD* in more recent English Bibles, such as RSV, NEB, NASB, NIV. The rejection of the transliteration *Jehovah* and the acceptance of the translation *LORD* is based on two aspects of the history of the use and written transmission of YHVH called the tetragrammaton. First, it was during postexilic times (after 538 B.C.) that this divine name was considered too sacred to be uttered on human lips lest it be profaned. Second, another divine name was therefore substituted for YHVH when the Scriptures were read; this divine name was *ADONAI*. This is clearly evident in the vocalized text of the Masoretes which has the vowels of *ADONAI* in combination with YHVH, a consonant-vowel combination never intended to be pronounced but rather intended for the vowels to suggest the pronunciation of *ADONAI*. The pronunciation *Jehovah* was not known until ca. A.D. 1520 when used by a Petrus Galatinus. This combination, which is a misreading of what the Masoretes intended, has been correctly called into question since first inappropriately transliterated by Galatinus. RSV, NASB, NIV, and other recent English translations follow the synagogue practice in rendering YHVH as *LORD*. This study will give attention to *Yahveh* as presented in the Book of Exodus. A following

study will give consideration to *Yahveh* as set forth in the Book of Isaiah.

Name Revealed to Moses Replacement for Earlier Names *Exodus 3:12-15; 6:2, 3*

The burning bush encounter with God was for Moses the most dramatic and significant event of his life. It was this experience that proved to be Moses' call and commission to return to Egypt to confront Pharaoh in the interest of leading oppressed Israel out of Egypt back to the land promised to them through their fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was during this encounter that God disclosed His name in a special way to Moses: '*ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh*. "I AM WHO I AM" (*Exod. 3:14, NASB*).⁵

The '*ehyeh 'asher 'ehyeh* name has evoked considerable discussion on several points. First, the spelling *y-h-v-h* may serve as that of a third person imperfect for the simple or Qal stem; the spelling '*ehyeh* is a first person imperfect of the simple or Qal stem. Assuming that *h-v-h* is a secondary or alternate spelling of the root *h-y-h*, "to be, exist," the comparable translation of *Y-h-v-h* would be *HE IS*. Thus the first person *I AM* or the third person *HE IS* may be understood as a name suggestive of God's self-existence and of His self-sufficiency. Further, the name *Yahveh* is used always in relation to His mighty acts in behalf of His people, suggestive not of a static divine existence but of power and divine authority to confront any and all circumstances for the present or future which may arise in His created world.

Second, the Exodus narrative gives no hint as to the origin of the divine name *Yahveh* except, of course, that it was a direct divine disclosure to Moses. Various studies are attempts to demonstrate the occurrence of this name in non-Israelite sources, such as the Mari Texts or the Ebla Texts, but none has been able to show conclusively any direct connection with use and understanding of the name *Yahveh*. Further, the discussions on the possible Kenite origin of the name *Yahveh* remain tentative and incon-

clusive due to lack of suitable decisive evidence.

Third, rather recent studies show the inclination of certain scholars to identify the root of *Y-h-v-h* as that of *h-y-h* (or, the secondary spelling *h-v-h*), "to come to pass, come into being; be." Further, the forms '*h-y-h* (first person imperfect) and *y-h-y-h* (third person imperfect) are to be construed as causative, not simple formations. The first person rendering then is: "I cause to be what comes into existence." The third person rendering in full form is: "He causes to be what comes into existence." This translation tends to place emphasis on the dynamic and direct Lordship of YHVH in His relationship with the natural and historical happenings in His created world.

Fourth, the name YHVH was intended to be a special name to Moses and Israel from that time onward. It was to be a replacement of the name *El Shaddai*, "God Almighty," as clearly suggested by the statement of *Exod. 6:3*: "... but by My name, *LORD* [i.e., *Yahveh*], I did not make Myself known to them" (*NASB*). The point here is not so much whether or not the name YHVH was in vogue as a divine name prior to the burning bush incident, but, rather, it was announced to Moses that God would reveal himself and therefore be known in a new or different way from the way He had made himself known previously. This is therefore an announcement of new things that God was intent on doing in behalf of His people, a declaration concerning deeper dimensions of the divine will for them.

The Special Covenant Name *Exodus 6:4-8 and 24:1-8*

The name YHVH was revealed in connection with God's intention to establish or make a covenant with Israel. In speaking to Moses He referred to the covenant He had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (*Exod. 6:2-4*). He thereby indicated a direct relationship between the promise to their forefathers (cf. *Gen. 12:7; 15:18*) and their plight under the oppressive Egyptian hand. Just as He had established at His own initia-

(continued on page 63)



NEW TESTAMENT WORD STUDIES

by Ralph Earle

Hebrews

At Sundry Times and in Divers Manners (1:1)

The first three words of this Epistle are *polymeros kai polytropos*. *Kai*, of course, means "and." That leaves us the two adverbs to look at.

"At sundry times" is one word in Greek, *polymeros* (only here in NT). *Poly* means "many" (cf., English use as a prefix); *meros* means "part." So the adverb literally means "in many parts" or "in many portions" (NASB). "In divers manners" is *polytropos*. *Tropos* means "way"—so, "in many ways" (NASB).

Marcus Dods gives an excellent treatment of these two adverbs. He writes:

Polymeros points to the fragmentary character of former revelations. They were given piece-meal, bit by bit, part by part, as the people needed and were able to receive them. The revelation of God was essentially progressive; all was not disclosed at once, because all could not at once be understood ("Expositor's Greek Testament," 4:247).

Dods goes on to say:

His speaking was also *polytropos* . . . not in one stereotyped manner but in modes varying with the message, the messenger, and those to whom the word is sent. Sometimes, therefore, God spoke by an institution [for instance, the Tabernacle and its offerings], sometimes by parable, sometimes in a psalm, sometimes in an act of righteous indignation. . . . These features of previous revelations, so prominently set and expressed so grandiloquently, cannot have been meant to disparage them, rather to bring into view their affluence and pliability and

many-sided application to the growing receptivity and varying needs of men (EGT, 2:248).

By his Son (1:2)

The Greek reads *en whio*—literally, "in a son." This emphasizes the character of the new revelation in Christ; it was a *personal* revelation. The previous revelations had been in prophecies, types, and symbols. But an impersonal revelation of a person must always be an imperfect one. So at last God sent His Son. Only a personal revelation of a person can be a perfect revelation. Christ is the perfect revelation of God.

The Worlds (1:2)

The Greek says *tous aionas*—literally, "the ages." B. F. Westcott makes this helpful comment:

The universe may be regarded either in its actual constitution as a whole (*ho cosmos*), or as an order which exists through time developed in successive stages. There are obvious reasons why the latter mode of representation should be adopted here ("Epistle to the Hebrews," p. 8).

Brightness (1:3)

The Greek word *apaugasma* (only here in NT) is used passively in the sense of "reflection" (cf., RSV). But the active meaning, "effulgence" or "radiance" (NASB, NIV) is that adopted by the bulk of the early church fathers and so is to be preferred here (Kittel, TDNT, 1:508).

Express Image (1:3)

This is one word in Greek, *character* (only here in NT). It first meant "a tool for engraving," and then "a stamp or impress," as on a coin or seal (Abbott-Smith, *Lexicon*, p. 479). It is that by which a person or thing can be recog-

nized (cf., our use of "character"). Probably the best translation, suggested by Arndt and Gingrich, is "exact representation" (NASB, NIV).

Person (1:3)

The Greek word *hypostasis* has been taken over into English as a technical theological term. It literally means "that which stands under," as a support or foundation. Then it came to mean "reality . . . that in virtue of which a thing is what it is, the essence of any being." Westcott goes on to say that Christ "is the expression of the 'essence' of God. He brings the Divine before us at once perfectly and definitely according to the measure of our powers" (*Hebrews*, p. 13). Marcus Dods suggests: "To the English ear, perhaps, 'nature' or 'essence' better conveys the meaning" (EGT, 4:251). So we can use "nature" (NASB) or "being" (NIV). Koester suggests that in the Septuagint *hypostasis* is the "underlying reality behind something" (TDNT, 8:582).

Spirits (1:7)

This is the plural of the noun *pneuma*, which occurs 385 times in the New Testament. In over 200 of those times it refers to the Holy Spirit. Only once in the KJV is it translated "wind" (John 3:8). Yet that is the rendering here in the RSV, NASB, and NIV. The reason is the parallel with "flames of fire" in the next line of poetry (see NIV). Westcott says: "*winds*, not *spirits*. The context imperatively requires this rendering" (p. 25).

Fellows (1:9)

This is the plural of the adjective *metochos*, which literally means "sharing in" or "partaking of." Used as a substantive here, it means "partners" or "associates," and so "companions" (NASB, NIV).





TODAY'S BOOKS for TODAY'S PREACHER

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

By Robert Guelich (Word Books, 1982, \$17.50).

Serious Bible students will quickly find that Robert Guelich's careful and comprehensive work offers fresh scholarship on a variety of topics relating to the Sermon on the Mount. He deals with basic issues:

- Is this teaching intended for all Christians, for super Christians, or as a law for the whole of society?
- Is it to be strictly obeyed, or held up as an ideal?
- Is it one sermon, or a compilation?

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

By William D. Maxwell (Baker Book House, \$7.95).

This book gives a concise outline of Christian worship and the forms it has taken from earliest times to the present. The aim has been practical, directed toward the clear delineation of basic facts and principles.

Chapters are devoted to primitive worship (its origins and growth). Liturgical forms in the East, liturgical forms in the West, liturgical forms in the Reformation Churches and the Christian cycle of prayer. "A large portion of the space is devoted to the worship of the Reformed churches," admits the author. "This has been necessary because of the strange neglect shown towards these liturgies by British scholars, resulting in widespread misunderstanding of a most important period."

For many Evangelicals the term *liturgy* has been an offensive word creating images of rigidly prescribed orders of worship with no spontaneity and standard prayers. They have missed the fact that every church has its liturgy. The question is whether it is meaningful or meaningless.

This book allows one to examine the biblical teaching of worship and the rich heritage in worship that the Church has, not only in its early centuries, but also from the Reformation and later times as well, which should help us examine our own method of worship.

—Tim Miller

SCUFFY SANDALS

By Mary Mulford Eakin (The Pilgrim Press, New York. Paperback, 83 pp., \$5.95).

Scuffy Sandals, by Mary Mulford Eakin, is a practical manual for making the church visitation call relevant and productive. Her process is to tell an incident from the scripture followed by her interpretation of the event. By using examples of situations likely to occur during the call, she illustrates the important areas of visitation dealt with in each chapter. Extended readings and some suggestions for group use are also included.

One of the most beneficial aspects of the book is the section entitled, "Aids to a Caring Ministry" which is located at the close of each chapter. These succinct sentences deal with the meat of each chapter. They are practical suggestions for making the call

productive. She suggests three basic steps to every call: Step in—a clarification of the purpose of the call. Step forward—the meeting of two people. Step Out—the successful conclusion of the call.

This book would lend itself as a study guide to a class on church visitation. By showing that the call can be non-threatening to both the visitor and the one being visited, much anxiety can be removed. I would recommend this book to men just beginning their pastoral ministry and laymen interested in effective visitation in the community.

—Ken Bateman

ANGER: YOURS AND MINE AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

By Richard P. Walter (Zondervan Publishers, \$4.95. 160 pp.).

I believe, for too long, we in holiness circles have accepted an understanding of anger that is more a product of our culturalization than of biblical exegesis. We have been taught that feelings of anger are not compatible with the holy life.

When an evangelist in my church once said that when he was sanctified entirely there were no longer any "stirrings within" and went on to suggest that this was normative, something stirred within me and it was not carnality.

This book will be a help to those, like me, who feel that anger has at times been poorly dealt with in holiness preaching and writing.

—Ken Culbertson



Case Studies for Analysis and Reflection

(continued from page 47)

seen many young ministers come to this church. It seems that I disagree with each one a little more. They come with newer and 'nuttier' ideas every time. I didn't really want to argue with them so I kept quiet. I hope you aren't that way!"

A. What would be the general direction of your response to him?

- _____ 1. Show him that I am different by telling him about my concept of ministry.
- _____ 2. Remind him that since the world is constantly changing the church must change to minister to it.
- _____ 3. Help him to understand why my predecessors did what they did.
- _____ 4. Encourage him to continue to be open with

me; indicate that disagreement can be healthy.

- _____ 5. Confront him with what I believe is wrong with his arguments.

Other. (Please describe.)

B. What was your objective or purpose in answering "A" in the way you did?

C. What was your rationale or underlying theory in answering "A" and "B" as you did?

*Cases II and III were adapted from the Readiness for Ministry Project.



OT Word Studies

(continued from page 60)

tive a covenant with their forefathers for blessing on them and unto all peoples, so He was intent on obligating himself in covenant with Israel in order to bring an end to their suffering and to lead them to the Promised Land.

It was at Sinai after the plagues, the crossing of the Red Sea, and the days of arduous travel that the name *Yahveh* became for Israel a special name for their God. Moses had received "words" (*debarim*) and "ordinances" (*mishpatim*) from *Yahveh* and had written them in a book (Exod. 24:3-4a). He then built an altar and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on it as important parts of a covenant-making ceremony. The people at the appropriate or closing place of this ceremony responded by saying: "All that the Lord [*Yahveh*] has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!" (Exod. 24:7, NASB). It is in this setting that the "Book of the Covenant" (*sepher hab-berith*, verse 7) and the "blood of the covenant" (*dam hab-berith*, verse 8) are mentioned; all this was done before and in the name of *Yahveh*. Thus it is clear that at this point in time *Yahveh* entered into a covenant relationship with Israel. Hence, the name *Yahveh* became and remained the special covenant name for God.

The covenant at Sinai between *Yahveh* and Israel has several significant features to which we will allude only briefly. First, it was initiated out of God's love and compassion for Israel—and for the whole world ultimately.

Second, since it was a binding agreement or contract between unequals (*Yahveh* on the one hand and Israel on the other), it is thought by a number of scholars to be patterned along the general lines of ancient Near East suzerainty treaties.⁶

Third, the laws and ordinances constituting the "Book of the Covenant," which called for obedience on Israel's part, were in effect "the way of life" *Yahveh* graciously disclosed to Israel (see Deut. 30:15-16). Moses later expressed recognition of Israel's high privilege to have *Yahveh* always near at hand (Deut. 4:7) and to have been the recipients of statutes (*huq-qim*) and judgments (*mishpatim*) as righteous as the Law (*torah*; see Deuteronomy 4:8). Thus there was evident recognition that the bestowing of the LAW was in effect an act of mercy on *Yahveh*'s part. The covenant at Sinai, while stressing obedience to the LAW, was a covenant of grace, as all divinely initiated covenants must be.

Fourth, the "blood of the covenant" among other considerations was a serious, binding pledge on Israel's part to be God's people—to live in full obedience to *Yahveh*'s will.

It is from this point on that the following statement applied: Israel was *Yahveh*'s people; *Yahveh* was

Israel's God, at least this was the way it was intended for Old Testament history to unfold.

NOTES

1. See Exod. 3:15b, literally translated: " . . . this is My name forever, and this is a memorial to me from generation to generation." NASB renders: " . . . This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations"; NEB: " . . . This is my name for ever; this is my title in every generation"; NIV: " . . . This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation."

2. See Exod. 5:1; 32:27; Num. 16:8-11; Deut. 4:10; *passim*; and the hundreds of passages listed in an exhaustive concordance with such expressions as "our God" or "your God," with *Yahveh* as antecedent.

3. Again, a quick glance at the listing of passages with these names in an exhaustive concordance suffices to make it clear that each divine name occurs hundreds of times throughout the Old Testament. Further, these data are convincing concerning biblical writers' preferences for using one or the other, particularly in the Pentateuch and the Psalms. Scholars have offered a variety of opinions explaining the usage of these two different names; however, the question has not yet been answered with finality. The data being what they are, the least to be said is that these occurrences indicate the dynamic aspect of the history of the Word of God delivered to Moses and afterward, as well as a vitality in use and growth of the written form of the Word as God's people preserved it and transmitted it from generation to generation.

4. My preference for following the Sephardic pronunciation and transliteration over against the Ashkenazic is the reason for transliterating YHVH rather than YHWH.

5. AV translates: "I AM THAT I AM." ASV: "I AM THAT I AM"; marginal: "I AM, BECAUSE I AM." NEB: "I am, that is who I am"; or "I will be what I will be" (footnote). NIV: "I am who I am"; or "I will be what I will be" (footnote).

6. See G. Ernest Wright, *Biblical Archaeology* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), pp. 99-101.





THE ARK ROCKER

AH, BUT WHAT DOES VOLTAIRE KNOW?

At least we are one up on the Muslims. They ask folks to leave only their shoes at the portals of the mosque. We Christians ask, sometimes by implication, sometimes outright, that the faithful park their brains at the church door. And sometimes it seems that we ecclesiastics have declared open season on the intellect.

Lately, I've been through one of those seasons. There was a long string of sermons, products of various perpetrators, in which loving God with all of the mind would have unleashed serious doubts about the preacher's preparation, let alone his mental capacity. Accompanying these were countless announcements of trivial matters, put as if their spiritual significance equalled that of the Second Coming, or huckstered like lite beer. There were pastoral prayers laden with implicit doubt of the Lord's omniscience: "As You know, Sister Echs was admitted to St. Hippocrates last evening at 7:15 with double hangnail. We're grateful that she is resting comfortably there in Room 415 as she awaits surgery at 9:00 tomorrow morning. We remember, too, her allergies and will send no flowers." Then, topping all off, there's the banal chatter of those musicians who "just must say a word" before singing (or whatever).

Some of this stuff is laughable. But it can be laughed off, too, by people who so desperately need what we, by the grace of God, can offer. In fact, it may be quite lethal, spiritually.

It's Voltaire who helped me to see this by way of his story about Friar Berthier, editor and principal writer for the *Journal de Trevoux*, a Jesuit organ aimed at debunking Voltaire and his ilk.

It seems that Berthier has fallen ill on a carriage trip from Paris to Versailles and the only plausible explanation of his malady is his proximity to the chest carrying two dozen copies of the latest issue of the journal. He has been poisoned by inhaling the very air around him.

Effort is made to secure a priest to hear the confession of the dying Berthier. Finally a volunteer is found, a passing padre whose philosophy is, "Advantage can be gotten from any situation."

After a bit, he asks Berthier if he has read any bad books. Not just boring books, but blasphemous stuff, and he names some scandalous materials done by Jesuits. Berthier tries to weasel, but finally confesses: "Sir, I

have the right to read everything because of the important post that I hold in the Society (the Jesuits)."

"Well, now, what is this eminent position?" asks the confessor.

"You must know, I suppose. I am the author of the *Journal de Trevoux*," replies Berthier.

"Good grief! You're author of *that*? Of that work which damns so many people?"

"Come now, my book damns no one. Into what sin could it possibly induce anyone to fall?"

"My dear brother," says the confessor, "don't you know that anyone who calls his brother *Raca* lays himself open to the fires of hell? And you, you have the misfortune of leading anyone who reads your work into an immediate temptation to call you *Raca*. I've seen all too many—decent persons at that—read just two or three pages of your book and fling it into the fire, beside themselves with anger. 'Such insolence,' they say. 'Dunce! Dolt! Prig! Numskull!' Why, such calumny would never end! The spirit of charity is completely snuffed out in them. Obviously, they are in danger of losing their salvation. Judge for yourself the number of evils of which you are the cause. Why, there may be 50 people who read you every month. That's 50 souls whom you mortally imperil every month. And what especially enrages the faithful is that assurance with which you pronounce upon everything which you do not understand."

Well, the story goes on. The confessor turns out to be Jansenist and editor of their journal. The Jesuits despised the *philosophes* for their impiety and the Jansenists for their piety, so Berthier, who had been tricked into an honest confession, wanted to retract it. But it is too late. He must die the death of the righteous in spite of himself. And in the eyes of his sidekick, he dies a saint, for he confesses that he is guilty of one of the worst of sins, according to Voltaire. Berthier is boring.

Voltaire exaggerates, of course. But there's point to what he says, isn't there? Have we any responsibility at all for seeing to it that no occasion is given, insofar as we are able, for someone to burlesque or depreciate the gospel or anything about Christian worship—particularly preaching?

Let's be honest. Whose fault is it, really, when someone goes away from our services saying of either the preacher or of the worshippers, "Fools!"?

The Ark Rocker

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Cassette 3

Side A: "Come and Praise the Lord"

Side B: "All Night, All Day"

Cassette 4

Side A: "Oh, How I Love Jesus"

Side B: "Clap Your Hands"

Cassette 5

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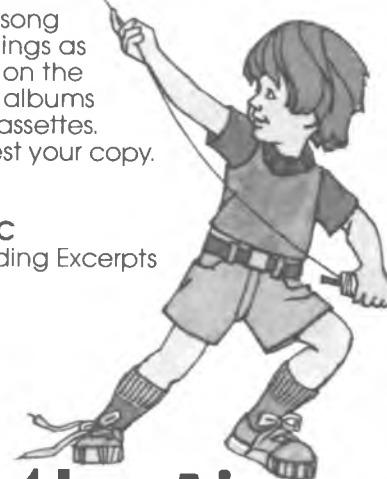


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